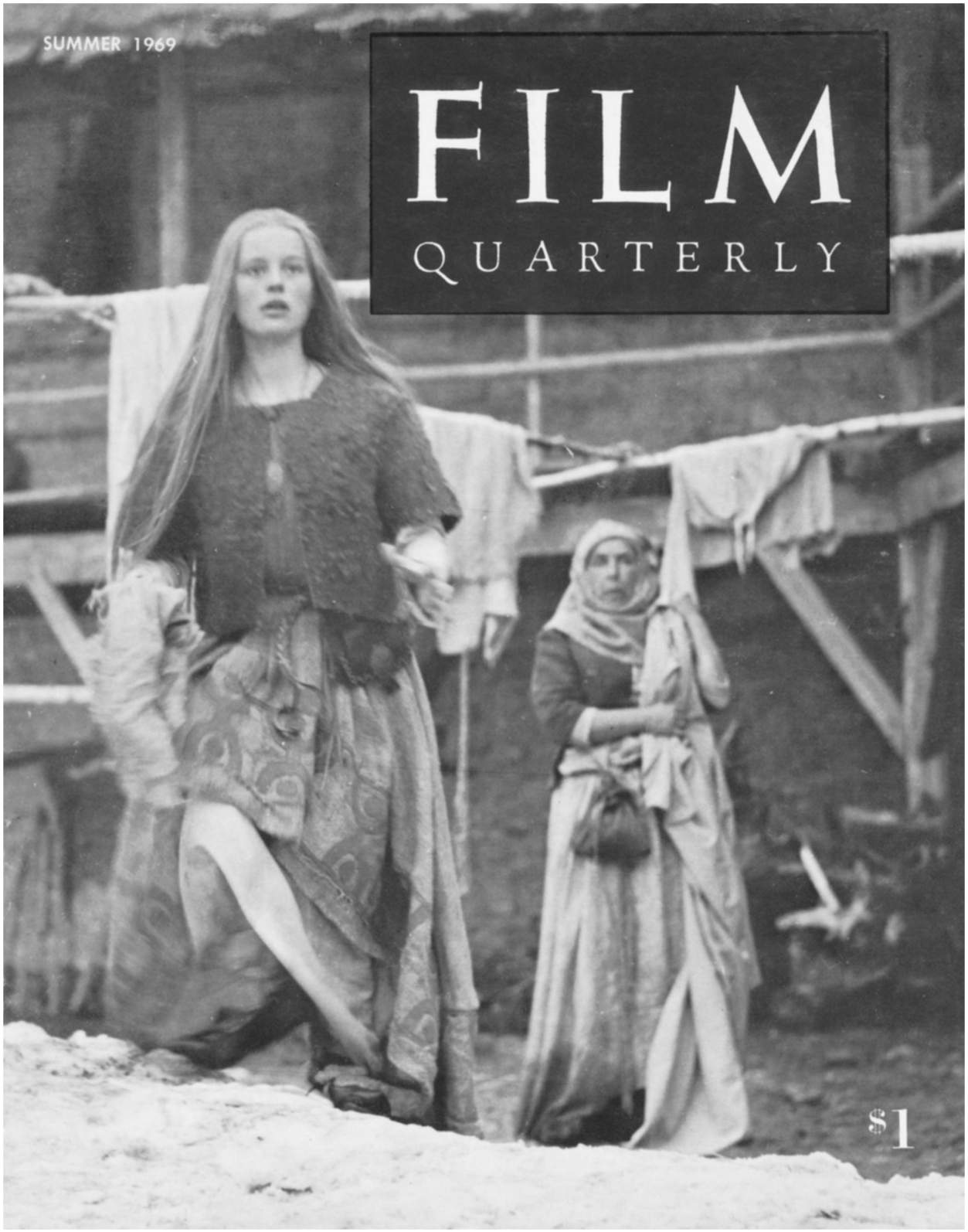
SUMMER 1969

FILM QUARTERLY



$1

WHAT HAD BEEN A SPRINGTIME OF HOPE BECAME...

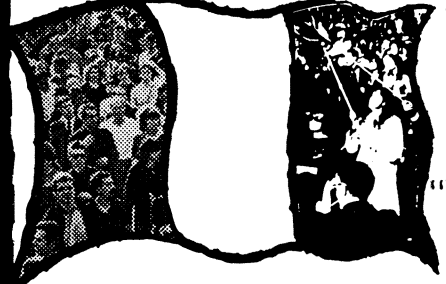
PRAGUE: THE SUMMER OF TANKS

THE INVASION FILMED...
HOUR BY HOUR

WAS THE TERROR OF ARMOR AND GUNS ENOUGH TO KILL THE PEOPLE'S WILL TO FREEDOM?

Spring, 1968...for the first time in twenty years freedom blossomed in Czechoslovakia. Then the tanks came—Russian tanks sent to crush all hope. How successful were they? Here is a motion picture smuggled out of Europe to "tell it like it is!"

Filmed by photographers who must remain anonymous...banned in the countries where they were made.



TO BE SHOWN WITH...

THE PARIS STUDENT REVOLUTION

"THE RIGHT TO SPEAK"

Filmed by French cinema students

Available to **Art Centers, Museums, Colleges and Universities** for booking now in 16mm and 35mm from . . .

THE KINETIC ART
Universal Education and Visual Arts
221 Park Ave. South
New York, N.Y. 10003

VOL. XXII, No. 4 Summer 1969

ARTICLES

FILM REVIEWS

COVER:

Frantisek Vlacil's *Marketa Lazarova.*

Editor's Notebook

—END OF THE FOREPLAY FLICK?

Movies, it is widely said, are at least dirtier than ever—if not better. The weakening of the Code in Hollywood (and of legal censorship) has led to a proliferation of sniggering sex in movies which may be at least as revolting as the hypocritical puritanism of the Code. Meanwhile, sexual intercourse is realistically if satirically simulated in a foreign film cleared for U.S. distribution (*I am Curious* [*Yellow*]) and it is lengthily recorded in Andy Warhol's underground feature, F***. Prurient outrage and satisfied salivation appear to be on the rise about equally, and the response of the MPAA has been its classification system—on which we will reserve comment until we can see more clearly how it is really working (or not working). But the general current toward more literal and extended portrayal of sexual behavior on the screen is clearly enduring, broad, and deep. So is the debate it occasions, as is natural for a revolutionary development in public mores—which is, moreover, connected with other tender questions of cultural revolution. The situation calls for extended aesthetic analysis as well as political argument; for in a sense most romantic and melodramatic films in the history of the cinema to date (which means a vast majority of all films) can now be classified as foreplay cinema. That is, they have really been films about the preliminaries of getting to bed—their suspense has turned on the familiar question, Will-they-or-won't-they? Over the decades this has seemed a fascinating question to literally billions of paid-admission customers. But what happens now, if this great tease is ended, and a film-maker can simply show his hero and heroine climbing into bed in the first reel? Awesome new problems arise —much of the traditional dramatic machinery is obsolete at one fell swoop. But worse horrors impend, for it turns out that the sexual act itself, heretofore the great implied Climax, is not really very interesting on film for most adults—or indeed

FILM QUARTERLY is published by the University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720. $1.00 per copy, $4.00 per year in the U.S., Canada, and Pan-America. Special two-year subscription rate: $7.20. Elsewhere: $1.80 per copy, $7.20 per year. Editor: ERNEST CALLENBACH. Assistant to the Editor: MARICAY GRANA. New York Editors: ROBERT HUGHES and JUDITH SHATNOFF. Los Angeles Editor: STEPHEN FARBER. Paris Editor: GINETTE BILLARD. Rome Editor: GIDEON BACHMANN. London Editor: PETER COWIE. Advisory Editorial Board: ANDRIES DEINUM, AUGUST FRUGE, HUGH GRAY, ALBERT JOHNSON, NEAL OXENHANDLER, COLIN YOUNG. Views expressed in signed articles are those of the authors. Indexed in *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Art Index* and *Social Sciences and Humanities Index.* Published quarterly. Second-class postage paid at Berkeley, California. Printed in U.S.A.

VOL. XXII, No. 4 Summer 1969

ARTICLES

FILM REVIEWS

COVER:

Frantisek Vlacil's *Marketa Lazarova.*

Editor's Notebook

—END OF THE FOREPLAY FLICK?

Movies, it is widely said, are at least dirtier than ever—if not better. The weakening of the Code in Hollywood (and of legal censorship) has led to a proliferation of sniggering sex in movies which may be at least as revolting as the hypocritical puritanism of the Code. Meanwhile, sexual intercourse is realistically if satirically simulated in a foreign film cleared for U.S. distribution (*I am Curious* [*Yellow*]) and it is lengthily recorded in Andy Warhol's underground feature, F***. Prurient outrage and satisfied salivation appear to be on the rise about equally, and the response of the MPAA has been its classification system—on which we will reserve comment until we can see more clearly how it is really working (or not working). But the general current toward more literal and extended portrayal of sexual behavior on the screen is clearly enduring, broad, and deep. So is the debate it occasions, as is natural for a revolutionary development in public mores—which is, moreover, connected with other tender questions of cultural revolution. The situation calls for extended aesthetic analysis as well as political argument; for in a sense most romantic and melodramatic films in the history of the cinema to date (which means a vast majority of all films) can now be classified as foreplay cinema. That is, they have really been films about the preliminaries of getting to bed—their suspense has turned on the familiar question, Will-they-or-won't-they? Over the decades this has seemed a fascinating question to literally billions of paid-admission customers. But what happens now, if this great tease is ended, and a film-maker can simply show his hero and heroine climbing into bed in the first reel? Awesome new problems arise —much of the traditional dramatic machinery is obsolete at one fell swoop. But worse horrors impend, for it turns out that the sexual act itself, heretofore the great implied Climax, is not really very interesting on film for most adults—or indeed

FILM QUARTERLY is published by the University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720. $1.00 per copy, $4.00 per year in the U.S., Canada, and Pan-America. Special two-year subscription rate: $7.20. Elsewhere: $1.80 per copy, $7.20 per year. Editor: ERNEST CALLENBACH. Assistant to the Editor: MARICAY GRANA. New York Editors: ROBERT HUGHES and JUDITH SHATNOFF. Los Angeles Editor: STEPHEN FARBER. Paris Editor: GINETTE BILLARD. Rome Editor: GIDEON BACHMANN. London Editor: PETER COWIE. Advisory Editorial Board: ANDRIES DEINUM, AUGUST FRUGE, HUGH GRAY, ALBERT JOHNSON, NEAL OXENHANDLER, COLIN YOUNG. Views expressed in signed articles are those of the authors. Indexed in *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Art Index* and *Social Sciences and Humanities Index.* Published quarterly. Second-class postage paid at Berkeley, California. Printed in U.S.A.

even very stimulating erotically. Almost all of the sex act's meaning turns out to be invisible and imperceptible to anyone but the participants. The withering away of the sexual revolution may thus turn out to be almost literal. Or it might be turned to counter-revolutionary ends: someone suggests that F**** ought to be run as a required sex-education film in high schools, thus turning off millions of hot-blooded teen-agers.

At any rate, the aesthetic challenge looks increasingly arduous. As I have discovered from young men employed to manufacture films for the underground sex circuit, it taxes their utmost ingenuity to make such films less than stupefyingly tedious. Probably what will happen will be largely in so-far-unexplored areas of sexual comedy. The chess-game of *The Thomas Crown Affair,* though I fear it was meant seriously, points the way; so does *Closely Watched Trains,* though it botched the Obligatory Scene. (Some intrepid critic may even now be at work on a theory of the comic sexual catharsis. . . .) More curiously still, writers and directors will be forced to invent new categories of plot in which emotional rather than anatomic climaxes are central; we will almost be back with D. W. Griffith, or perhaps Henry James, but probably from the cool perspective of the new youth, for whom sex is nice but not a great hang-up. Nudity itself will have to be re-explored; and like a couple getting to know one another after a too-quick seduction, film will have to learn subtleties and nuances in matters that have heretofore been handled with mere passionate glances and heavy breathing. Most oddly of all, certain artists will surely take the path of Jean-Luc Godard; after the kissing scene in *Breathless,* he has resolutely excluded such privileged intimacies from the camera's prying eye. In short, where everything is permitted it may be even harder to do it right.

CONTRIBUTORS

IRIS BARRY founded the Museum of Modern Art Film Library (now, under Willard Van Dyke, known as the Film Department); she lives in retirement in the south of France. LEO BRAUDY teaches literature at Columbia University. GARY CAREY, who was the editor of *Seventh Art,* a critical journal based in New York, now works in the Museum of Modern Art Film Department. ESTELLE CHANGAS is a film student at UCLA. CHIDANANDA DAS GUPTA, who is an Indian critic and film-maker, has been associated with the Calcutta Film Society and the journal *Indian Film Culture.* WILLIAM JOHNSON, British by origins, lives in New York. CLYDE B. SMITH is head of film production in the University Extension Media Center, Berkeley.

PRICE RISE

Despite more or less continual inflation, we have managed to stick to our original prices for eleven years. But the University of California Press is raising the prices on all of its periodicals, and regrettably *Film Quarterly* must be included. The new rates will go into effect August 1, 1969, and all subscription renewals or extensions postmarked before that date will be eligible for the old rates, which can be found at the bottom of page 1. The new rates will be (for the United States, Canada, and Pan-America):

Single-copy price: $1.25 (Institutions: $1.75)
Individual subscription for one year: $5.00
Individual subscription for two years: $8.00
Institutional subscription (libraries, colleges, etc.) for one year: $6.00
Institutional subscription for two years: $10.00

For subscribers in other parts of the world, prices will be:

Single-copy price: $2.50 (Institutions: $3.00)
Individual subscriptions for one year: $9.00
Individual subscription for two years: $14.40
Institutional subscription (libraries, colleges, etc.) for one year: $10.80
Institutional subscription for two years: $18.00

Postbank numbers are available for the convenience of foreign subscribers upon request, and air-mail delivery can be arranged through prepayment.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE: Complete sets and extra copies of: *Cahiers du Cinema in English, Film Comment, Film Culture, Film Journal, Film Quarterly, Films and Filming, Films in Review, Sequence, Sight and Sound* (since July 1944): Write: Russell Shimansky, Box 344 Cathedral Station, New York, N.Y. 10025.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Face the Music

"It is written that Alexander was sometime so fervently stirred with [music], that, in a manner, against his will he was forced to arise from banquets and run to weapon; afterward the musician changing the stroke and his manner of tune, pacified himself again and returned from weapon to banqueting."

—From THE COURTIER, by Baldassare Castiglione, 1516.

"Some of my more practised colleagues assure me that when I have had all their experiences my youthful exuberance will disappear, and I shall look upon film composing not as an art but as a business. At present I still feel a morning blush which has not yet paled into the light of common day. I still believe the film contains potentialities for the combination of all the arts such as Wagner never dreamt of."

—Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1945.

"Let's face the music—and dance."

—From the Astaire-Rogers film FOLLOW THE FLEET, 1936.

Nearly everyone responds to music in some way, even if less wholeheartedly than Alexander. From primitive times down to the present, the affective power of music has been used to reinforce the dance, the drama, and religious, social, political, and military ceremonies. And in the last four decades—the era of the sound film—the dramatic use of music has been brought to a fine pitch of precision. Music can be tailored to fit the film's action—or, in some cases, vice versa—to the nearest twenty-fourth of a second. The dynamic balance between the music and the film's other sounds can be controlled with any desired rigor. And the blending of music and film, once made definitive, can be repeated unvaryingly time and time again.

There is a good deal less precision in attempts to explain the affective power of music. As far as film music is concerned, attempts are practically nonexistent[1]. For "pure" music, on the other hand, there is a large body of research and theory, much of it conflicting.

For reasons which will be examined later, music accompanying a film does not usually work on the spectator in the same way as "pure" music works on the listener, and so it is not necessary here to sift through all that research and theory. A more direct and empirical approach is possible. The affective elements which do apply with equal force to "pure" and film music are few and relatively clearcut. They operate on the physiological plane—the same plane on which Alexander apparently responded to music.

Music can act on the body in three ways: through its rhythm (speed and emphasis of beat), its dynamics (loudness or softness) and its pitch (high or low).

Of these three, rhythm is probably the most potent. From Siodmak's *Phantom Lady* (1944) I still remember the frenetic jazz drumming of Elisha Cook, Jr., polarizing the film's mood of menace and suspense, even though all other details have gone. Similarly, the only memorable scene in Konwicki's *Salto* (1964) is the salto itself, a group dance to a deliberately paced music which briefly gives shape to an otherwise amorphous film.

The physiological action of a musical beat presumably depends on its relation to certain natural tempi of the body, such as the heartbeat or breathing rate. If faster, it tends to be stimulating; and the greater the speed, the greater the stimulation is likely to be. A pro-

HOUR OF THE WOLF: *killing of the boy.*

gressively faster tempo, as with William Walton's music for the charge of the French knights in Olivier's *Henry V*, builds up excitement. The consistently fast tempo of the "Can't Buy Me Love" number in Lester's *A Hard Day's Night*, accompanying the Beatles as they rush down a fire escape to cavort in a field, is exhilarating; and so is Hanns Eisler's musical theme of rapid triplets with the "Closing the Gap" sequence in Joris Ivens's documentary on the reclaiming of the Zuyderzee, *New Earth*. The stimulation takes on a more somber aspect in Bergman's *The Hour of the Wolf*: when Max von Sydow imagines himself killing a boy who stares at him, the rapid monotonous pulsation of beats in Lars Johann Werle's score intensifies the sense of nightmare.

Musical tempi that are slower than the body's natural tempi do not have a positive converse effect. They may be and often are relaxing—like the nostalgic Simon and Garfunkel songs with *The Graduate*—but other musical elements and the dramatic context may combine to give them a different character. The slow melodic phrases with which Maurice Jarre accompanies the climax of Zinnemann's *Behold a Pale Horse* serve to tighten, not relax, the suspense.

Compared to rhythm, dynamics and pitch are extremely limited in the kind of physiological responses they can arouse. Above a certain level of loudness, music can cause pain. Some film composers have deliberately created incidental music loud enough to be physiologically disturbing—Quincy Jones for the anguished ending of Lumet's *The Pawnbroker* and John Barry for the beginning and ending of that fable of racial animosity, *Dutchman*. Here again there is no automatic converse: soft music does not necessarily arouse euphoria or tranquillity. The musical cliché of tremolo strings for suspense is usually played softly.

Both very high and very low notes can be physiologically disturbing, since they are at the threshholds where sound is perceived as a physical rather than an aural sensation. The hanging of Billy Budd in Peter Ustinov's film of that name is accompanied by a piercingly high note on the violins. At the end of Bellochio's *Fists in the Pocket*, when Julia lets her brother die in an epileptic seizure, a phonograph record sticks eerily on the high note of a soprano. Ominous low notes on the double bassoon—lowest of all orchestral instruments—are heard in Bernard Herrmann's score at the beginning of Welles' *Citizen Kane*, when Kane is dying. In Shohei Imamura's *The Pornographer*, double bassoon notes accompany the scenes involving a pet carp which a widow believes to be the disapproving reincarnation of her late husband.

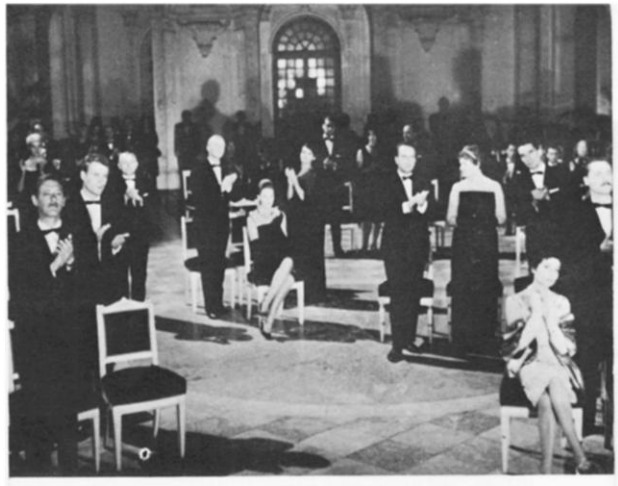
From the foregoing miscellany of examples it can be seen that the physiological effects of rhythm, dynamics, and pitch are far from specific. They gain whatever definition they do have from the cinematic context. This is still more true of the other elements of music (harmony, tone color, etc.), whose effects on the

Climactic sequence in THE PAWNBROKER.

listener do not conform to even the most general pattern.

Acutely dissonant harmony, for example, might seem to be as fundamentally disturbing as loudness or high pitch. But, unlike these, dissonance cannot be measured objectively. Someone familiar with the works of Boulez, Babbitt, and Berio will not have the same concept of dissonance as someone who listens to nothing more modern than Richard Strauss. In film music, dissonance can become even more elastic. Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" sounds much less dissonant on the sound track of Disney's *Fantasia* than in the concert hall, not merely because it has been reshuffled and reorchestrated but also because the smoothness of the images and the logic of the story they tell rubs off onto the music itself. In *Muriel,* by contrast, Resnais sets out to demonstrate the jagged fragmentation of life as lived by his characters, and his deliberately abrupt editing interacts with Hans Werner Henze's discordant musical interjections to enhance and be enhanced by them. Moreover, Resnais's direction even gives a nervous jagged edge to Georges Delerue's nostalgic song "Déjà."

Associations also play an important role in determining the cinematic impact of the more complex elements of music—harmony, tone color, form. To achieve a certain effect, the filmmaker or composer can rely on the spectator's awareness, however vague, of different musical patterns and their usual context. With Resnais's *Last Year at Marienbad,* for example, Francis Seyrig's music comes in two harmonic styles. At the beginning it is neoclassical, with mild discords resolving into concords in progressions that would have been acceptable 200 years ago; this fits in with the baroque interiors of the chateau and, together with the past tense of the narrator's reminiscences, establishes a sense of reflectiveness and completion. But then, as the camera moves in among the players and spectators of the chateau's theater, the film shifts into the present tense, and at the same time the harmonic pattern of the music shifts to a long chain of discords, still relatively mild but persistently unresolved. While the images



LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD: *Brisk neoclassical music sets the scene (above), slow romantic music accompanies the action (below).*

remain formal and baroque, the romantic languor of the new harmony helps to suck the spectator into the flow of unresolved events on the screen.

The difference between the two harmonic styles of *Last Year at Marienbad* is accentuated not only by tempo and rhythm (rapid 4/4 time against slow 3/4) but also by tone color: the first is scored for string orchestra, the second for solo organ. The rich, fuzzy tones of the organ, partly through their association with the church, seem to lend themselves well to the extraordinary and the ritualistic. Organ music accompanies Buñuel's black comedy *The Crim-*

inal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz (Ensayo de un Crimen) and Denys de Daunant's short slow-motion study of bullfighting, *La Corrida Interdite;* it underscores the credits of Frankenheimer's *Seconds;* and it occurs in ambient[2] form in such somber melodramas as *Dark Eyes of London* (master criminal Bela Lugosi disguised as a blind musician) and *Daughter of Darkness* (Siobhan McKenna as a nymphomaniac who kills her consorts and then assuages her guilt by playing the organ). At the opposite pole are the clear tones of the flute, which can have the effect of neutralizing a tendency toward melodrama: this is what happens in Renoir's *Boudu Sauvé des Eaux,* where the incidental music for solo flute counteracts Michel Simon's roguish playing of Boudu as a "character." The dry, staccato tone of Norman McLaren's artificial music for *Neighbours*—produced by drawing the sound track directly onto the film—is even more antiseptic, helping to keep the savage fable free of any sentimentality.[3]

For Michael Powell's *Peeping Tom,* composer Brian Easdale uses the tinny, wavering tone of an upright piano to accompany scenes showing the childhood of the voyeur-killer protagonist. The climactic killing of a dancer is accompanied by the ambient recording of a Chico Hamilton fast jazz number in which staccato percussion effects predominate. The nostalgic associations of the former arouse pity for the protagonist, while the dry, unemotional quality of the latter suggests the almost mechanical psychological drive that leads him to kill.

Here again there is more than one difference between the two kinds of music. They are distinguished not only by tone color and tempo but also by form and style—and the listener's response to these musical elements depends almost exclusively on associations. It's a stylistic association that makes one wince in *The Sound of Music* when Julie Andrews walks down the church aisle to be married and the sound track accompanies her with a full orchestral version of the song "Maria." The style of this song, in bouncy 6/8 rhythm, is out of place in the ecclesiastical setting.

While it's easy to tell when a stylistic association is wrong, it can be difficult to tell when such an association is right. There is, for example, a certain style of music—12/8 time, moderately fast, with a sweeping melody, and guitars and woodwind prominent in the orchestration—which invariably accompanies westerns. However, a passage in the same style occurs without sounding at all incongruous in Vaughan Williams' London Symphony. Thus the power of music to set a specific scene cannot be taken for granted, and many screen composers play it safe by simply underlining what the images have already made clear. Open fifths moving in the pentatonic scale reassure one that *The Sand Pebbles* is set in China; characteristic rhythmic and melodic patterns for voice and guitar endorse the Mexicanness of *Viva Zapata!;* and the tune of "Waltzing Matilda"

PEEPING TOM: *Nostalgic piano music highlights the suffering of the killer (left), percussive jazz the suffering of his victim (right).*

is a continual reminder that *On The Beach* is set in Australia.

This use of musical stereotypes quickly becomes tiresome. One of the pleasures of Chris Marker's short documentary *Sunday in Peking* is the incidental score by Pierre Barbaud, which avoids all conventional "Chinese" sounds. But imaginative uses of stereotyped associations are possible, especially when some kind of contrast is involved. In both Ichikawa's *The Burmese Harp* and Lean's *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, ambient music emphasizes the clash between Western and Japanese cultures: in the former, the Japanese environment is invaded by British soldiers singing "Home Sweet Home"; in the latter, by British prisoners of war whistling the "Colonel Bogey" march. Incidental music has been put to similar uses. In Tati's *Mon Oncle*, the scenes in the ultramodern house and factory are accompanied by cool jazz, those in the uncle's *vieux Paris* neighborhood by a *valse musette*.

The last example can be construed as a shift in time as well as space, and from this it's a short step to the final sequence in Buñuel's *Simon of the Desert*, where a "nuclear rock" marks Simon's miraculous transportation to the twentieth century. The use of musical forms and styles to evoke a period may be just as banal as "Chinese" music and the like: a Viennese waltz in the background and one is in a nineteenth-century salon; a snatch of plainchant and one is in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, a film-maker may undermine a scene with anachronistic music, as George Stevens does in *The Greatest Story Ever Told* when he accompanies the raising of Lazarus with the resolutely eighteenth-century sound of Handel's "Messiah," or as Ulu Grosbard does in *The Subject Was Roses* when he tacks sixties folk rock onto his forties setting.[4] Yet anachronism can be effective in humorous or nonrealistic contexts. In the generally undistinguished Marx Brothers movie *Love Happy*, when Harpo is forced to empty his pockets, one of the first of the odd items to emerge is a music box; this proceeds to play a tinkling eighteenth-century-style composition whose incongruity reinforces the humor of the entire scene. When Stanley Kubrick, at the end of *Dr. Strangelove*, sets the image of a nuclear explosion to Vera Lynn's singing of "We'll Meet Again" he is accomplishing more than a verbal joke: by superimposing World War II on World War III he is reminding the audience, as they laugh, that the latter will not lend itself to nostalgia so well as the former.

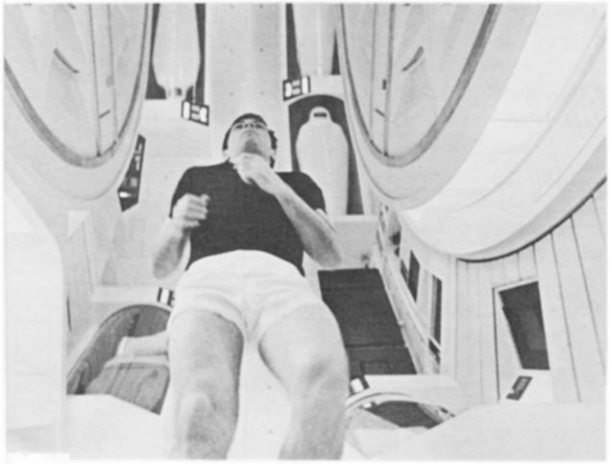
A wide variety of other associations can be triggered by musical forms, from the funeral march at the end of Olivier's *Hamlet* to the square-dance music accompanying the zany car ride at the beginning of Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde*. The potency of such associations can be judged from the fact that it may take only a few seconds of music to fix a particular mood. In Mackendrick's *The Man in the White Suit* Alec Guinness plays a technician obsessed with developing an indestructible fabric. During his first day's work at a new factory he comes across the research lab, and as he pushes the door ajar to peer inside, Benjamin Frankel's incidental music briefly surges up in the kind of romantic crescendo which usually accompanies a lover's reunion. This is not just an amusing parody but a neat way of making the audience feel the power of Guinness's obsession.

An equally brief association in Asquith's *Orders to Kill* is *too* potent. At the end of the film the young British agent visits the family of the Frenchman, erroneously identified as a traitor, whom he had killed during World War II. After leaving, he shakes off his constraint and strides away in what could be a conventional but unexceptionable it's-no-good-crying-over-spilt-milk fadeout. But the music that surges up at this point contains a few bars in the form of a military march, and this suggests a much less acceptable attitude—that the young man sees no further need to feel responsible because he was only following orders.

Music can arouse a rapid and powerful response because it either acts directly on the nervous system or makes contact with associations rooted in the listener's personal experience. The response is nonrational; and this might seem to explain why music can make such a

successful marriage with the screen image, which itself arouses a nonrational response. But music is also the most abstract of arts, with harmonic, rhythmic, and structural patterns that can readily be expressed in mathematical terms. In this, of course, it differs sharply from the dramatic film, which incorporates too much of the randomness and disorder of reality to be reduced to simple numbers. Even the cutting from shot to shot, which *can* have the metrical regularity of music, is rarely given it in practice, and then only for short periods at a time. *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg,* for example, as thoroughly steeped in music as it is, contains only one brief sequence cut to a musical beat.[5]

Not only the rhythm but the whole organization of music is different from that of the dramatic film. This difference always plays a part in determining the effectiveness (or otherwise) of a film score, and sometimes its importance may override all details of rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color, and style. There's a simple example in Thorold Dickinson's *Gaslight.* Anton Walbrook, in his attempt to drive Diana Wynyard insane, slips his watch into her handbag as they are leaving for a concert. Then, during a piano recital, he whispers that she has taken it and must give it back. Her agitation at being accused and then at seeing the watch in her handbag is made all the more agonizing by her unsuccessful struggle not to disturb the music. Here it is the organic nature of music, not any individual qualities of the piece being played, which heightens the tension. While the scene could have been acted out during a play, lecture, or sermon, these do not have the structured, impersonal flow of music and the tension would have been diminished.



← 2001

This organic difference between film and music contributes even to films which value a cinematic flow above dramatic action, such as Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey.* Consider the scene where Keir Dullea is jogging around the Jupiter spacecraft. This is about as continuous as a film scene can be, and yet it's still perceived as a series of discrete events: Dullea is going away from the camera, he's coming toward the camera; now the camera is backing away in front of him; now he's shadow boxing. Meanwhile, accompanying this scene, the Adagio from Khachaturian's "Gayne" ballet suite moves along slowly and plaintively yet with an unmistakable linear flow, suggesting the patient progress of the ship through the immensity of space.

It is because film and music do operate along different lines that the effect of music combined with film can be quite distinct from the effect of music alone. This is seen most clearly in films which borrow their music from the concert hall. A simple and striking example is Arthur Benjamin's "Cloud Cantata" in Hitchcock's 1956 version of *The Man Who Knew Too Much.* As the cantata is played during the opening credits, the camera cranes slowly forward over the orchestra until the screen is filled with the clashing cymbals which bring the work to a close. This camera movement gives a shape and tension to the music which it would not have for anyone seated in the concert hall; and of course it conditions the spectator to experience even more tension when the cantata is played again at the climax of the film, with an assassin planning to make his gunshot coincide with the cymbal clash.

Usually when concert music is incorporated in a film it is not so much the music's shape as its tone or mood which is modified. The most obvious examples of this are the romantic dramas which use passages of nineteenth-century romantic music (or twentieth-century imitations of it) merely as splashes of sentiment—Chopin with *A Song to Remember* or

the Warsaw Concerto with *Dangerous Moonlight*. But a similar if far less gaudy transformation can be found in films like Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and Godard's *Weekend* (both of which use ambient Mozart) and Pasolini's *Accattone* (incidental J. S. Bach). In *Vertigo*, when James Stewart is in a sanitarium, broken up by Kim Novak's apparent death, Barbara Bel Geddes visits him and plays a record of some "therapeutic" Mozart chamber music, but he tells her to turn it off because it is making him dizzy. To the audience, the Mozart comes as a small island of clarity and composure amid the heaving orchestral sea of Bernard Herrmann's incidental score, and Stewart's incongruous response helps to show just how deeply his obsession is rooted. The farmyard recital of a Mozart piano sonata in *Weekend* represents a similar island of calm amid violence, and the yawns with which Godard's "hero" and "heroine" react to it help to show how far they have become addicted to brutality. In *Accattone*, the calm flow of Bach is superimposed on scenes of violent emotions—such as Accattone's fight with his brother-in-law—and the effect is the reverse of the splashes of music in films like *Dangerous Moonlight*. Here the music acts as a kind of cooling filter to preserve the somewhat melodramatic incidents from sentimentality.

To a music-loving purist, the use of concert music in *Vertigo*, *Weekend*, and *Accattone* is probably as offensive as in *A Song to Remember*. The qualities he prizes in music—above all, the formal qualities of balance, of interdependence and contrast of parts, of repetition and variation—are thrust into the background in the movie theater, where the spectator's attention is held primarily by the screen image and the events that it is depicting. In short, whatever the music's complexity in its own right, it is required to serve merely as one voice in the film's contrapuntal texture of sights and sounds. The content as well as the form undergoes the same compression: a piece of music used to accompany a film tends to represent only one mood or association. Just as any of Chopin's more romantic pieces would do to

THE CHRONICLE OF ANNA MAGDALENA BACH

accompany the screen version of his love life, the Bach in *Accattone* and the Mozart in *Vertigo* and *Weekend* blur into something approaching an undifferentiated "Bachness" or "Mozartness," and could be replaced by any of a large number of the composer's other works to the same effect.

An apparent exception to this "shrinkage" of concert music in the cinema is Straub's *Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach*, in which the featured works *are* strongly differentiated. But here the music is no longer incidental in any sense of the word; it is central. The film shows how Bach's life is dominated by his music, which flows superbly on over financial worries and even the death of his children. In order to bring the music to the forefront Straub has had to drastically pare down the cinematic texture of his film, leaving only an ascetic minimum of subject movement, camera movement, dialogue, and cutting.

Since concert music can normally be effective in the cinema only with a loss of complexity, it isn't surprising that music which sounds banal to begin with may make an ideal accompaniment for a film. Anton Karas's "Harry Lime" theme is absurdly trivial, but it's doubtful whether the music of Mahler or Schoenberg or any other distinguished Austrian composer could have set the mood of *The Third Man* half so well.

This doesn't mean that banality is automatically desirable in screen music. Both the potency

and the limitations of banal music are demonstrated in Murnau's *Sunrise*. After the husband's half-hearted attempt to drown his wife, she runs away and jumps onto a streetcar traveling to the city. There is a long and extraordinarily poignant dolly shot taken from inside the streetcar as it weaves its way through sunlit streets and a busy factory district: while the wife sits there still appalled by her husband's action, life goes on unaware outside. The scene is accompanied by a thoroughly sentimental tune that is just right, since the visual texture is so rich that simple, even banal music can help to give it a sense of unity and direction. Later, however, when husband and wife are reconciled and they enter a church to watch a wedding, not only is the music sentimental and banal but the images are, too. Instead of complementing each other the two elements add up to excess—sugar on marshmallow instead of sugar on lemon.

Despite its recorded sound track, *Sunrise* is a silent film, and its use of music follows the needs and conventions of the silent era. The music of that era—whether produced by a live pianist or orchestra or by some kind of recording—had to perform all the functions of today's multichannel sound track. Not only did it serve indiscriminately as both incidental and ambient music but it also stood in for sound effects and dialogue. Not surprisingly, it was expected to run continuously from the start of the film to the finish.

While live accompanists *could* produce synchronized effects—for the beating of gongs, ringing of phones, dance scenes, etc.—they did not have the time to devise or rehearse many of these. Normally they would choose a piece of music appropriate to the dominant mood of each sequence and simply play it with any necessary repeats for as long as the sequence lasted. Elaborate cue books were compiled to provide music for a variety of moods. In many cases it was the title rather than any expressive quality of the music that determined the matching ("Light Cavalary Overture," "Hearts and Flowers," "Spring Song," etc.). However, even though the sound of the music might be less than ideal for the mood, and even though the music might roll on regardless of any changes within the film sequence, the total effect could still be satisfying. This was where the organic nature of music, the sense of continuity mentioned earlier in connection with *Gaslight* and *2001*, came into play. Because there was no dialogue or other sound for the music to interfere with, a silent film could benefit from the momentum even of a score which suggested an inappropriate mood.[6]

With the advent of sound it was no longer clear what the role of film music should be. The makers of some early sound films treated music in much the same way as for silent films, and in so doing occasionally achieved novel effects by accident. In Tay Garnett's *Her Man* (1930), for example, Johnny is the villainous manager of an American bar in Havana and Frankie is a bar girl who falls for a pure-hearted sailor. Not surprisingly, the tune of "Frankie and Johnny" is used liberally on the sound track. At one point, in fact, Johnny plays the tune on the bar piano, and when the scene cuts to a dialogue between Frankie and Johnny in her room, the piano music continues without a break. If the film were silent, it would be routine for the music to bridge the two scenes in this way, but with the music integrated into the film there is an abrupt shift of mode from ambient to incidental. Such a shift has been used deliberately in some recent films (one example is *The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner*, where the singing of "Jerusalem" continues through the capture and beating up of a youth who escaped from the reform school). As a result, what was a carryover from the silent era in *Her Man* now seems ahead of its time in sophistication.

Most early sound films, however, broke away from silent traditions. There were two main developments, both based on the assumption that audiences over the years had heard enough of pianos and pit orchestras and would now be most likely to pay to hear the human voice:

(1) *The all-talking film* either dispensed with incidental music altogether or restricted it to the opening and closing credits. Ambient

music, of course, might still occur. I'll have something more to say about this type of film later.

(2) *The all-singing, all-dancing film* welcomed music on condition that it remained strictly subservient to the human voice and body movements. In effect, all the music in this type of film was ambient, since the instruments playing it were on the scene in reality or by implication. While the musical (together with the film opera and the *film chanté* of Jacques Demy) is outside the scope of this article, many of the observations made here apply to it as well.

Soon the novelty of all-talking pictures wore off and incidental music began to make a comeback. It was, after all, an added "production value." At first the majority of screen scores were arrangements of existing music; by the mid-thirties, however, scores were being specially composed for the more elaborate "A" features, and during the next decade this practice spread to nearly all films.

It was normal for incidental music of the thirties and forties to occupy between 70 and 100 per cent of the film's running time. But the score was also expected to avoid detracting in any way from the action or dialogue, and two styles of music were developed to show the necessary deference:

Background music consisted of a "wash" of sound devoid of any striking melody, harmony, rhythm, or orchestration, and of any abrupt changes in rhythm or dynamics. While the mood of a background score might vary from sequence to sequence, in some films there was often no perceptible association at all between music and action: the score of Huston's *African Queen* (1951) is a late example of this. The main purpose of the background score was to keep the audience's ears fully occupied and to strengthen the film's continuity.

Mickeymousing is the pejorative name for the practice of making the score continually echo twists in the action or mood of the film. Because of this follow-my-leader strategy, a mickeymouse score was permitted to be a good deal louder and more idiosyncratic than a background score. There were degrees of "mickeymouseness": some scores—Max Steiner's for *The Informer* is a notorious example—followed the action in synchronous detail, while others were content to echo each scene as a whole—tremolo strings for suspense, solo bassoon for drunkenness, and so on.

Neither of these two types of music was satisfactory. The weakness of background music can be seen by comparing two of Carol Reed's films, *The Stars Look Down* (1938) and *The Third Man* (1949). The former is directed and edited in a casual, often elliptical style and it seems surprisingly modern today in everything but its music. Hans May's score twitters and mumbles to itself in the background, making no positive contribution to the film at all. *The Third Man* is cinematically a good deal less adventurous and has dated badly, but Anton Karas's celebrated zither score—simple tunes amplified into the foreground—gives it a modern panache which is still extremely effective.

Background music could even be positively distracting, as if it were coming from a radio in the theater lobby. This was particularly true of the many scores that were conceived and recorded at a "foreground" level and then toned down in the final dubbing of the sound track. But it could happen with any score that had no detectable relevance to the image.

Mickeymousing went to the other extreme: it was distracting because it was too relevant, like a running commentary delivered by a compulsive talker in the audience ("Look, he's going to kiss her . . . . Now she's slapping his face . . . . "). In Rudolph Maté's dark and frenetic thriller *D.O.A.*, for example, when Edmond O'Brien is eyeing young women in a hotel, Dmitri Tiomkin decides to nudge the audience in the ribs half-a-dozen times with a wolf call on a swanee whistle. Mickeymousing came off best when it stayed close to its origins, accompanying broadly comic action. In Walter Forde's *Bulldog Jack*, the hero thinks he's eluding the villain by running up a long spiral stairway, while the villain is in fact running down it. As the film cross-cuts from one to the other, the incidental music alternates between a rapid-

ly rising and descending scale, and this heightens the comic suspense. But the limitations of mickeymousing even for humor can be judged from the fact that in one of the most hilarious of all Disney short cartoons, *Band Concert*, the music is independent of the action. Indeed, the humor arises largely out of this independence, as Mickey's band, whirled up into the air by a tornado, continues to play without faltering.

With more serious films, mickeymousing was not worth all the effort involved. Erich Wolfgang Korngold's score for Mervyn LeRoy's *Anthony Adverse* industriously echoes the moods and tempi of the action, but the one scene in which it fuses with the romantic extravagance of the plot to electrifying effect is precisely the one scene which departs from the mickeymouse technique. Anthony Adverse, in Paris after various adventures, goes to the opera to see a famous singer who is Napoleon's mistress and also, though he doesn't yet know it, the girl he fell in love with years before; she knows that he is in the audience and that her first appearance will be a shock to him. Korngold's music for this crucial moment is ambient (the score of the fictional opera) and simple. There is some recitative by minor characters to prepare for the singer's entrance and then a slow, haunting aria which she begins in the shadow of a doorway (so that Adverse first recognizes her voice), moving downstage into the light for its climax.

It may be argued that this opera music echoes the mood and tempo of the scene just as thoroughly as the rest of the film score. But there's a significant difference. In this scene the music asserts its own shape (that of an operatic excerpt), which happens to fit the dramatic shape of the action. In the rest of the film, the fitting is accomplished at the expense of the music, which is forced to gallop along one minute, turn languorous the next, then pulse with foreboding, and so on. These wrenching changes weaken the music's sense of continuity.

Quite apart from the inherent weaknesses of background music and mickeymousing, there were several circumstances that militated against the creation of good film scores in the thirties and early forties. Most important of all, music was not generally thought of as an integral part of the film, to be planned in advance. It was left to music directors to tack it on after the action and dialogue were set. This also meant that the composing or arranging had to be done in haste, since the studio would want to release the film as soon as possible after it was "in the can."

Another limitation was the level of musical sophistication considered acceptable to the moviegoing public at that time. Though many screen composers would have been at home in a post-Schoenberg or Stravinsky idiom, the popular ear was not ready—or not thought to be ready—for such twentieth-century innovations. Now, in the US at least, a majority of screen composers had been brought up in the tradition of Germanic music—in fact, several were recent refugees from Nazism—and so they turned naturally to the late-nineteenth-century Germanic idiom of Wagner and Richard Strauss. This idiom, with its heavy texture and grandiose structure, could hardly have been worse suited either to the reticence demanded of background music or to the mercurial shifts in mood entailed in mickeymousing. In France and Britain, screen composers such as Maurice Jaubert and William Alwyn could draw on a more restrained tradition of music, with happier results. But it was Hollywood that dominated the film scene.

The state of recording techniques in the thirties also robbed film music of some of its effectiveness. It was impossible to achieve the clarity of sound, the dynamic range, and the separation of different sound track elements that are routine today.

While film music was floundering, some filmmakers of the thirties managed to sidestep the problems. They turned their attention to sound effects, treating them as an extension of the film's visual possibilities. In so doing, they created what might be called "underground" film music, often far more sophisticated and effective than anything that screen composers were writing. The most famous example of this is the complex sound that Rouben Mamoulian

devised for the first transformation in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931). This included such ingredients as artificial high and low frequencies; the sound of gongs reversed in time with the impact cut out; and Mamoulian's own heartbeats. It was *musique concrète* a decade before the term was invented—and, more important, its eerie, unidentifiable sound gave the spectator an apt sense of disorientation and unease.

Hitchcock, whose thirties films were accompanied by nondescript arrangements of background music, consistently relied on unusual ambient sounds to reinforce the tension of his images. Here again there are celebrated examples: the scream dissolving into a train whistle in *The Thirty-Nine Steps;* the organ note sustained by the hand of the murdered organist in *Secret Agent;* the disjointed drumming by the murderer at the end of *Young and Innocent.* Most interesting of all is the Swiss folk dance in *Secret Agent* in which each dancer twirls a coin around inside a bowl, generating a high-pitched whine like that of the electronic moon beacon in *2001* and with much the same disturbing effect.

Such uses of sound, developed at a time when incidental music was unreliable and directors had little control over it, have continued to the present day. In several recent films which have no incidental music it turns out that the director has created his own "score" with sound effects. In Bergman's *Brink of Life* an ambulance siren surges up behind the opening credits, and a climactic sequence is accompanied by Eva Dahlbeck's rhythmic, almost metronomic screams. During the attempted jail break in Jacques Becker's *The Night Watch* most of the natural sounds have a dramatic charge because they expose the prisoners to the risk of discovery; this is particularly true of the scene in which one prisoner batters his way through the cell floor in what might be described as a fortissimo percussion solo. And in Buñuel's *Belle de Jour* many of Catherine Deneuve's daydreams are cued in by the jingling of harness or the ringing of doorbells or missal bells.

It's only a step from the musical use of sounds to the use of ambient music, which came into vogue in the thirties and forties. The action of a drama or comedy would shift to a nightclub, for example, where the characters would pause to listen to a torch song. Of course, the main purpose of such ambient music was not usually to add to the expressiveness of the drama or comedy: by introducing a new or familiar song number, producers hoped to cash in on the popularity of screen musicals.

Yet often these musical interpolations *did* enhance the film. If the mood of the music complemented or contrasted with the mood of the action, and if there was at least some justification for its presence, the music could complete a nexus of associations that would deepen and intensify the audience's dramatic experience. This accounts for the fascination of the nightclub scene in Raoul Walsh's *The Roaring Twenties,* where racketeers Cagney and Bogart plot darkly at a table while Priscilla Lane gaily sings "I'm Just Wild About Harry." In Howard Hawks's *To Have and Have Not,* on the other hand, all but one of Hoagy Carmichael's songs cause the drama to flag because they are too obviously inserted for their own sake. "Carry Me Back to San Francisco" is redeemed by its pertinence: it wryly expresses the homesickness which expatriates Bogart and Bacall may feel but are too hardboiled to admit.

The power of this kind of ambient music has attracted film-makers a good deal less concerned than Hollywood producers with box-office success. There's an outstanding example in Delvaux's *The Man with the Shaven Head.* At a school concert, a shy middle-aged professor goes backstage to watch an attractive girl student sing a romantic song entitled "The Ballad of Real Life." As he moves about, silent and restless, seeking the best vantage point to view her, a transference seems to take place, and the song is pouring forth on his behalf the emotion that he is too inhibited to reveal.

Ambient music in the thirties had a valuable side effect: it broke the stranglehold of background music and mickeymousing on incidental scores. As is shown by the opera in *Anthony Adverse,* ambient music could easily insinuate itself even into a film otherwise dominated by

one of these prevailing types. The next step was for the ambient song or instrumental number to move into the incidental score—and it did this in the form of the theme tune.

Once again the box office was the main spur behind the move. Unlike background or mickey-mouse music, a theme tune could be used to promote the film, and it could also be issued separately and profitably as a phonograph recording. But once again it was a move in the right direction. A theme tune could be played softly, but it could not fade anonymously into the background; its orchestration, tempo and even time signature could be varied to suit different scenes, but not to the extent required for outright mickeymousing. Like accompaniments of the silent era, theme-tune scores could assert their presence and, at the same time, deploy the continuous character of music regardless of twists and turns in the screen action.

There were, admittedly, serious weaknesses in the theme-tune score. Following the fashion of the time it was generally long, and its length involved repetitions of the theme that could quickly become tiresome. Moreover, it staked everything on the aptness of its particular theme. Whereas an ambient song (as in *The Roaring Twenties*) was involved in only one scene, the associations of an incidental theme had to complement or contrast with the tone of the entire film. When the theme *was* right, however, it could triumph over many weaknesses. To take just one group of examples, David Raksin's score for Preminger's *Laura* (1944), Miklos Rozsa's for Hitchcock's *Spellbound* (1946) and Franz Waxman's for Delmer Daves's *Dark Passage* (1948) are all too long and repetitive and they often intrude on scenes that would be better left silent[7]. Yet because their themes have a somber romanticism that epitomizes the mood of the three films, the scores are extraordinarily effective.

TOKYO STORY: *Like most Japanese directors, Ozu used occidental music—in both contemporary and historical films.*

As with the ambient song, it wasn't only Hollywood that went in for theme-tune scores. The French cinema especially has long had a predilection for them, from Maurice Jaubert's "Valse Grise" for Duvivier's *Carnet de Bal* (1937) to René Cloerec's heavy nostalgic tune for Autant-Lara's *Le Diable au Corps* (1949) to Francis Lai's light nostalgic tune for Lelouch's *A Man and a Woman* (1966). Even so un-Hollywoodish a film-maker as Yasujiro Ozu made good use of theme-tune scores—with thoroughly occidental-sounding themes—in such films as *Tokyo Story* and *Good Morning*.

By the fifties further changes had taken or were taking place on the film music scene. It was becoming a common practice to plan the music in advance. Sometimes the composer had a chance to make suggestions about the film as well as the music (even if they were rarely followed), and at worst he had more time to work on his score. Advances in recording techniques were improving the fidelity of the sound track, widening the composer's effective "palette" of sound. At the same time, the frontier of musical style considered acceptable for the moviegoing public was being pushed away from the late nineteenth century. Occasionally it might be pushed backward, as it is for the scene in Yorkin's *Divorce American Style* where ex-husbands and ex-wives try to sort out whose children are spending Sunday with whom—a scene of confusion that Dave Grusin ironically accompanies with a pastiche of Mozartian clarity. More often, of course, the frontier was pushed forward. Hugo Friedhofer introduced strong dissonance into his music for Wilder's *Ace in the Hole* (1951), and Benedek's *The Wild One* (1953) had a jazz-influenced "serious" score; but the most daring scores could be found with thrillers, horror, and science fiction, whose subject matter lent itself most readily to disconcerting

sounds. As suggested earlier, there is an equation between what the eye and ear will accept in the way of stimuli. The visual fantasmagoria of the Star Gate sequence in *2001*, for example, matches the bizarre sounds of Gyorgy Ligeti's "Atmospheres" (the most advanced music yet to appear on the track of a major Hollywood feature), and anyone who can enjoy the former is unlikely to complain that the latter is more dissonant than vintage Max Steiner.

All this does not mean that film music has progressed steadily since the forties. Planning, improved recording techniques, and greater musical sophistication have often conspired to produce bigger, louder, and in no way better scores. The irrelevant but reticent background score of the thirties has been amplified into today's irrelevant and brassy "foreground" score, examples of which can be heard with films as diverse as *Barbarella* and *The Bible*. At the same time, as theater admissions have dropped and sales of music-from-the-sound-track records have risen, composers have been encouraged to write theme-tune scores in which ostentation and catchiness are more important than relevance. Such scores take the vices of foreground music one stage further, being not only irrelevant and brassy but repetitive as well. Maurice Jarre, who once wrote excellent atmospheric small-orchestra scores for such varied films as Franju's *Eyes Without a Face* and Zinnemann's *Behold a Pale Horse*, has become trapped in this kind of composition. Under the pressure of Hollywood, his musical range has shrunk until his theme tunes have become almost interchangeable: *The Loves of Isadora* echoes *Is Paris Burning?* which in turn echoes *Doctor Zhivago*.

Mickeymousing, too, has squeaked into many films of the sixties. Richard Sarafian's *Run Wild, Run Free* offers a rare example of a recent score that doggedly echoes nearly every vicissitude of the action. Mickeymousing today usually comes in more isolated though no less blatant examples. In John Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn*, when Interior Secretary Edward G. Robinson consents to help the Cheyenne, a solo violin launches into a sentimental melody that is grotesquely out of character. In Peter Glenville's *Becket*, when Henry II hears of Becket's first challenge to his authority, there is a twiddle of strings to convey the king's annoyance—something that Peter O'Toole is well able to convey for himself. In *Tony Rome*, the prevailing jazziness of the score deliquesces into syrupy violin music when Frank Sinatra first kisses Jill St. John. In Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* there is a distracting orchestral surge when the two protagonists first look each other in the face.

Wilder's ACE IN THE HOLE

Fortunately, some composers have put the technical and other improvements of the past decade or two to better use. It might seem that there is little room to maneuver, since mickeymouse scores are unsatisfactory because they are too relevant while background (or foreground) scores are unsatisfactory because they are too *ir*relevant. Yet with the right balance between continuity (stressing the independent organic shape of the music) and associations

Zeffirelli's ROMEO AND JULIET

(reinforcing the tone of the film) a score can sail close to both dangers without running aground. Here are some analyses of recent examples, beginning with those that sail closer to mickeymousing.

In Desmond Davis's *The Girl with Green Eyes,* when Rita Tushingham first ventures for a drive in Peter Finch's car, she starts out being wary but then suddenly relaxes and kisses him. Immediately the scene cuts to the view ahead of the car, a magnificent cloud formation hanging over an open landscape that opens up even more as the camera zooms back to a wider angle; and with this cut John Addison provides a burst of vigorous oboe melody accompanied by strings. While the effect superficially resembles that of *Tony Rome* and *Romeo and Juliet,* it is distinguished from them on several counts: (1) the oboe melody is not an *ad hoc* creation but a faster version of the main theme of the score (in other words, it is integrated into the music's own continuity); (2) it does not coincide with the kiss, so that there is no gross tautology of action and music; (3) the scene that it does accompany is both a realistic background and a visual metaphor for the characters' sense of liberation after the kiss, and the music reinforces the metaphor while remaining detached from the foreground action, like a theme-tune score echoing only the general tone of the film.

Yet when the foreground action consists of something more complex or less homogeneous than a kiss or love at first sight it can successfully be reinforced by music. In Chabrol's *Les Biches,* Jean-Louis Trintignant and Stéphane Audran make love while Jacqueline Sassard, who has been sexually involved with both, crouches outside the bedroom door; and Pierre Jansen accompanies this scene with a slow impassioned crescendo of orchestral music. What distinguishes this from the routine emotional churning that so often underscores scenes of love-making and frustration is the equivocal relationship among the characters. In the preceding scenes the three have been shown sitting close together in a circuit of almost absent-minded caresses, then embracing as they walk to the bedroom; and even when Jacqueline Sassard is shut outside, there is a visual link between her fingers touching, almost clutching at the door and Stéphane Audran's fingernails scraping down Trintignant's back. Thus the music, developing without a break as the scene alternates between the inside and outside of the bedroom, helps to bind the characters together again in a perverse and powerfully erotic love scene *à trois.*

A similar but perhaps less deliberate binding together of characters occurs in Delmer Daves's *Jubal.* Glenn Ford is given a job and a home by rancher Ernest Borgnine ("the only man who was ever kind to me since my father died"). The rancher's wife makes advances to Ford, which he rejects. After he has visited the ranch house one evening, there is an almost stylized sequence of cross-cuts between the wife gazing from her window toward the building where Ford sleeps and Ford gazing from his window toward the ranch house; David Raksin's accompaniment for this sequence is a high, loud, and passionate rendering of the film's main theme. This music, in a sense, adds realism to the film's action. The script hews to the old Western convention that the hero must be pure of heart, and there is no overt suggestion that Ford is ever tempted by the wife's offer. In the cross-cut sequence, the intention could very well have been for Ford's gaze to imply regret at his awkward situation or sympathy for the rancher, and for the yearning music to refer only to the wife. But since the music flows behind Ford's scenes as well, its implications extend to him and enrich his mythic character with human conflict and desire.

It is even possible for music to reinforce the mood of an entire homogeneous sequence and still avoid tautology. In fact, some of the most impressive uses of music fall into this category. What vindicates them is the unexpectedness of the sequence in question, involving a dramatic reversal of the whole mood of the film. A notable example is in Bergman's *The Magician,* nearly all of which is somber and anguished. Then, just as the magician seems irredeemably plunged into defeat and disgrace, he is sum-

moned to perform before the king. The change is so startling and comes so late in the film that it needs the help of music to establish it firmly, and Erik Nordgren provides that help in the shape of a brisk, bouncy march that continues from the arrival of the royal summons to the final fadeout.

In Jiri Menzel's *Closely Watched Trains* the Nazi occupation is viewed for the most part only as a backdrop to the everyday concerns of the railroad station staff, and the incidental music shares this perspective by being light or ironic (a triumphal march when young Milos finally overcomes his "premature emission"). In one scene, however, Milos is picked up by an SS train as a suspected saboteur, and the music becomes intensely lyrical. Here the perspective has changed: Milos has now been whisked into the world of the Nazi occupiers, and everyday life is now the distant backdrop—sunlit fields and farmhouses passing by the train. The unexpected lyricism of the music illuminates the shift from Milos's experience of everyday life in all its banality and confusion to his view of it from the outside, a bright panorama of desire.

In the foregoing examples the music reinforces the mood of the action but is distinguished from mickeymousing by its sense of continuity. Other examples of good screen music do the reverse—they assert their own independent shape and continuity but are distinguished from background or foreground music by their protean relevance to every mood of the film. "Relevance" is, of course, a wide-ranging term: it can apply not only to the stately suspense of the organ music that accompanies the stately suspense of the action in *Last Year at Marienbad* but also to the cheap bouncy street-band music which ironically and effectively accompanies Zbynek Brynych's film about Jewish ghetto under the Nazis, *Transport from Paradise*.

A theme tune of some kind is the basis of many recent scores whose primary aim is to establish a sense of continuity. Elio Petri's *The Tenth Victim,* set in the twenty-first century, stands or falls on its evocation of a future society, and the bizarre steely buoyancy of Piero

Petri's THE TENTH VICTIM

Piccioni's rock-influenced theme goes a long way toward making it stand. In Albert Finney's *Charlie Bubbles* and Louis Malle's *The Fire Within* the themes establish not time or place but the protagonists' state of mind. Just as Charlie Bubbles's success turns sour, so Mischa Donat's jaunty theme ends with a run of sour notes. For *The Fire Within* Malle uses Erik Satie's Gymnopédie No. 1, and this quiet, elegiac piano music, repeated at intervals throughout the film, embodies the unquenchable melancholy at the heart of Alain Leroy.

In some films both the timing and the tone of the music may at first seem arbitrary. There is a curious similarity between recurring musical passages in Ichikawa's *Kagi* (*Odd Obsession*) and Godard's *Weekend.* Both passages consist of somber chords on the low strings, which in the former occur irregularly as bridges between

Godard's WEEKEND

sequences and in the latter are superimposed on such scenes as Mireille Darc's description of her involved sexual encounter with a married couple. While the two films do not at first sight appear to have much in common, they could both be summed up as tragedies wearing the mask of comedy. Thus in each case the somber music serves as an unexpected but relevant reminder of the film's tragic side.

With the right kind of film, a score can even have the two main distinguishing marks of background music—a lack of easily identifiable themes and an indefatigable flow—and yet make them a source of strength instead of weakness. Bernard Herrmann's scores for Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and *Marnie* and Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451* and *The Bride Wore Black* are outstanding examples. All four films have a powerful undercurrent of suspense that lends itself to a continuous flow of incidental music. Herrmann's scores do have themes (some even whistleable) but he blends and varies and prolongs them into what may be heard simply as a web of suspenseful sound.

Earlier, referring to the Star Gate sequence in *2001*, I said that anyone who enjoys the image is likely to enjoy the music. The negative of this also holds good, and it is especially pertinent to the Hitchcock and Truffaut films just mentioned, which are either strongly liked or strongly disliked. Anyone who dislikes them might argue that Herrmann's scores are as limited in range and as irritating as those of Maurice Jarre which I censured earlier. On the other hand, anyone who likes the films will probably admire Herrmann's music because its chosen range and persistence are exactly right for the suspense.

A screen composer can work only within the tenor of the film. His music may suggest a different mood from the action so long as it is implicit in the film (as in *Kagi* or *Weekend*) or throws the dominant mood of the film into relief (as in *Transport from Paradise*). Except in the special case of the musical, where the music to a great extent determines what appears on the screen, the composer cannot change or improve on a poorly conceived film; the best he can do is to palliate its badness. In fact, while it is all too easy to create a bad score for a good film, the idea of a good score with a bad film makes no sense. Thus from one point of view the screen composer has an uninspiring task. He is at the mercy of the producer, director, script writer, and editor (among others) not only for the quality of the material he has to work with but also for the leeway in which he can do that work.

Yet everyone involved in the cooperative enterprise of film-making faces similar limits—and in one way the composer's task is more challenging than his collaborators'. He works in a separate dimension with its own vast possibilities of forms and associations, and the effectiveness with which he chooses among them cannot be measured in any way by seconds or decibels. A single note that fits the action or a quiet passage that seems to go its own way can do wonders for a film—and yet there is also a place for the tocsin and the rhapsody. The best screen scores, however simple they may sound, are likely to result from a vertiginous balance between freedom and bondage.

NOTES

1. Even the best books on film music devote surprisingly little space to this crucial topic. *The Technique of Film Music*, by Roger Manvell and John Huntley, contains an excellent historical survey, quotations from directors and composers, and detailed illustrations (musical passages matched with script excerpts and frame enlargements), but it makes no systematic study of the aesthetic relationship between film and music. Henri Colpi's *Défense et Illustration de la Musique au Cinéma*, which offers a tremendous wealth of documentation, is even more frustrating: it often seems on the point of revealing exactly what music does for the films but then retreats into mere description and arbitrary appraisal. Hanns Eisler, in *Composing for the Films*, does devote several pages to esthetic essentials; but he is so concerned to expose the abuses of the time (his book was published in 1947) that perceptive statements are intertwined with others that are no longer valid. My aim here has been to focus on the relationship between film and music, showing how and why music can enhance (or detract from) the spectator's involvement in a film. I have outlined

the history of film music only to the extent that it represents a trial-and-error groping toward a satisfactory aesthetic, and I have cited outstanding examples of film music only to the extent that they throw light on that aesthetic. In describing examples of film music, I have tried to be as specific as possible short of using musical technicalities that would be unfamiliar to the layman.

2. "Ambient" is the least ambiguous term I can find to describe music which forms an integral part of the sounds of a scene.

3. There *is* an objective physical basis to this variety, since tone color depends on the particular pattern of harmonics (subsidiary notes higher than the main note) produced by each musical instrument. The organ sounds fuzzy because most of its pipes produce sounds rich in harmonics. The flute, by contrast, has few harmonics, and McLaren's artificial music virtually none. Nevertheless, association is probably more important than acoustics in determining the effect of tone color in film music.

4. Stevens's error is in relying on the literary connection between the title and libretto of the oratorio and the content of his film. The association aroused by the *sound* of "The Messiah" is likely to be a church rather than the Holy Land of 2,000 years ago. Grosbard's error, I suspect, is more calculating: forties-style music would be a less popular "production value" than folk-rock.

5. It's interesting to note that, in the experimental field, music and film today often exchange their usual characteristics. Many abstract films (such as those of John Whitney) do consist of mathematically generated patterns and rhythms, while aleatory music (such as John Cage's) involves randomness and uncertainty. However, little if any aleatory music has been used with dramatic films, and what follows in this article may explain why.

6. E. Jaques-Dalcroze, writing in the *Revue de Genève*, December 1925, noted that silent film accompanists had taken to "eliminating all superfluous ornament and picturesque effects and were devoting themselves instead to creating a 'continuous' music whose sole object was to envelop the continuity of the visual action with an aural atmosphere of decor."

7. In *Hitchcock Selon Truffaut*, Hitchcock is reported as complaining that a scene between Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck in *Spellbound* is spoiled by intrusive violins.

IRIS BARRY

The Film Library and How It Grew

Iris Barry was first curator, then director of the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art, in New York (originally known as the Film Library of the Museum). Born in England in 1895, she became an American citizen in 1941. She was made Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur in 1949, and now lives in retirement in Fayence (Var), France.

That it could begin at all seemed, at the time, altogether a miracle. Now, thirty-four years later, it is difficult indeed to believe that in 1935 the vacuum which existed could have been so great or that it could ever have been filled. Nevertheless there were then virtually no means in existence anywhere of seeing any films other than those in current distribution by commercial

the history of film music only to the extent that it represents a trial-and-error groping toward a satisfactory aesthetic, and I have cited outstanding examples of film music only to the extent that they throw light on that aesthetic. In describing examples of film music, I have tried to be as specific as possible short of using musical technicalities that would be unfamiliar to the layman.

2. "Ambient" is the least ambiguous term I can find to describe music which forms an integral part of the sounds of a scene.

3. There *is* an objective physical basis to this variety, since tone color depends on the particular pattern of harmonics (subsidiary notes higher than the main note) produced by each musical instrument. The organ sounds fuzzy because most of its pipes produce sounds rich in harmonics. The flute, by contrast, has few harmonics, and McLaren's artificial music virtually none. Nevertheless, association is probably more important than acoustics in determining the effect of tone color in film music.

4. Stevens's error is in relying on the literary connection between the title and libretto of the oratorio and the content of his film. The association aroused by the *sound* of "The Messiah" is likely to be a church rather than the Holy Land of 2,000 years ago. Grosbard's error, I suspect, is more calculating: forties-style music would be a less popular "production value" than folk-rock.

5. It's interesting to note that, in the experimental field, music and film today often exchange their usual characteristics. Many abstract films (such as those of John Whitney) do consist of mathematically generated patterns and rhythms, while aleatory music (such as John Cage's) involves randomness and uncertainty. However, little if any aleatory music has been used with dramatic films, and what follows in this article may explain why.

6. E. Jaques-Dalcroze, writing in the *Revue de Genève*, December 1925, noted that silent film accompanists had taken to "eliminating all superfluous ornament and picturesque effects and were devoting themselves instead to creating a 'continuous' music whose sole object was to envelop the continuity of the visual action with an aural atmosphere of decor."

7. In *Hitchcock Selon Truffaut*, Hitchcock is reported as complaining that a scene between Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck in *Spellbound* is spoiled by intrusive violins.

IRIS BARRY

The Film Library and How It Grew

Iris Barry was first curator, then director of the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art, in New York (originally known as the Film Library of the Museum). Born in England in 1895, she became an American citizen in 1941. She was made Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur in 1949, and now lives in retirement in Fayence (Var), France.

That it could begin at all seemed, at the time, altogether a miracle. Now, thirty-four years later, it is difficult indeed to believe that in 1935 the vacuum which existed could have been so great or that it could ever have been filled. Nevertheless there were then virtually no means in existence anywhere of seeing any films other than those in current distribution by commercial

circuits, and the lifetime of these was brief. Movies appeared, movies vanished forever. Obviously then, anyone wishing to study the history and developing technique of the motion picture since 1895, or to savor its quality as an art peculiar to the twentieth century was totally out of luck for lack of material.

It was, I think, the advent of the talkies and —by that time—their prevalence which had slowly made us realize what we lacked or had lost. True enough, we had seen, heard, and rejoiced in *Public Enemy,* the first husky words of Garbo in *Anna Christie.* Yet something, not only of technique, seemed missing. Should we never again experience the same pleasure that *Intolerance, Moana,* or *Greed* had given with their combination of eloquent silence, visual excitement, and that hallucinatory "real" music from "real" orchestras in the movie theaters which buoyed them up and drifted us with them into bliss? No question but that had furnished an experience different in kind. But the silent films and the orchestras had vanished forever and when could one hope to see even the best of the early talkies again? How could movies be taken seriously if they were to remain so ephemeral, so lacking in pride of ancestry or of tradition?

An answer came, unexpectedly, through the still very young Museum of Modern Art in New York. This institution had started modestly in late 1929 in two rooms in the old Hecksher Building, at a time when—even more incredible today—no modern painting or sculpture was visible to the American public: indeed, I seem to recall that there was not then one work by Cézanne on public view, not to mention anything by the effulgent Picasso. The response to the Museum's first exhibitions had been so overwhelming that the infant organization had quickly had to bundle out into bigger premises —a good-sized brownstone on 53rd St., where it could spread out and organize its memorable suite of shows (including unheard-of exhibitions devoted to "objects," *art nouveau,* and the new architecture) and, at the same time, accommodate its growing public. It must at this point be noted that, in the original outline of the new Museum's activities-to-be (drawn up by Alfred Barr, who was to be its first director and constant inspiration) there had been included some consideration of the art of the film.

Now the tale must necessarily become rather personal, since I was to get into the act. The way it fell out was this. Late in 1930, I had come to try my luck in New York after having been severed rather forcefully from the big London newspaper of which I had been film correspondent for five years. No immigrant could have been more absurdly optimistic or, as it proved, less successful at the onset. But in the fall of 1932 a fortuitous meeting at a cocktail party with Philip Johnson (yes, the now famous architect) sent me scuttling next morning for an interview with him at the Museum. As a result, I settled in there that same day. There existed on the top floor of the brownstone on 53rd St. a large empty room, no doubt intended formerly for billiards or gymnastics. It held a big table, a handsome armchair, and nothing else but the view. My task as a volunteer worker was to begin making a library there, for the young Museum did not yet have but badly needed one for its staff. Rather oddly, this proved to be a lucky moment. There were no funds available for the purchase of books but the "crash" had caused some of the institution's wealthy patrons to reduce their outlays and therefore the extent of their residences and of their personal libraries. I was still innocent and unafraid, so followed the biblical advice: "Ask and it shall be given unto you." As a result, many of the Museum's elite and notably some of its trustees donated a goodly quantity of books on art, with the proviso that I should sell those not appropriate and then, with such funds, purchase books relevant to the study of modern art. Happily these were then cheap and I bought many. Contributions in kind flowed in—I remember particularly the great definitive catalogue of Delacroix's work (it fetched a handsome sum), while friends of the Museum like Edward Warburg and Lincoln Kirstein donated many really relevant books. Walter Chrysler, Jr. furnished both the wood and the workmen to put up shelves and, later, enabled me

to purchase two collections of surrealist literature and *memorabilia* from two foresighted bourgeois collectors in Paris. Much of the material thus acquired is, I believe, rarely obtainable today. Many other people helped, the thing was slowly growing, and while it did not yet amount to very much, it was a beginning.

At this point, Alfred Barr returned from a prolonged excursion in Europe. He had nowise forgotten his earlier inclusion of the film among those arts to be considered by the Museum. Seemingly, on learning that I was installed upstairs in the nascent library, he remarked "She would be better employed doing something about a film collection."* Meanwhile I had—feebly but with zeal—begun to get out a rather measly bulletin for Museum members—its *mise en page* was dismal—which included brief notes on current movies. These caught the eye of the late Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (friends of hers had found them unacceptable). What happened next in the higher echelons of the Museum I cannot pretend to know, but the coming miracle manifested itself when one of the trustees, John Hay Whitney, contributed funds to underwrite a preliminary study of whatever practical function the Museum might undertake in the field of cinema. With this study I was charged, together with my husband, John "Dick" Abbott, then in Wall Street, since clearly such a project needed someone who could conjure with figures and talk turkey to businessmen, and that was definitely not myself. We gladly flung ourselves into the task, acquired as secretary the heavensent Helen Grey. The three of thus then met daily after work and, aided by a restorative highball, spent the evenings and some "white nights" in painstakingly shaping a report which, we learned, would be submitted to the Rockefeller Foundation with a request for a grant to cover the establishment of a film division in the Museum. It will hardly be imagined that our job was an easy one or quickly accomplished: there were scores of problems to be faced such, for example, as the cost of projectors, laboratory work, storage vaults, raw film stock, printing and processing. What staff would be needed? What premises? And—most knotty of all—loomed the question as to how film rights for this particular use could be obtained. Only that ignorance which is bliss could have given us the enthusiasm and indeed the joy with which the research was tackled, completed and—eventually—crowned with success. A determining factor, apparently, was the response to a circular letter we had boldly sent out to heads of educational institutions across the country to enquire if said institutions would welcome a series of programs, in the form of actual films, to illustrate the history, technique, and aesthetic of this new art. Almost all replied and many of them affirmatively. One professor in particular wrote, laconically: "Yes, this might be a valuable idea since, as I see it, movies are the one and only thing that really interests students so that, if it were possible to make them cerebrate about that subject, it might assist in urging them to be critical, analytical and even just intelligent about other subjects."

*Omniscient Mr. Barr knew that in London in 1925, with Ivor Montagu and a handful of enthusiasts, I had been one of the founders of the Film Society. This was the progenitor of all cine-clubs, film study groups, etc.—though not of "art" cinemas, which had already burgeoned in Paris.

The Film Society's private status as a club, with an annual membership of around 1,000, allowed it to show films without censorship or other control. Many German, French, Russian features shown there had not been seen before in Great Britain. Pudovkin's *Mother* was the first Soviet film ever seen there.

Its performances were given monthly for an audience of some 1,500 (members could obtain tickets for guests) in an elegant cinema on Sunday afternoons when, otherwise, all England lay under a pall of puritan tedium—theaters, cinemas, shops, pubs all tightly shut. It employed a first-rate orchestra. There were erudite program notes. Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Roger Fry among other notables had blessed it. Hostesses gave lunch-parties for it. Groups of students poured up from Oxford, from Cambridge. Members included rising young cineastes Anthony Asquith, Alfred Hitchcock, and the "documentary" boys. Anyone who was anyone in intellectual circles attended and this—but not the programs—was noted in the press. It was in fact a wow.

The miracle had happened. The substantial grant made by the Rockefeller Foundation to cover three years of activity enabled the work to begin. The Film Library was set up under separate charter. Abbott abandoned Wall Street, I the Museum's nascent library and Miss Grey took on full-time work. Offices were taken in the Columbia Broadcasting Building (there was no room for us in the parent brownstone), a projection room with splendid 35mm and 16mm equipment established near by, and staff sought.

All very fine and good but where, really, were the films to come from? Happily it is not necessary here to insist that ownership of films is controlled by copyright, or that the physical possession of a print does not confer the right to project it before an audience whether for profit or—as of course we proposed—otherwise. The right to project it noncommercially is governed by its owner and contingent upon the nonpayment of individual admissions to showings. This and much else we had learned from the few invaluable friends from within New York's film world whom rumors of our project had brought to our aid. Among them two whose counsel should be signalled were Arthur de Bra and Arthur Mayer. Certain "old hands" now enabled us to acquire a lavendar preservation print of *The Great Train Robbery,* a number of Méliès subjects, and the prospect of laying hands on what remained of the old Biograph negatives. Bill Jamieson, long with Edison, joined the staff: he was reputed to be and indeed proved able to identify old film by simply smelling it. But how were we to get at the film industry proper?

Armed with letters of introduction, notably from Mr. Whitney (already interested in Technicolor) and particularly to Louis B. Mayer, then head of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and considered as *the* big shot of the business, Abbott and I whisked off to Hollywood. This visit proved vastly agreeable but was, in a sense, a wild goose chase. We soon realized that, perhaps understandably, no one there cared a button about "old" films, not even his own last-but-one, but was solely concerned with his new film now in prospect. Some thought we wanted to do good to long-suffering children by showing them things like *The Lost World,* which of course was not the case. Some certainly thought that we stood for some kind of racket. And what was "modern art"? The days were still distant when to have a Rouault in the drawing-room became a "must." That the Museum of Modern Art ardently desired Buster Keaton's *The Navigator* seemed very odd. Yet some people did seem genuinely interested and many were kind—notably the Samuel Goldwyns, whom happily I already knew, Walter Wanger and his wife, Mrs. Thomas Ince (though most of her husband's films seemed to have disappeared.) Morning after morning, Louis B. Mayer's charming secretary said on the telephone that Mr. Mayer very much hoped to see us but that, unfortunately, today it would not be possible, but please to call back tomorrow: which of course we did, daily.

Eventually Mary Pickford was persuaded by Mr. Whitney to "open" Pickfair and give a big evening reception for us, so as to make our project widely known. This is not the moment to describe it in detail, but it was *quite* a party, with many famous guests in full fig, music in the garden, supper at candle-lit tables and—subsequently— a program of films in the drawing-room to recall and briefly recapitulate American film history. This included D. W. Griffith's *New York Hat* (featuring our hostess and Lionel Barrymore), a new Mickey Mouse (Walt Disney was there but seemed personally unknown as yet to the others) and sequences from several far from aged films, including one from *The Gold Rush* but notably another from *All Quiet on the Western Front.* This had a curious effect. When Louis Wolheim's face appeared on the screen in close-up there was an audible gasp—so familiar had it been, so recently had he died —and been forgotten? There were tears. The evening ended quietly, pensively perhaps.

An immediate result was that next morning the Los Angeles *Times* carried a long and eulogious piece on the affair by Louella Parsons, that high-priestess of Hollywood publicity, and there is no doubt that this helped considerably, since it was read in New York movie circles.

But we had nevertheless not succeeded in putting our case to a single one of the heads of the big producer-distributor companies. No film star, no top-ranking director—not even my admired John Ford—could help us. Mary Pickford had presented us with a print of *The New York Hat.* Harold Lloyd (who owned his own films) characteristically and without fanfare gave us access to everything of his that we desired. We *had* cut some ice. But we also had had to realize that the way into open water lay not through Hollywood but through New York, where real control of the industry resided in the hands of the big corporations, the lawyers, the banks. We never did get to see Louis B. Mayer.

It was however the corporation lawyer of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Robert Rubin, back in New York, who finally drew up the contract—a tough one—governing the Film Library's acquisition and use of films. This contract was then accepted by the other major companies and remains the basis of its operation. It governs the acquisition at print cost of new prints on 35mm and 16mm and strictly controls their use thereafter.

The Film Library could hence begin seriously to build up a series of programs which would furnish material for a study of motion pictures. As we hoped to circulate such programs to colleges and other educational institutions, we started off with a sort of test-case by giving a special program at Haverford College in Pennsylvania (my husband's *alma mater.*) This consisted of *The Great Train Robbery, Caligari,* Deslav's *Marche des Machines* and an English short on the life of a plant which—in speeded-up motion—writhed in wholly fascinating coils. All this seemed valid and enjoyable to its audience and encouraged us greatly,* for indeed now one was faced with selecting and assembling much material long unseen. Can anyone today realize the anguish and thrill of ordering unseen, paying for, and then projecting a new print from the ten- or twenty-year-old negative of a movie mostly forgotten by all but crazy fans? Was one's memory reliable? Would students respond suitably?

Work went ahead wonderfully: among other features requested *A Fool There Was* came in from Fox, with its preposterous but memorable first "vamp," but not less crude than *The Jazz Singer* from Warner Brothers, which, though indubitably a sound-film, amazed us by containing only two brief sequences in which Jolson actually spoke or sang. This everyone had forgotten: so, in a sense, we became archaeologists and among the first and happiest of film students. The "collection" grew apace and promised soon to comprise the all-essential major works of D. W. Griffith; programs were being formulated and put into circulation.

Now it seemed advisable to look abroad: American films, though predominant, were not all. Since 1895, turn by turn, France and England, then Denmark, Italy, Sweden, Germany and Russia had richly contributed to the corpus of cinematography. In May 1936 we therefore left for Europe, with great hopes and many visas but not a little trepidation. This crazy venture proved to be timely.

Charles and Elsa Laughton met the boat at Southampton and, after a convivial evening with them in the bosky English countryside (nightingales burbled madly in the darkness, cuckoos shrieked at dawn), took us on to a London momentarily in a state of euphoria occasioned annually by the Derby races, and by Whitsuntide weekend. If "everyone" was out of town, the telephone worked and it was not difficult to set up a dense series of rendezvous for the coming week: after all, this *was* home and I knew the ropes.

Most heartening was the discovery that an enthusiasm like our own had, the previous year, given birth to the British Film Institute, with roughly the same objectives as the Film Library. The rest was like falling off a log. Meetings took place with the Institute's governors and with Ernest Lindgren, its archivist, with whom the Film Library has maintained cordial relations and an exchange of films and cognate material since. Old acquaintances like Michael Balcon

*Among the students who organized this evening was Richard Griffith, later a member of the Film Library staff and now the film historian.

and John Grierson rallied round while all went easily with new ones such as Cavalcanti and Len Lye. All agreed to let us have films.

Next to Paris by ferry and Golden Arrow, on which we seemed to be the only passengers, for France was in the thick of a momentous General Strike. (Indeed, someone at the American Embassy in London had warned us not to venture there.) Sitting on the roofs of idle factories marked in red paint with hammers and sickles, workmen waved as the train went by. In Paris it was agony to get a taxi, the hotel employees were few and seemed numb, the telephone did not work and most restaurants and cafés were shut. Nevertheless there was a curious stir of nonchalance and gaiety, although the situation was forcedly far from pleasing everyone. It appeared inevitable and rather stimulating to the many people we had to see. I do not recall now exactly how it was managed, except that chaps from the travel bureau drove us in their cars to appointments (there was no other transportation) but it was easy to get in touch, and work began well. Jean Benoit-Lévy became our *compère*. René Clair gave us invaluable advice and a splendid dinner: shortly afterwards we found ourselves in the hands of Yves Chataigneau, then attaché of superlative qualities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On his and Benoit-Lévy's advice, we boldly decided to hold a press reception at the Hotel Crillon for which, miraculously, the strike ended just in the nick of time. This occasion was not only as sparkling as the champagne offered to the guests, but was in fact a real short-cut. The prospect of obtaining films from both Gaumont and Pathé opened; Man Ray and Fernand Léger gave us films; many others were promised. Most important of all was the opportunity of meeting a highly individual young man, Henri Langlois, who had (again the happy coincidence) the previous year been enabled to create the Cinémathéque Française—yet another enterprise similar to our own. With him, as with Ivor Montagu in the past, rapport was immediate and mutual cooperation with an exchange of films a foregone thing.

Encouraged if exhausted, we left for a couple of days' repose in tranquil Luxembourg, where I ate the best dinner of a lifetime, accompanied by a Corton 1919 worth dying for. Loins girded, on we went by train to Berlin and not without apprehension—no one could have been unaware of the political situation there. If I believed in astrology, I would say that, once again, there was a fortunate conjunction of stars. The imminence of the 1936 Olympics had rendered foreign visitors especially welcome. As ours was a "cultural mission," it proved feasible to latch on quickly to an open-minded member of the German Foreign Office and, through him, to make contact with the appropriate official at the Reichsfilmarchiv, itself under the aegis of Dr. Goebbels's Ministry of Enlightment and Culture, which controlled all and everything to do with cinema. A request for films representing a cross-section of German film history was presented and granted in principle, without anyone's seeming aware that most of the films on our list had been made by men then in exile. (We had talked to Korda and to Pommer in London, to Pabst in Paris.) The basis of agreement reached here was not one of exchange, but on payment of print cost of material to be acquired. I do not say that the going was other than tricky: we did not speak German and somehow never seemed to understand that it was the custom to wave one's right arm and vociferate "Heil Hitler" instead of "Good Morning." Yet everything we asked for was actually granted, with the exception of *The Blue Angel* and the reason for this—which we guessed—we did not enquire. One learns a little diplomacy by contagion. And in between endless meetings and interviews, we escaped to the Zoo to visit a magnificent sea-elephant named Roland and to get some fresh air.

So, after a brief whirl in a Warsaw that no longer exists—faded elegance, droshkys and Jan Kiepura—away across endless plains dotted with solemn storks and wild horses, towards the *terra incognita* of the USSR.

At the Russian frontier there was a hitch. Courteous but unsmiling uniformed persons at

Customs motioned us aside while removing from my suitcase a bundle of mimeographed handouts, carefully prepared in Russian in New York, as a "statement of purpose." There was telephoning to Moscow: it looked as though our blurb were being read out to someone there. Thoughts of Tchekhov, of *Boris Godounov* and the Russian ballet, of masterly new Soviet films sustained me, and it only struck me later that our dim-witted little "statement" might have looked like some kind of subversive literature. While waiting, I was also diverted by watching a gang of stalwart women heaving at railroad ties on the line, while their male foreman in a Tolstoi shirt lolled on the enbankment, playing a sort of ukelele. Finally, the mimeographed papers having been confiscated, we were on a Soviet train, being given glasses of tea, en route for Moscow with joy.

Thanks once more to the forethought of Alfred Barr, we were met at the station by a young American who had been studying with Eisenstein for some time—Jay Leyda, without whose untiring help as counsellor, interpreter, and guide this part of the mission would certainly have been fruitless. Too long now to trace the labyrinthine path we followed on this part of the film hunt, from VOX (tourist center) to INTORGKINO (film business) to NIS (Film School). The appropriate bureaucrats seen were pleasant enough but appeared incredulous that our Museum could exist without being a government institution or that the film industry would let us have films if no law compelled them to do so. They were also quite unable to do anything concrete for the Film Library without consent from on high. Now we had, on arriving, presented a letter of introduction from the Soviet Ambassador in Washington, Troyanovsky, to one Shumiatsky, big shot in charge of all Soviet film affairs. While awaiting his response, we did as much sight-seeing as possible on foot in the blazing heat and wished we could speak to the nice friendly-seeming people on the streets and at the huge Park of Culture and Rest. Otherwise we shuttled between our old-fashioned Savoy Hotel and the American Embassy—in this case a real home away from home. Eventually the acting Ambassador put in an official request for us to be received by Shumiatsky and when no response came, became rather nettled.

Several other kind cooks attempted to stir the broth, though Walter Duranty said we were mad to hope to cut through the red tape in anything under three months. This was not, in any case, a peculiarly happy moment to have chosen for a visit, as oncoming events and the first "purges" were soon to show. My diary at this point moans plaintively: "discouraged and miserable and footsore."

Eisenstein, who was not in high favor at the time, tried hard to be consoling—never did I dream that so many sorts and sizes of caviar existed as he and his aide, Attesheva, spread for us on his supper table. And there at his flat we met the American journalist, Louis Fischer who, on learning our plight, telephoned to someone at the Foreign Office. This intervention coincided with a fairly insistent call from our Embassy to the same quarter. Mystery as to what really clinched things, but at this point a singularly urbane diplomat from that same Foreign Office emerged into our ken, and finally got us the real okay to obtain some Russian films, notably *Mother, Fragment of an Empire,* and the promise of others. It is with pleasure that I record that these did eventually arrive in New York: but with a wry grimace I record that, of course, we never did see Shumiatsky.

In better spirits now, we lit out for Leningrad and its less rigid atmosphere. There we communed with Pudovkin (also not greatly in favor then) as well as with well-considered younger men like Kozintsev and Trauberg and the Vassiliev brothers. A day's outing to Tsarskoie-Selo with its fabulous mass of successive imperial residences preceded our hopping on by train to hospitable Helsinki for another brace of days' repose before leaving by air for Stockholm. I had lost seven pounds' weight since London.

Nothing in Sweden was a problem, unless perhaps the temptations offered by Swedish

hospitality during the long "white nights" of summer. Everything cinematographic was in the hands of the Svenskfilmindustrie where everything that we asked for was graciously granted, from *Atonement of Gosta Berling* onwards. As time was passing rapidly, the next item on the program was a quick return through Berlin and Paris to pick up, or get dispatched, the trophies obtained there: and soon we were back in the New York office at the end of a strenuous but rewarding *grand tour.*

Mountains of toil confronted us, especially in studying and preparing the splendid material now flowing in steadily. I will only note in passing our heroic struggles to run an extension course on the cinema for Columbia University but recall vividly a lecture given by Wystan Auden, who writhed fearfully and was spellbinding about his work on *Night Mail.* A great feather in the Film Library's cap was gained through another lecture given by Erwin Panofsky—the art expert who adorned Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies rather as Einstein did in another field. The fact that Panofsky had evidently long studied and esteemed movies, that he cited the pictures of Greta Garbo and Buster Keaton as familiarly and learnedly as he customarily referred to mediaeval paintings, really made a dent. What snob could venture now to doubt that films *were* art? Up till then I suspect that many aesthetes may have cast a dubious eye at my choice of films for the collection and might indeed have preferred one confined more closely to purely experimental and "art" films.

1937 and 1938 sped past amidst hard work and other preoccupations of which the increasingly onerous one became that of finance for the Museum as a whole and its film section in particular. An effort to obtain support from the industry wove itself into a heart-breaking tangle not, unhappily, resolved by frantic efforts (in Hollywood again) to get a movie produced on the romantic theme of movie history, this to be circulated jointly by all the companies for our benefit. Despite the most generous cooperation of scads of people—from David Selznick through W. S. Van Dyke to Zanuck—this all came to nothing, as might indeed have been foreseen. What did happen was that in 1939 the March of Time issued *The Movies March On* with some cooperation from us.

Of the war years let it be said briefly that they were hectic in the extreme, with reduced staff and many special projects undertaken. There was one concerning the content of current films for the Library of Congress; another with which the name of Seigfried Kracauer will be remembered for its study of German psychology as revealed in films; and yet another for the Co-Ordinator of Inter-American Affairs on which Luis Buñuel and his team worked diligently on Spanish and Portuguese versions of American documentary films for exhibition in Latin America. It must have been the Signal Corps, or at any rate something to do with the U.S. Army which, evening after evening, brought up to my projection room, in rather dazzling uniforms, Colonel Frank Capra, Major Anatole Litvak, Colonel John Huston, Lt. Leonard Spiegelgass, and sometimes dear Robert Flaherty (in mufti) to scrutinize miles of film material in preparation for the making of the "Why We Fight" series. This was a good effort on everyone's part and could have been undertaken nowhere else, though I will admit that I feel tired now just remembering what work all these projects entailed—what endless human contacts, projection schedules, book-keeping, what visits from FBI men and the unmentionable red tape now right on the doorstep.

It is a refreshment to revert, in conclusion, to the happiest event that ever marked the Film Library's beginnings. This took place towards the end of 1939—I refer to the opening of the Museum of Modern Art's new building, always on the 53rd Street site but greatly and handsomely enlarged. Here at last the Film Library could be housed properly and no longer as an orphan. Who could fail to realize the whole staff's delight upon moving into spacious offices with efficient film-handling facilities and a perfect gem of a working projection-room right at hand? Nor was this all. As everyone who has visited it knows, down below the Museum's galleries and the Cézannes and the de Koon-

ings, there was built a real and admirably equipped 498-seat movie theater. All these years since, films have been thrown daily on to its screen, as a tribute to the seventh art and a continual source of pleasure and education. I nearly choked with excitement when the first program was given there and never stole down afterwards without being intensely moved by pride and thankfulness. And, looking back now to those days so long ago and far away, and in spite of or to explain a little grumbling, I hear inwardly the words from an old hymn: "That such a light affliction should win so great a prize."

CHIDANANDA DAS GUPTA

Indian Cinema Today

The film industry of India is, depending upon which statistics you emphasize, the second, third, or fourth largest in the world. Moreover, films have been made in India since the earliest decade of the art. How then do we explain the fact that—aside from the films of Satyajit Ray—Indian films have been unable to obtain attention in the world film scene? And what are the prospects, in the new nation that has been growing up since independence from Britain, for the curiously chaotic Indian film industry? This article, by a well-known Indian critic, film-society official, and film-maker, attempts to sketch answers to such questions.

"We must put everything into the cinema," says Jean-Luc Godard, the high priest of modern cinema. And his films leapfrog from real life to painting, literature, advertising, science, politics—connecting it all less and less by story links, and more and more by the unifying force of the film-maker's mind, turning narrative, "objective" cinema into a direct personal communication between the film-maker and his audience. But this "putting everything into the cinema" is only made possible by the film-maker's awareness of the many past forms both of cinema and of other arts, and his sense of the constantly developing interrelations of art, history, literature, science. Only this can give him an awareness of the possibilities of the cinema, because the cinema is a medium distilled out of previous modes of expression synthesized by science. Yet, so far, only a tiny segment of India lives in the scientific ambience of the twentieth century; the rest is one enormous anachronism struggling to leap into the present.

Those of us who would like to see Indian cinema on the sophisticated level of films from the West (or Japan) tend to forget that the forces weighing down Indian cinema are special and massive. Even the most avant-garde section of the Indian film industry is still subject to crushing pressures—from both past and present.

ings, there was built a real and admirably equipped 498-seat movie theater. All these years since, films have been thrown daily on to its screen, as a tribute to the seventh art and a continual source of pleasure and education. I nearly choked with excitement when the first program was given there and never stole down afterwards without being intensely moved by pride and thankfulness. And, looking back now to those days so long ago and far away, and in spite of or to explain a little grumbling, I hear inwardly the words from an old hymn: "That such a light affliction should win so great a prize."

CHIDANANDA DAS GUPTA

Indian Cinema Today

The film industry of India is, depending upon which statistics you emphasize, the second, third, or fourth largest in the world. Moreover, films have been made in India since the earliest decade of the art. How then do we explain the fact that—aside from the films of Satyajit Ray—Indian films have been unable to obtain attention in the world film scene? And what are the prospects, in the new nation that has been growing up since independence from Britain, for the curiously chaotic Indian film industry? This article, by a well-known Indian critic, film-society official, and film-maker, attempts to sketch answers to such questions.

"We must put everything into the cinema," says Jean-Luc Godard, the high priest of modern cinema. And his films leapfrog from real life to painting, literature, advertising, science, politics—connecting it all less and less by story links, and more and more by the unifying force of the film-maker's mind, turning narrative, "objective" cinema into a direct personal communication between the film-maker and his audience. But this "putting everything into the cinema" is only made possible by the film-maker's awareness of the many past forms both of cinema and of other arts, and his sense of the constantly developing interrelations of art, history, literature, science. Only this can give him an awareness of the possibilities of the cinema, because the cinema is a medium distilled out of previous modes of expression synthesized by science. Yet, so far, only a tiny segment of India lives in the scientific ambience of the twentieth century; the rest is one enormous anachronism struggling to leap into the present.

Those of us who would like to see Indian cinema on the sophisticated level of films from the West (or Japan) tend to forget that the forces weighing down Indian cinema are special and massive. Even the most avant-garde section of the Indian film industry is still subject to crushing pressures—from both past and present.

The absorption of the twentieth-century medium of the cinema, born and developed in industrially advanced countries, into India's classical and folk culture presents enormous problems. India is one country, but has over 800 "mother tongues"; 16 languages with scripts of their own are recognized in the constitution; the diversity in religions, races, costumes, customs, food habits, looks and outlooks, cultural backgrounds is greater than within the entirety of Western civilization. The advanced middle class is one of the most liberal-minded in the world. But some tribal people still live in the neolithic age; other groups exist, as it were, in medieval times. Even the educated, once inside their homes, often go back centuries, leaving the modern world in the office and the drawingroom; they use the products of science without allowing science itself to penetrate their beings and change the structure of their minds. In India the industrial revolution began barely twenty years ago; neither its pace nor its influence is yet adequate to give the cinema—a product of science and technology—a sense of belonging to the times. Yet an average of 300 full-length features were produced and released in the last three years by 61 studios, 39 laboratories, 1,000 producers, and 1,200 distributors; films were shown in 6,000-odd theaters to an audience of more than two billion a year—the fourth largest in the world. There are films for nationwide or "all-India" distribution made in Bombay and Madras (in Hindi or its variant Hindustani) and there are regional films made in many states—of which the most numerous are the Bengali, well-known for Satyajit Ray.

For more than a century, progress in India has been the outcome of a successful synthesis of Indian tradition with a Western education in the sciences and the humanities. But this culture, brought about by Tagore, Gandhi, and Nehru, is the culture of the advanced middle class; it still leaves out the overwhelming majority of the population to whom the twentieth century and its products are only a necessary evil to be lamented. In the popular mind, you resist this *Kaliyuga* (evil eon) by mentally withholding yourself from its contamination or you are corrupted and fall from grace as defined by tradition.

Even the railway train and the radio are still unconnected facts—things that exist and must be used, but without any consciousness of where they came from or how. Science has only confused the Indian villager's philosophy and his pattern of living. The products of science have only brought vulgarity into his existence. This lack of integration between the disparate aspects of life is a constant source of vulgarity in social manifestations and in so-called cultural phenomena—the vulgarity of synthetic, folksy art, of the garish painting of ancient temples, of the harshness of naked fluorescent tube lights, of the sons of 5-year-plan contractors playing transistors under massive banyan trees, of dignified old peasants breaking into an ugly trot to cross city streets.

With Independence came the stimulation of industrial growth, the opening up of communications (without a corresponding broadening of education), population pressures, rising prices: these ugly features of a colonial subcivilization have, instead of diminishing, multiplied themselves. Independence has lifted the cultural disciplines of anti-British politics and let loose many disparate cultural tendencies. The cultural leadership of the country has been too inadequate to bring to the masses the same synthesis between East and West which people like Tagore and Nehru brought to the advanced middle class. The failure to absorb the cinema into the Indian tradition is only a part of this larger failure.

Yet the breakdown of folk culture, the rise of an uneducated industrial working class coming into money, of middlemen who thrive on government spending, the increasing outward conformity of the *nouveaux riches* to a vulgar pseudo-Western pattern (in the absence of any other pattern), the increased mixing between men and women—all this has created the need for an entertainment formula that can cater to an increasingly common set of denominators.

The Hindi (i.e., all-India) film formula not only caters to these denominators, but also helps to create and consolidate them, giving its public certain terms of reference for its cultural adjustment, no matter how low the level of that culture and adjustment may be. It thus supplies a kind of cultural leadership, and reinforces some of the unifying tendencies in our social and economic changes. It provides an inferior alternative to the valid cultural leadership which has not emerged because of the hiatus between the intelligentsia, to which the leaders belong, and the masses—many of them living in remote corners of the country. One cold spring morning in Manali (7,000 feet up in the northwestern foothills of the Himalayas) I heard a woman's voice softly singing a Hindi film song outside my window. I went out to investigate and met a family which crosses the 14,000-foot Rohtang Pass every spring, from Lahaul Valley on the Tibet border, to seek work on this side. Every spring they go to Kulu

The All-India film in full flower.

to the cinema there, and the wife was singing a song from a film she had seen the previous year. For her, the experience of a Hindi film once a year was a tiny window on the world beyond the Rohtang Pass.

The basic ingredients in the all-India film for the laborer from Lahaul as well as the half-educated petty bourgeois comprise not only an operatic assembly of all possible spectacles, sentiments, melodrama, music and dancing, but a mix of these calculated to appeal to the righteous inertia of the audience. In the absence of any other explanation of technological phenomena, it is the Hindi film which holds forth: "Look at the Twentieth Century, full of night clubs and drinking, smoking, bikini-clad women sinfully enjoying themselves in fast cars and mixed parties; how right you are in condemning them—in the end everyone must go back to the traditional patterns of devotion to God, to parents, to village life, or be damned forever." This answer does not try to explain; it merely echoes the natural fear which traditional people have of anything new, anything they do not understand. The films thus give reassurance to the "family audience" which is the mainstay of the film industry. They pander to the puritanism developed in the dark pre-British period of superstition and isolationism, aided and abetted by Christian missionary teaching of the British period. They satisfy the common man's curiosity regarding the ways of the new times but do not explain them. They not only do not try to make him think; they do everything possible to stop him from thinking. Film landscapes change weirdly from Bombay to Tokyo or Delhi to Honolulu, airplanes land and big cars whiz past; the story has no logic, but the songs are delectable, the heroines glamorous, the dances carry the viewer off his feet. Yet in the end he has not sinned himself; like the Code-supervised American moviegoer of yore, he has merely inspected the sins of others before condemning them. The hero with whom he identifies has returned to his true love, the village belle, and renounced the city siren. Sin belongs to the West; virtue to India. Between the two Sharmila Tagores —one a cabaret dancer and the other a demurely Indian damsel—of *Evening in Paris,* no compromise, no middle tones are possible. The more the *nouveaux riches* rock and roll or twist and shake in blue jeans, the deeper becomes the schizophrenia between modernity and tradition in the Indian cinema. The all-India film thus paradoxically becomes the most effective obstacle against the development

of a positive attitude towards technological progress, towards a synthesis of tradition with modernity for a future pattern of living.

If India's course today is still being guided by the Tagore-Nehru dream of an East-West synthesis, the all-India film actively prevents the filtering down of that dream from the advanced middle class to the wider base of the population. It is thus a conformist, reactionary film, out to prevent social revolution rather than to encourage it. In this conformism, the censorship helps. You can criticize the prime minister in the Indian press but not in films. Occasionally when we see a corrupt policeman in a film, we are overjoyed by the liberality of the censors. It is impossible in films to go openly against the basic attitudes of the Establishment. Not only in prudery on sex but in hypocrisy on all possible things, the cinema must conform. It therefore undermines the ideas of the Establishment indirectly, but effectively.

The form of this cinema follows its content. In India film has largely been a receptacle for the mixing together of other media, rather than a medium in itself. Today's Hindi cinema lacks no acting talent; but it is not meant to be used. What passes for acting is a game between the director and the audience played with well-established types—the crying mother, the doting father, the dancing, singing, dewy-eyed heroine, the sad-faced or epileptic hero, the comic, the precocious child—in which a few mannerisms of the actor are enough for the audience to take the details for granted, so that one can proceed quickly to the climax at which someone will burst into song or dance. It is not as if serious acting or storytelling is suddenly interrupted by a song; the "action" is in fact merely a preparation for the song. Similarly the situations are stock situations, with stock responses too readymade to require any exploration of why or how something has happened; the sooner the rest of the action springing from a situation (in a night club, a swimming party, a sentimental scene between father and daughter) can be taken for granted, the better. The films are long, as folk entertainment has always been; the opposition between good and evil is sharp, as it has always been in the epics and legends. Some of the traditional characteristics of folk entertainment have been cleverly exploited to promote the opposite of the harmony with the environment which such entertainment achieved.

Today the songs are competently written, composed, and sung, as in *Sangam* (or *Union*)—at intolerably high pitch for my ears but loudly enough to reach up to the Lahaul Valley; the dances are smartly executed, as in *Anita*; the girls are pretty (too many to name); the color is good, the sets well-designed, as in *Palki* (*Palanquin*); the locations well-selected (*Sangam*); the fights convincing, as in *Gunga Jumna* (the names of two rivers); the censor-deceiving sex-appeal cunningly contrived (*Anita*). The Hindi cinema has not only produced a pop culture, but pop songs which are comparable in rhythm, melody, and verve to those of any country: an effective concoction made of borrowings from classical and folk backgrounds, even Tagore songs and Western music. The dancing is similarly culled from all conceivable styles but gells into the sprightly form of Vaijayanthimala (a Southern dancing star), leaving no dull moment to be dedicated to thought. But in spite of its competence and its verve, it is neither Indian, nor cinema.

Yet with the erosion of the traditional forms of folk entertainment and the trek into the cities in search of employment, this cinema (in the absence of television) quickly established itself as the only diversion of the public—fulfilling its diverse needs for drama, music, farce, dancing, escape into illusions of high living, into fantastic dreams of sin and modernity from which to return to the daily grind.

The sixties found the Hindi cinema spiralling up in costs as it expanded in spectacle; diseases which had been inherent in the system since the war broke out into a first-class crisis when 60 out of 70 Bombay films, each costing over half a million dollars, failed at the box office in 1967. Well over 60% of the production costs went to meet the fees of the stars. With each star acting in several films at the same time, the annual income of some of them (in a country with an average per capita income of some $50 a year) is higher than that of the top Hollywood stars. Since the money is "black" and mostly paid under the counter, the Indian star's income-tax worries are rather less than those of his Hollywood counterpart. No wonder the films which are so aptly described by journalists as the "vehicles" of these stars are unreal from start to finish.

"Black money" originated during the scarcities of the wartime years, when the spoils of large-scale profiteering stayed outside the banks; it has remained there ever since. An industry which costs more in services than in goods offered an excellent area for this unaccounted and untaxed wealth to hide and multiply. The moneybags offered fantastic sums to the stars to wean them away from the studios, which were soon forced to close down. Since then, Indian production has been completely "in-

dependent" everywhere except the South. "Independents" dependent on stars are hardly likely to be able to hold their own against them. Now the inevitable has happened. The economics of the blockbuster have over-reached the economic potential of the single formula, however perfect. In imitating Hollywood, the mass film in India has landed itself in a star system without studio control, formula film-making without Hollywood's variety of formulas, an annual investment of some 85 million dollars without Hollywood's audience research or other organizational safeguards.

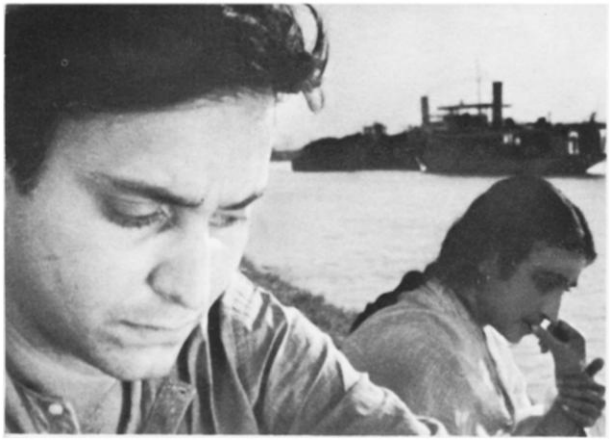
The trouble with the Hindi cinema is not that it is commercial; all film industries in the world, including the state-owned ones, are commercial because they cannot go on throwing away money on films which people do not want to see. The trouble is that other film industries do two things that the Hindi cinema does not (for the simple reason that it is incapable): produce films at many levels ranging from pure art to pure commerce, and occasionally bowl over the art critic and the box office with the same film. Diligently, the Hindi cinema has perfected its one and only formula. It has had no John Ford turning out Westerns, no Milestone making memorable war films, no Hitchcock to hold us in thrall, no Minnelli, no Donen to make it by music alone. It has no genres. It is impossible to make, in our national cinema, anything like *Judgment at Nuremberg* or *Advise and Consent* or *The Best Man* although our guru has been Hollywood. It makes no adult films for the literate middle class. It is idle to draw much comfort from Basu Bhattacharya's *Teesri Kasam (The Third Vow)* or *Uski Kahani (Her Tale)* or Hrishikesh Mukherjee's *Anupama* (name of a girl); in any case these films are significant *only* in the context of the Hindi cinema. All that they may mean in the end is the reappearance of some sort of middle-class film on the Hindi market. Even with the fullest freedom, what was the net achievement of such stalwart directors as Shantaram or Bimal Roy? Shantaram had some honest intentions, some cinematic gimmicks wrapped up in execrable taste; his *Jhanak Jhanak (Ankle Bells Tinkle)* and *Shakuntala* (heroine of a Sanskrit play) have done as much harm to Indian cinema as Robi Barmas's naturalism did to Indian painting. Bimal Roy, except in the first half of *Do Bigha Zamin (Two Acres of Land)* stayed with melodrama and sentimentality in slightly better taste. In Raj Kapoor's *Sangam* the audience is asked to believe that two adult men, whose dedication to friendship is almost pathological, take twenty reels to find out

Village India as portrayed in the all-India film. *Ramu Kariat's* CHEMMEEN.

that they are in love with the same girl. Traditionally, narrative literature has asked for the suspension of disbelief; the Kapoorian phantasmagoria demands the total surrender of the rational part of man, leaving the animal staring dumbly at helicopters and locations in Europe. The problem is not one of freedom; it is one of cynicism, ignorance, and cultural underdevelopment. That is why, when it decides to be good or tries to be "art," Hindi cinema is dreadfully self-conscious, didactic, and pretentious.

The regional film, as we shall see, has its roots, its sense of identity; it tends to underplay the common factors arising in the country and stresses elements of regional tradition with some pride and nostalgia. In the all-India film, no male character except the villain can wear Indian costume; in the regional film almost the opposite is true. The regional film likewise shows more of rural and urban lower-middle-class life. The all-India film, anxious to avoid pronouncedly regional characteristics in its search for wide acceptability, avoids these and weaves its fancies round high-income brackets where Westernized uniformity is more easily available. There is thus a greater sense of reality and cultural integrity in the regional film; it is Indian, even when it is not cinema. Its main concerns are with social problems, as in literature.

The position was much the same with the Hindi film until the war. In the days of Bombay talkies and films like *Achut Kanya (Untouchable Girl)* or *Jivan Prabhat (The Dawn of Life)*, the attitudes of the Bombay film (or the Madras Hindi film) and the Bengali film from Calcutta were more or less the same. They shared the social reformist zeal of the advanced middle class of those times, as much as literature or journalism. The evils of caste, the right to love before marriage, the tragic taboo



Mrinal Sen's PUNASCHA, *with Soumitra Chatterjee.*

against widow remarriage, ideas of individualism, secularism, and democracy provided the subject matter of most films whether in regional languages or in Hindi. The form was by no means cinematic but the content was definitely Indian. It was much closer to the ideals of the country's leadership than today.

The shortages of the war not only brought about "black money," high star fees, and the end of studio production, but initiated a profound change in the character of the audience of the Hindi cinema. With the war-time emphasis on production began the rise of the industrial working class. In independent India the process was further emphasized with labor legislation and encouragement of trade unionism. But industry made progress out of all proportion to education, whose standards have in fact declined with the population pressure. In comparison to the landless laborer whose name is legion, the industrial working class became a privileged minority. In this it became bracketed with other *nouveau riche* sections of society, such as those that bag the contracts and subcontracts of the massive five-year plans. To these were added, in the sixties, the dealers in food grains and the big and the middle farmers who made killings during the food shortages. In other words, the Hindi cinema after the war found itself forced to address its appeal to a culturally impoverished *nouveau riche* audience, increasingly disoriented from the cultural ambitions of new India and falling back on a schizophrenic solution of being extremely conservative inside and outwardly ultramodern. The educated minority in the Hindi-speaking areas accepted this cinema as much as the masses, in the absence of an alternative. With this change in the nature of the audience, the Hindi cinema emerged as the all-India cinema by virtue of the position of Hindi as the lingua franca of the country; and the get-rich-quick financiers turned away from social zeal to a cynical-conformist formula of Westernized sin-parade ending in the triumph of tradition.

Inevitably, due to the economics of scale and the spread of new "all-India" denominators, the regional cinemas receded before the impact of the Hindi film. Color filming has become virtually impossible in Bengal, for instance. Even Satyajit Ray was forced to drop his color plans and make his latest film *Goopi Gain Bagha Bain* (based on a fantasy by his grandfather) in black and white. But the film audience in Bengal has remained basically middle class and by and large educated. This is more or less true of all regional cinemas, and gives them greater artistic potential than the all-India field, as we have seen in the break-through of Satyajit Ray, who reflected a resolution of our cultural dilemmas not in terms of its lowest common denominators, but its highest. Ray translated the value world of Tagore into the content and technique of advanced cinema and tried to extend it to contemporary, post-Tagore situations as well. This he was able to do with success, not because the Western world could recognize in it the signposts of India's evolution into the modern world, but because he was able to attract an audience—a fairly sophisticated middle-class audience—on his home ground in Bengal. Here was the Tagore-Nehru dream of a new Indian identity—enshrined in the law and official goals of the country yet repudiated by the mass cinema—at its best.

But Ray's position in India is not just unique; it is one of splendid isolation. Although his genius is recognized not only by intellectuals but by the average audience in Bengal and by the film industry all over the country, his influence, in relation to his reputation, must be considered negligible. In a characteristically Indian way, film-makers have put him on a pedestal for admiration from a safe distance. He is an exception, a phenomenon, an object of pride for India like the Konarak temple or Benares textiles. Film-makers think of modelling their work on his no more than they think of building a Taj Mahal to live in. The juggernaut of Indian cinema grinds on.

The Marathi cinema, the only other considerable regional cinema outside the South, was fatally weakened by the expanding Hindi film audience; if it still exists today, it is not due to its inherent strength but to governmental oxygen which keeps it breathing.

It is only at the level of art that the regional film can survive, as the Bengali film has done so far. If

Satyajit Ray and other new film-makers did not emerge, the Bengali film would go the way of the Marathi. The only other and somewhat doubtful prescription, which is being tried by some today, is to rouse regional passions and summon them to the aid of the local film. Even this, like the governmental rescue operation, can at best be temporary and partial aid in the recovery. The average Bengali, or any other regional film imitating the all-India pattern or being nostalgic in a heavy-handed, namby-pamby way, is becoming as unbearable to the average audience as it has always been to the sophisticated. In fact the Bengali film enjoys an undeservedly high reputation because of a few artistic successes; the average Bengali film remains a dreadfully dull opiate for a sleepy middle class. For the more contemporary-minded viewer, some films do keep appearing which reflect his restlessness, but the difference between these and the rest seems unbridgeable. The films of Ritwik Ghatak, who has not done anything since *Subarnarekha* (the name of a river in West Bengal), Mrinal Sen, whose *Akash Kusum (Up in the Clouds)* was a box-office failure and made him seek distinction in Oriya in his brilliant *Matira Manisha (Child of the Earth)*, not to speak of Satyajit Ray who made the latest of a series of masterpiece and near-masterpieces with *Charulata*, are far removed from the average Bengali product. Directors like Tapan Sinha and Tarun Majumdar (also to a lesser extent Arup Guha Thakurta and Hari Sadhan Das Gupta) have brought good taste and competent story-telling to present-day Bengali cinema, whereas others have faded away after brief spells of "experiment" whose purpose has in some cases been vague even to themselves—notably Rajen Tarafder in *Ganga*, Barin Saha in *Tero Nadir Parey (Beyond Thirteen Rivers)*, Purnendu Patrea in *Swapna Niye (Of Man's Dreams)*. Pushed to the wall, the Bengali cinema is fighting back hard, trying to find in box office-cum-art what it cannot in terms of the lavishness and sprightliness of Hindi film. In Tarun Majumdar's *Balika Bodhu (Child Bride)* or Arundhati Devi's *Chhuti (Vacation)* it has absorbed something of the creative techniques of Ray, Ghatak and Sen, and turned it into the routine of mediocre poets and the stuff of the box office. The leadership of culture which lay for some ten years in the domain of the cinema is fast moving into the amateur theater, which now provides greater freedom to the artist.

The states of Assam and Orissa have not yet done anything to save themselves from the future pressures of the all-India film either in terms of solid box-office foundations or the escape route of art. The Oriya audience completely rejected Mrinal Sen's *Matira Manisha*—imaginative, sensitively photographed and acted, and directed with a big heart—because it does not conform to its source, a novel; obviously the Oriyas are not yet ready for the sophistications of the film medium, and must stick to the copy book of the filmed theater. I have no doubt that they will rediscover the film after ten years of industrial development.

Ritwik Ghatak's KOMAL GANDHAR.

Madras made its dent into Bombay's monopoly of the Hindi market as early as 1948 with S. S. Vasan's *Chandralekha* (a woman's name); although South India provides a large enough audience to sustain a regional cinema, it has made regular forays outside its natural boundaries and Southern films still appear on the all-India screen. The "common" factors are developing here too, enabling many Tamil films to come out in Hindi versions to compete—often successfully—with the all-India film. The fact that South India has something of a unity of its own, despite the existence of many languages, has given its regional film a wider audience than the Oriya, Assamese, or Bengali film whose audience is virtually confined to its own linguistic area. Telegu (state of Andhra, middle south-East) actors appear often in Tamil (state of Madras, deep South-East), Malayalam (state of Kerala, deep South-West) films get easily shown in Madras, the Kanarese (state of Mysore, middle middle South) film is more easily understood in Andhra than is the case with films in the North Indian languages. Binding them together, however, is the formula of song-dance-melodrama in which reality is of little consequence. This formula precludes the cinema of narrative illusion; it is unabashed spectacle, vulgarized but closer to traditions of popular variety shows than to literature or drama. Even its music and dance are breaking out of the tradition of the

Satyajit Ray's CHARULATA.

Carnatic system and picking up the postures of the Hindi cinema of Bombay. It is only in superficialities that it maintains some semblance of regionalism.

There have been minor exceptions to this; D. Jayakantan has shown a superior sensibility for literary-dramatic values (more than cinematic ones) in *Unnaipol Oruvan (In the Jeweler's Balance).* The Malayali cinema, always of a more literary nature than the Tamil, has thrown up over-rated, but above-the-local-average films like *Neelakuvil,* jointly directed by Ramu Kariat and P. Bhaskaran, on untouchability and unmarried motherhood. The Malayali cinema, like the Bengali and Marathi, has remained occupied with social problems—a concern which the Tamil cinema abandoned long ago in order to catch up with the all-India box office. The work of the mildly interesting South Indian directors has sometimes been praised beyond all proportion because of its rarity and because of the general lack of understanding of the film medium or its achievements in other countries and periods. The malaise here is worse than the hero worship of the late P. C. Barua in Bengal and of Shantaram in Maharastra as geniuses of the cinema—as if their work was comparable to that of Eisenstein or Dreyer, Ford or Renoir.

The fact is that although some of these directors and films have borne a slight stamp of individuality, an ardor for a good cause, snatches of realism and touches of cinema, even some emotional power within their own notions of drama, they never really left the framework of the filmed theater and the variety show; at best they groped towards the language of the cinema. Discussing nine South Indian social films of 1964 which received regional awards from the Government of India, S. Krishnaswamy wrote: "In nearly all the nine films, the climax is developed with illness, death or accident. Five have hospital scenes, one has a scene of chronic illness building up to a climax, and the three others feature suicide, murder and death by accident. The doctor is a favorite character. Disputes are resolved by offering blood to the dying, sympathy created by being in bed."

Of the background music he says: "You hear the same set of notes in similar situations on the screen, as though a common track is used from a music library." And finally of D. Jayakantan's *Unnaipol Oruvan (In the Jeweler's Balance):* "It is conceived more as a drama than as a screenplay. It conveys less by vision than by words. Except for one, the performances are superb, the material surroundings are much less convincing than the people themselves. The art direction is unimaginative, photography uneven, and editing poorly conceived . . . Jayakanthan has not produced an outstanding film, but it is a milestone in southern film history." ("Madras Letter," *Indian Film Culture,* No. 6)

I believe that in terms of box-office economics, the fate of the regional film, perhaps sooner elsewhere than in the South, is sealed. It is only in terms of art that the Bengali cinema, the Oriya or the Assamese, or the newly identity-proud Gujrati and Konkani film, will survive in the end, bolstered up by state finances or art theaters or whatever mechanics we eventually arrive at for making it possible to have artistic films for a minority audience. (In a country like India, even a minority is large enough to contend with—it may surpass the population of Scandinavia.)

And there is no doubt that a minority audience is fast coming into being, thanks to the international film festivals, film societies, film institutes, formidable new forces in the documentary (which has thrown up a number of good films in the last three

years), film archives, serious film magazines, state recognition for good films, state finance, and a wider spread of import sources. These forces, despite occasional signs of defeat, are in fact gathering some strength; more people are beginning to get a taste of real cinema and becoming impatient to try their hand at the medium, to hold their doors wide open to influences and examples from all over the world. Their dissatisfactions and creative urges are bound to find expression, sooner or later, in a kind of cinema which may or may not cater to the vast popular, but will find sufficient buyers to break out into art theaters and the film-club circuit (now consisting of about a hundred groups). Under its pressures, even the commercial cinema may have to undergo at least superficial changes in form, although perhaps not in spirit. The trail blazed by the Bengalis is already being followed by other regions who might also find paths of their own; and the total impact of India's regional films—like the best of the Bengali—may yet be memorable in world cinema.

Film Reviews

MARKETA LAZAROVA

Director: Frantisek Vlacil. Script: Frantisek Pavlicek and Vlacil, from the novel by Vladislav Vancura. Camera: Bedrich Batka. Score: Zdenek Liska. Ceskoslovensky Film; no U.S. distributor as yet.

The historical film generally has a very bad name—and richly deserved. "Costume pictures" from DeMille onward have been synonymous with the worst in movie excesses: the grotesqueries of *The Scarlet Empress* with Dietrich as Catherine the Great, Laughton deliciously and atrociously hamming it up as Henry VIII, the kimono-swishing revenges of *Chushingura*, Burt Lancaster sleepwalking through Visconti's static landscapes in *The Leopard*—actor and set-designer films gone adrift in overblown fantasies of a melodramatic past. The historical picture has lately taken a theatrical turn with modestly filmed plays such as *A Man for All Seasons* and *Lion in Winter*, but these are hardly movies at all, much less good movies; they have the advantage of attracting fine stage performers, but they do not even broach the real (and interesting) problems of relating film and theater, and simply allow their actors to march about declaiming lines and confronting one another. In *Virginia Woolf*, *Marat/Sade*, and *The Brig* we have had intriguing experiments in theatricalized film, but what we have had from the historical film is mostly romances, battles, escapes, and lots of cleavage.

Marketa Lazarova, which takes place in the thirteenth-century in what is now Czechoslovakia, is without a doubt the best historical film ever made anywhere—not that it has much serious competition. Its only rivals are those elegantly formal (and actually time-less) masterpieces, *The Passion of Joan of Arc* and *Alexander Nevsky*. It is like some archaeological record that has suddenly become animated; it makes you feel as if you've been plunged into some widescreen time-capsule. (The only recent film footage at all relevant to it is the "Lang" fragments in Godard's *LeMépris*, where strange painted Greeks climb out of the sea.) There is virtually no trace in it of modern man; a character played by Charlton Heston would be as out of place in it as a hairy mastodon in Rockefeller Plaza.

Generally the makers of historical films engage in a simpleminded substitution game: they put comfortably contemporary characters into fresh wigs and costumes, and ask us to imagine they are Napoleon or Toulouse-Lautrec—but the plot machinery and the thinking of the characters are unutterably and unredeemably modern. There is not a character and not a situation in *Marketa Lazarova* which could have been imagined by a Hollywood scriptwriter. Nothing in it is charming or picturesque. Hair is matted, filth is routine; none of the living arrangements are at all familiar.

Partly as a result of this, and partly from its complex structure, the film is initially as confusing as it would be to actually arrive in such an alien culture. We don't at first have the faintest

years), film archives, serious film magazines, state recognition for good films, state finance, and a wider spread of import sources. These forces, despite occasional signs of defeat, are in fact gathering some strength; more people are beginning to get a taste of real cinema and becoming impatient to try their hand at the medium, to hold their doors wide open to influences and examples from all over the world. Their dissatisfactions and creative urges are bound to find expression, sooner or later, in a kind of cinema which may or may not cater to the vast popular, but will find sufficient buyers to break out into art theaters and the film-club circuit (now consisting of about a hundred groups). Under its pressures, even the commercial cinema may have to undergo at least superficial changes in form, although perhaps not in spirit. The trail blazed by the Bengalis is already being followed by other regions who might also find paths of their own; and the total impact of India's regional films—like the best of the Bengali—may yet be memorable in world cinema.

Film Reviews

MARKETA LAZAROVA

Director: Frantisek Vlacil. Script: Frantisek Pavlicek and Vlacil, from the novel by Vladislav Vancura. Camera: Bedrich Batka. Score: Zdenek Liska. Ceskoslovensky Film; no U.S. distributor as yet.

The historical film generally has a very bad name—and richly deserved. "Costume pictures" from DeMille onward have been synonymous with the worst in movie excesses: the grotesqueries of *The Scarlet Empress* with Dietrich as Catherine the Great, Laughton deliciously and atrociously hamming it up as Henry VIII, the kimono-swishing revenges of *Chushingura*, Burt Lancaster sleepwalking through Visconti's static landscapes in *The Leopard*—actor and set-designer films gone adrift in overblown fantasies of a melodramatic past. The historical picture has lately taken a theatrical turn with modestly filmed plays such as *A Man for All Seasons* and *Lion in Winter*, but these are hardly movies at all, much less good movies; they have the advantage of attracting fine stage performers, but they do not even broach the real (and interesting) problems of relating film and theater, and simply allow their actors to march about declaiming lines and confronting one another. In *Virginia Woolf*, *Marat/Sade*, and *The Brig* we have had intriguing experiments in theatricalized film, but what we have had from the historical film is mostly romances, battles, escapes, and lots of cleavage.

Marketa Lazarova, which takes place in the thirteenth-century in what is now Czechoslovakia, is without a doubt the best historical film ever made anywhere—not that it has much serious competition. Its only rivals are those elegantly formal (and actually time-less) masterpieces, *The Passion of Joan of Arc* and *Alexander Nevsky*. It is like some archaeological record that has suddenly become animated; it makes you feel as if you've been plunged into some widescreen time-capsule. (The only recent film footage at all relevant to it is the "Lang" fragments in Godard's *LeMépris*, where strange painted Greeks climb out of the sea.) There is virtually no trace in it of modern man; a character played by Charlton Heston would be as out of place in it as a hairy mastodon in Rockefeller Plaza.

Generally the makers of historical films engage in a simpleminded substitution game: they put comfortably contemporary characters into fresh wigs and costumes, and ask us to imagine they are Napoleon or Toulouse-Lautrec—but the plot machinery and the thinking of the characters are unutterably and unredeemably modern. There is not a character and not a situation in *Marketa Lazarova* which could have been imagined by a Hollywood scriptwriter. Nothing in it is charming or picturesque. Hair is matted, filth is routine; none of the living arrangements are at all familiar.

Partly as a result of this, and partly from its complex structure, the film is initially as confusing as it would be to actually arrive in such an alien culture. We don't at first have the faintest

Frantisek's Vlacil's MARKETA LAZAROVA.

idea what the people are up to; and yet it is powerfully clear that the primitive world they live in is coherent, alive, real, menacing; in their quick retributions, their glares and threats, their moments of softness, they understand each other very well, even if we don't. And Vlacil never compromises: he makes us figure out what is happening for ourselves.

The opening throws us into the middle of a roadside robbery of some travelers; it is dawn, and the snow is deep. If we had any expectations of cloistered quaintness, this sequence loosens them. The desolation and danger of the snow-covered countryside, infested with wolves and inhabited by humans who are scarcely less menacing, is rendered in a strange, threatening, low-key style. (Snow scenes in studio movies are almost universally faked; this film was patiently shot amid real snow, so that the cold and discomfort are patent; we soon see why the people dress in furs and skins.)

The motivations of the chief personages are those of the feudal era they live in: interclan rivalries, resistance to the still weak central power of the king, fierce family loyalty and pride, a code of justice through revenge, treatment of women (except the old, who may have a certain influence) as sexual chattels—over whom, however, hovers a weird pantheistic sexuality not yet displaced by the people's nominal Christianity. And within these general patterns the script also weaves variations on the basic ordinary human traits of greed, lust, fear, war-mongering, paternal love, even affection. The result is a stunning film that escapes all the usual labels: it is not heroic and "noble" like an epic, it is not gracefully aristocratic like a medieval tapestry. If it resembles anything, perhaps the grubbier parts of the Icelandic sagas come closest.

The novel, which unfortunately has no English translation, though it appeared in 1931, served Pavlicek and Vlacil as a source for free inspiration rather than for literal borrowing. But a transformed novel form is effectively brought back into the structure of the film. Just as we often open a strange book at several random places to read a little and get an idea of what is happening, *Marketa Lazarova* begins with some sequences which are confusing and seemingly disconnected. It is only later, when the context of an elaborate inter-family dispute becomes more clearly defined, that the real meaning of these opening scenes is understood. The whole film is constructed from such short episodes, often non-chronological and nearly independent, which, however, increasingly focus on destructive events occurring in the families of Kozlik and Lazar. Living rurally in fort-like house clusters, these fierce clans seem to have lived in a grudging friendship until the events of the film occur. Kozlik, the Goat (politely called Buck in the subtitles), is an out-and-out ruthless and bestial robber, successful by some standards. Lazar, also thievish, has some of the trappings of civilization, including a daughter, Marketa, who plans to enter a convent. When Lazar and his boys playfully rough up Kozlik, the retribution is severe: Kozlik's sons swoop onto Lazar's house, destroy it, nail Lazar to a door, and ride off with Marketa.

Kozlik's household makes up in violence what it lacks in lust. His many and ferocious sons and daughters resemble killer hippies. Skipping most of the episodes, we see, for example, Adam, during a flashback incestuous bout with Alexandra, bitten by a snake and having his arm chopped off by Kozlik. Marketa herself during her captivity slowly transforms from a frightened rape victim to admiring her abductor, Mikolas—bringing on torment by Kozlik. When finally the King's sheriff gets fed up with Kozlik's crimes, including the cold-blooded kill-

ing of one of his deputies, he raids the place in force and destroys it, behaving himself much like Kozlik. Marketa escapes with an eccentric itinerant monk, and wanders back to the convent where she was supposed to have lived out her life; but even in her now desperate straits she prefers life with Mikolas. In the meantime, however, he has attempted a rescue raid on the fortress jail where his father is imprisoned, and is wounded and seized. Marketa comes to him and they are married, as a kind of gesture against his fate.

Marketa Lazarova is a fascinating and powerful film, but it is extremely long and its uncompromising brutality makes it hardly a crowd-pleaser; it demands endurance from its viewers, like participants in a strange rite. The dark, low-key lighting, which modulates from crepuscular to half-shadow and back again, gives a subtle rhythm within episodes. Cryptic bardic titles before each episode announce (often wryly) what is about to happen, on which the chorus also comments. The stylistic vigor is remarkable; Vlacil's camera work is as strong and active as Kurosawa's in *Seven Samurai.* Like *Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors,* that other extraordinary recent film from Eastern Europe, *Marketa Lazarova* draws upon remote historical sources to create a film with surprising contemporary impact. It asks us to see what man was, under his fur cloaks, crouched by the fire while the wolves circled his stone forts; but the question reverberates to what man is, under his nylon and rayon, crouched by the TV in his steel-and-glass apartment house.

—EMORY MENEFEE and ERNEST CALLENBACH

I AM CURIOUS (YELLOW)

Director: Vilgot Sjöman. Camera: Peter Wester. Producer: Goran Lindgren. Grove Press Films.

In our times the medium which can present social comment in the most convincing (and moving) fashion is the motion picture. But because of concern for the box office, or because of the particular artistic-dramatic inclinations of film authors, the social comment in most films is indirect. Obviously directors such as Godard, Buñuel, Antonioni, and Bergman are intimately and vitally interested in the complex issues of our times. But their works approach these issues in the voices of allegory and fantasy—in a word, in the voices of fiction. The films in which direct social comment is a main issue and fiction a parallel or secondary device are rare. *I Am Curious* are two exceptions. Or is one exception, depending on how you view them. For *I Am Curious* has been released as two films, but, in reality, are one film. Just as *Remembrance of Things Past* is really a single, unified work, so is *I Am Curious.*

One of the contradictions of our times is that movies are aimed at the young (note the statistics on the age of movie-goers) but that they are made, distributed, reviewed, and censored by the middle-aged or the old. *I Am Curious* is a young people's film made by a cynical, hopeful, questioning, middle-aged director who describes himself in the titles as "Vilgot Sjöman, young film director, age 42." All of the principal participants in the venture he describes as "young," as long as they are of the questioning left.

Anyone with half a mind knows we are living in a time when the status quo is being severely questioned by people of a wide range of persuasions—conservatives, liberals, activists, and the like. Although Sjöman's referents are particular to Sweden, they are nonetheless universal. The status quo, the Establishment, in Sweden, looks, I suppose, to the outsider like a kind of demi-paradise; it has the characteristic c o m m o n to all demi-paradises of engendering satisfaction, complacency, and apathy. Sweden is a socialist monarchy (more accurately, a constitutional monarchy) and a social-monarchy is a self-evident contraction in terms. The Social Democrats have been in power for more than thirty years. Instead of being a party of the left, they are now regarded as a party of the center. The conservatives and the liberals have, over the years, moved closer to the center and to each other. Thus, there is no

ing of one of his deputies, he raids the place in force and destroys it, behaving himself much like Kozlik. Marketa escapes with an eccentric itinerant monk, and wanders back to the convent where she was supposed to have lived out her life; but even in her now desperate straits she prefers life with Mikolas. In the meantime, however, he has attempted a rescue raid on the fortress jail where his father is imprisoned, and is wounded and seized. Marketa comes to him and they are married, as a kind of gesture against his fate.

Marketa Lazarova is a fascinating and powerful film, but it is extremely long and its uncompromising brutality makes it hardly a crowd-pleaser; it demands endurance from its viewers, like participants in a strange rite. The dark, low-key lighting, which modulates from crepuscular to half-shadow and back again, gives a subtle rhythm within episodes. Cryptic bardic titles before each episode announce (often wryly) what is about to happen, on which the chorus also comments. The stylistic vigor is remarkable; Vlacil's camera work is as strong and active as Kurosawa's in *Seven Samurai.* Like *Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors,* that other extraordinary recent film from Eastern Europe, *Marketa Lazarova* draws upon remote historical sources to create a film with surprising contemporary impact. It asks us to see what man was, under his fur cloaks, crouched by the fire while the wolves circled his stone forts; but the question reverberates to what man is, under his nylon and rayon, crouched by the TV in his steel-and-glass apartment house.

—EMORY MENEFEE and ERNEST CALLENBACH

I AM CURIOUS (YELLOW)

Director: Vilgot Sjöman. Camera: Peter Wester. Producer: Goran Lindgren. Grove Press Films.

In our times the medium which can present social comment in the most convincing (and moving) fashion is the motion picture. But because of concern for the box office, or because of the particular artistic-dramatic inclinations of film authors, the social comment in most films is indirect. Obviously directors such as Godard, Buñuel, Antonioni, and Bergman are intimately and vitally interested in the complex issues of our times. But their works approach these issues in the voices of allegory and fantasy—in a word, in the voices of fiction. The films in which direct social comment is a main issue and fiction a parallel or secondary device are rare. *I Am Curious* are two exceptions. Or is one exception, depending on how you view them. For *I Am Curious* has been released as two films, but, in reality, are one film. Just as *Remembrance of Things Past* is really a single, unified work, so is *I Am Curious.*

One of the contradictions of our times is that movies are aimed at the young (note the statistics on the age of movie-goers) but that they are made, distributed, reviewed, and censored by the middle-aged or the old. *I Am Curious* is a young people's film made by a cynical, hopeful, questioning, middle-aged director who describes himself in the titles as "Vilgot Sjöman, young film director, age 42." All of the principal participants in the venture he describes as "young," as long as they are of the questioning left.

Anyone with half a mind knows we are living in a time when the status quo is being severely questioned by people of a wide range of persuasions—conservatives, liberals, activists, and the like. Although Sjöman's referents are particular to Sweden, they are nonetheless universal. The status quo, the Establishment, in Sweden, looks, I suppose, to the outsider like a kind of demi-paradise; it has the characteristic c o m m o n to all demi-paradises of engendering satisfaction, complacency, and apathy. Sweden is a socialist monarchy (more accurately, a constitutional monarchy) and a social-monarchy is a self-evident contraction in terms. The Social Democrats have been in power for more than thirty years. Instead of being a party of the left, they are now regarded as a party of the center. The conservatives and the liberals have, over the years, moved closer to the center and to each other. Thus, there is no

organized dissent. For an analogy, consider the similarities of the Democratic and Republican Parties and the lack of organized dissent in the United States.

It is into this quiet pool of placidity that Sjöman has flung his film. According to Sjöman's own account, he went to Sandrews (the producing and distributing organization) and asked for 100,000 meters (over 300,000 feet) of film and a free hand. He got both.

I Am Curious is a film within a film. On the surface this might appear to be an artificial, time-worn device. But it works. Sjöman uses it for one kind of purpose in *Yellow* and for quite another in *Blue*. In the *Yellow* film the dual roles of the actors are kept quite separate from each other, but in the *Blue* film they begin to merge until actor and role become almost indistinguishable.

The principal role in both is played by a drama student, Lena Neyman, age 23. Lena is a kook. At least in the *Yellow* film she is. In the *Blue* film she is something quite different—but more of that later.

Lena the kook lives in a room in her father's apartment. The room is filled with an incredible array of book cases, disorganized files, posters, little shrines, sound-recording equipment, and other things too numerous to catalogue. Hanging on the wall is a black bag labelled "The Social Conscience of Democracy." Into it she stuffs all manner of things. The audience is asked to guess what it contains. Lena's room reminds one of the old bargeman's cabin in Jean Vigo's film, *L'Atalante*.

From this room Lena sallies forth to be a social irritant. On occasion she and her friends picket the U.S. Embassy, the Russian Embassy, the airline transporting vacationers to Franco's Spain, the Church, and other such institutions as strike her fancy. On other occasions she goes forth with a tape-recorder slung over her shoulder to ask questions, questions, questions. In this level of activity Lena is a vehicle Sjöman uses to express the questions in his own mind about social problems in Sweden. The scenes of Lena the picketer-questioner are handled in a fashion much like that of social documentaries such as we see on U.S. network public programming. But Lena is also developed as a human being, particularly in the *Blue* film, and thus enables Sjöman to probe more deeply.

Her father and mother are both working-class, low-income people. Her mother deserted her father (Rune) some years back for unspecified reasons. Her father works in a picture-framing shop and quite evidently does not understand Lena—or much of anything else for that matter. Lena focuses her resentment of Rune on the fact that his one good deed—going to Spain to fight in the civil war—came to naught. After three weeks with the International Brigade he returned and is unable to answer when Lena asks him why. Clearly he himself does not know.

Lena gets involved with Börje, a purposeless, rather shady young man whom her father brings home one day. All of the highly publicized sex in the *Yellow* film occurs between Börje and Lena. Sex is an integral part of the development and disintegration of their relationship.

The story of Lena's relationship with Börje in the "internal" film is set in the matrix of the story of Lena's emotional and sexual relationship with Sjöman, the director, in the "external" film. By the time he is well into the *Yellow* film, Sjöman is weaving together at least three major elements on the first level of perception: direct social comment and two sets of emotional relationships. And by this time his social comment is both direct and indirect. These are not simple works.

Lena, the social dissident, first espouses the cause of a classless society. Then in the story of the making of the film we see her observing Sjöman as he interviews Olof Palme, then Minister of Transport (now Minister of Education). Palme states his views about the lack of and the desirability of a classless society, while Lena irritates Sjöman by necking with Magnus, actor and her slave, while Sjöman and Palme talk.

Later, in the editing room at Sandrews, Lena says to Sjöman, "I can't stand listening to Palme. I don't get what he's talking about." Sjöman then runs for her, on the Moviola, an earlier interview with Martin Luther King on the subject of nonviolence. Lena is fascinated by Dr.

King. Her comment is, "I like him. He talks about better things than Palme."

Sjöman uses this incident as a transition to the next sequence (in the film within the film) in which Lena takes up the cudgels for nonviolence. By this, and by a number of other devices, Sjöman keeps the differentiation between levels of reality extremely fuzzy. Extraordinarily skillful handling of ambiguity is one of his abilities. As the two films progress, the involvements with each other of the characters in the film and in the film within the film begin to merge and the viewer is less and less able to maintain in his own mind a clear-cut differentiation between levels of reality. But Sjöman does create the impression that Lena's espousal of the cause of nonviolence stemmed from her viewing of the King interview. (In the *Blue* film an entirely different impression is created.) Anyway, the overt social commentary in the balance of the *Yellow* film is about nonviolence. Sjöman actually creates a hypothetical nonviolent foreign policy for Sweden which remains in force throughout the balance of the film.

Sjöman inserts the story of the development of the relationship between Börje and Lena as a sort of interlude in the searching social probing which takes place with Lena, the social dissident.

After their first encounter Börje and Lena spend the night together, then get up very early in the morning and go out in the deserted streets of Stockholm. We hear Lena in a voice-over monologue which sounds rather like "Under Milkwood" shifted to Stockholm.

> . . . Now the Prime Minister gets up to take care of Sweden.
> And the Minister of Trade wakes up
> And all the lefties
> And the whole mixed economy
> The conservative party leader rubs his eyes because he's had a nightmare
> And Torsten Erickson gets up and makes pee-pee and begins devising another defense of the new State Prison at Kumla*

*Here Sjöman is laying groundwork for the *Blue* film which takes up the question of the State Prison in depth.

Vilgot Sjöman and Lena Nyman: I Am Curious.

> And Per Wrigstad vomits again in *Expressen.*

Lena and Börje then proceed to have intercourse (sexual, not social) on a balustrade in front of the Royal Palace. In his testimony at the obscenity trial regarding *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, the Reverend Howard Moody ventures the opinion that at this point in the film Lena and Börje are saying "Screw the government." And it is indeed clear that Sjöman several times uses sex for satirical purposes. Witness, for example, the encounter in the "largest tree in Europe. Fourteen meters in circumference. 2,000 years old." And the romp in the pond.

We learn that Börje is living with Marie, by whom he has a child. And we are told that Börje and Marie are not married. Lena learns these facts from her father. (Is Rune being intentionally cruel? Or does he again not understand his daughter?) Lena goes to the country for a "retreat" in which she meditates, diets, and does exercises such as practice in understanding dialectic, yoga, self-denial and the like.

During the sequence of Lena attempting yoga exercises (she can't do them very well) the film crew comes out from behind the camera to help her. In a charming comedy sequence each member of the crew demonstrates a different exercise—over these are superimposed the technical credits. Then we go back to the story of Lena and Börje. Börje has fol-

lowed Lena to her retreat—upon which he intrudes. This encounter between Börje and Lena ranges from wild sexuality to bitter recriminations. Lena is furious with Börje, not because he has other women in his life but because he has not been honest with her about them. What she does not realize is that Börje is incapable of honesty. (In the *Blue* film she isn't so honest herself.)

The final sexual encounter is almost a form of rape since, while consent is implied, joy is absent. Here again, the film crew intrudes. By this device Sjöman seems to be trying to soften for the audience the agonizing quality of the fight between Lena and Börje. "Really," he sems to be saying, "it isn't really real."

Sjöman seems to do this to keep the question of sexual relations a subdominant theme in the *Yellow* film. This softening that takes place serves to make dominance of the sexual theme in the *Blue* film more forceful.

This last encounter between Lena and Börje begins with sexual intercourse which is interrupted for a screaming, acrimonious fight. The sequence of events culminates in a final sexual intercourse which is really a continuation of the fight, with Börje trying to establish sexual dominance over Lena.

Börje leaves, and on the last night of her retreat, Lena dreams that she has tied to a tree her 23 previous lovers and that she then shoots Börje and castrates him.

The violence of her reaction to Börje destroys Lena's confidence in her ability to practice nonviolence. She rushes to a baker's shop and gorges herself on extraordinarily calorific pastries. This is in contrast to her diet of water for breakfast, three peas for lunch, and a carrot for dinner while on retreat.

Sjöman then makes the point that although Lena has fallen along the wayside, the idea will continue.

Next we see a short reprise of the nonviolence idea, with specific reference to the Bomb. Following that, a short sequence in which Lena informs Börje that she has scabies. (In the *Blue* film she says she has crabs.) It turns out, of course, that Börje has the same affliction. But the conflict between the two is constantly interrupted by Sjöman the director, who is apparently jealous of Lena's affection for Börje (the actor) which has developed during the filming. Sjöman gets his revenge by subjecting both to the indignity of going through the treatment for scabies under the watchful eye of the camera.

Sjöman and Lena end their relationship and Lena and Börje (as the actors, not the characters in the film within the film) go off together as happy, contented lovers. Ha! Wait till you see the Blue film.

I Am Curious (Yellow), although a film with many levels, is nevertheless a rather restrained, non-threatening film because its treatment is largely satirical. This allows the viewer to maintain a kind of protective social distance. There are, of course, many moments of real poignancy in which the characters come through as real human beings who bleed when stuck with a knife. But the satire often comes perilously close to burlesque, as in the cake-eating sequence. Sjöman seems to be taking away from us our opportunity to participate in Lena's suffering over her loss of faith. But this only heightens the effect of the *Blue* film in which Sjöman pulls no punches.

The whole of the *Yellow* film is played from the perspective of Sjöman's view of Lena. He is constantly putting her down as a kind of well-meaning idiot child. Early in the film, for example, he says, "It's a damn shame that Lena doesn't understand politics. But, God, drama students!"

Throughout the film Lena is Sjöman's instrument, a glass through which he is showing the audience his view of Swedish socialism, ". . . the two heads of Swedish socialism: the big self-satisfied head and the little shrunken one." To the extent that she is developed as a person in the *Yellow* film, the view Sjöman shows us is of Lena in her relationships to the men in her life—Sjöman himself; Börje, her lover; Rune, her father; Magnus, her slave; Yevtushenko and Martin Luther King, her mentors. In her relationships with these men, Lena is constantly searching for values and for purposes.

In the end she is defeated largely by her own lack of self-realization. She breaks off with Börje who clearly in a few years will be just as confused and aimless as her father. She destroys the files in which she has been documenting the shortcomings of the Swedish social system, and she admits her inadequacy to cope with the idea of nonviolence. She rejects her father and cannot cope with the ideas expressed by Yevtushenko and King. And to top it all off, she is made miserable by a case of scabies.

Sjöman's use of the age-old device of the play within a play functions as something of a conjurer's trick in which he is constantly reminding us he has nothing up his sleeve. But there is always the specter of another camera crew behind the camera crew we see, filming the film within the film. Sjöman's magicianship is highly deceptive and leads one to suspect that, regardless of the truth or falsehood of Ernest Riffe's* accusations of Ingmar Bergman, Bergman has taught his former apprentice, Sjöman, well.

Sjöman, like Bergman, has a number of conjurer's tricks up his sleeve, with which he often convinces his audience they are seeing (or believing) one thing when they are actually seeing (or should be believing) another. But clearly Sjöman the fictional film director is used by the real Sjöman to help him make a major point—which seems to me to be this: all the pressing social problems mankind is faced with must be handled by ordinary human beings—and ordinary human beings are terribly fallible, prone to error, and therefore—God help us all! This point is made rather subtly in the *Yellow* film and then slammed home in the *Blue*. In both films, Sjöman, the young 42-year-old director, is irritable, a little erratic, condescending —in a word, a fallible human.

Now a brief word about sex. In the *Yellow* film we find out what men and women look like without clothes. We are also shown a little of what men and women have been doing since before *Homo sapiens* began. Since without such actions humanity would not exist, I think it is possible to argue that the sex act itself is important in the general scheme of things and thus a legitimate subject for an artist. But, in addition, Sjöman is saying something about the so-called new morality and is making a powerful argument for sexual equality for women. But why don't we just do away with censorship and stop having to justify, on the wrong grounds, such obviously worthy films as *I Am Curious?*

The acting in the film is excellent. But this may be in part due to Sjöman's tricks with the film within the film. We never really know when Lena and Börje are supposed to be themselves, or to be pretending to be themselves, or to be playing roles. Peter Lindgren, who plays Rune, is utterly believable. And Lena Neyman is a real departure from the usual concept of a film star, confused and filled with contradictions. But she comes across as a believable human—loaded with charm. And it is indeed refreshing to see a rather plump, non-glamorous woman in the leading role in a movie. One is indeed convinced that sex appeal can exist without the typical slick, sexed-up image usually created in the movies. That she sometimes comes across as a cardboard character is a fault of the director, not Lena.

Both the *Yellow* and *Blue* films were shot in black and white with a blimped 35mm Arriflex camera. Such a camera is heavy enough so that it must be mounted on a tripod. Not even the documentary sequences were shot with a hand-held camera. The impact of the *I Am Curious* films is in no way dependent on such "now" techniques as jump cuts, hand-held cameras, or extremely short shots. In fact Sjöman's film technique, although highly competent, does not call attention to itself at all. He tends toward realistic lighting effects and the sets and costuming are rigorously naturalistic. As a matter of fact, I suspect the footage was entirely shot on location and used no sets at all.

I do not believe at all Sjöman's protestation that he shot over 300,000 feet of film without a script. He may indeed have been using John Cassavetes-type improvised performances, but he bloody well knew *exactly* what he was after.

*Riffe is a Swedish critic who is particularly critical, for his own very personal reasons, of Ingmar Bergman.

(Lena's interviews, of course, could not be scripted. But Sjöman told her what questions to ask.) And what resulted, the *Yellow* and *Blue* films as a single unit, may well be one of the most important films of our time.

I AM CURIOUS (BLUE)

A yellow cross, by itself, is one thing. Place it on a blue background and it becomes the flag of Sweden. *I Am Curious (Yellow)* placed on the background of *I Am Curious (Blue)* becomes something quite different from *I Am Curious (Yellow)* taken alone.

I confess to having had a feeling of disbelief when I first heard Sjöman's claim that he could not adequately say all he had to say in a single film of relatively ordinary length. Other filmmakers have made the same claim, but such assertions are extremely difficult to evaluate. The original version of Von Stroheim's *Greed* can never be reconstructed. Who knows what Eisenstein had in mind when he shot the 100,000 feet of film that later became *Thunder Over Mexico*?

I saw the *I Am Curious* films in a single sitting in the Sandrews preview room—a room which is one of the locations shown in the film. To reach the preview room I rode in the elevator in which Lena Neyman and Vilgot Sjöman are riding as the film opens. I sat in the preview room for over four hours. At the end of the four hours I was convinced that Sjöman does not go far enough in his claim that the two films are necessary to accomplish his purpose. Sjöman says that the films can be seen separately and that it doesn't matter much which you see first. I think they should be seen together and that *Yellow* should precede *Blue*. Ordinarily I regard the double feature as anathema, but with this film—or these films—it takes on a new meaning. Unfortunately, distributors and exhibitors will make more money showing the films at different times.

Sjöman says that in *I Am Curious (Blue)* he is treating the same subject matter from a different point of view—and he does not specify what point of view he is talking about. The implied question does not have a simple answer and the answer varies with the level of meaning one is talking about.

In the *Yellow* film much emphasis is placed upon Sjöman's perceptions of social ills. The relations between the characters in the film are developed as an effect of the social forces impinging upon the people.

I Am Curious (Blue) is much more concerned with the relations between people (cause) and the implications of these relations for the social structure of the nation (effect).

Yellow is a man's film—*Blue* is a woman's film. *Yellow* is Sjöman's film. *Blue* is Lena's.

Structurally the films are quite similar. In both Sjöman begins with an exposition of his understanding of Swedish social ills: direct and forceful in *Yellow* and much more subtle in *Blue*. In both films Lena is shown in her involvement with people, in the locale of Stockholm. In both her initial role is that of questioner, gadfly, social dissident. In both she leaves Stockholm and goes out into the country, searching for something. In *Yellow* she is searching for self-control and for a value system. In *Blue* she is again searching for values but also for her mother. Or for a mother-image.

Both films end with her return to the city and with disillusionment.

Yellow is about class structure, nonviolence, and value systems. *Blue* is about religion, the prison system, and sex. Much of the publicity about *Yellow* has described it as a "sex film." For example, the *New York Times* carried a headline—"U.S. Court Clears Swedish Sex Film." (November 27, 1968) But the explicit depiction of the sex act it contains is subservient to the main issues considered in the film. The *Blue* film does not contain nearly as much explicit sexual material but sex and its implications are the major thematic materials of the film.

In *Yellow* Sjöman has indicated in the film about the making of the film that the director and the principal male actor, Börje, are in conflict over the affections of Lena. In *Blue* this conflict runs through the film but Lena has no contact with Börje in the film within the film at all.

(Lena's interviews, of course, could not be scripted. But Sjöman told her what questions to ask.) And what resulted, the *Yellow* and *Blue* films as a single unit, may well be one of the most important films of our time.

I AM CURIOUS (BLUE)

A yellow cross, by itself, is one thing. Place it on a blue background and it becomes the flag of Sweden. *I Am Curious (Yellow)* placed on the background of *I Am Curious (Blue)* becomes something quite different from *I Am Curious (Yellow)* taken alone.

I confess to having had a feeling of disbelief when I first heard Sjöman's claim that he could not adequately say all he had to say in a single film of relatively ordinary length. Other filmmakers have made the same claim, but such assertions are extremely difficult to evaluate. The original version of Von Stroheim's *Greed* can never be reconstructed. Who knows what Eisenstein had in mind when he shot the 100,000 feet of film that later became *Thunder Over Mexico*?

I saw the *I Am Curious* films in a single sitting in the Sandrews preview room—a room which is one of the locations shown in the film. To reach the preview room I rode in the elevator in which Lena Neyman and Vilgot Sjöman are riding as the film opens. I sat in the preview room for over four hours. At the end of the four hours I was convinced that Sjöman does not go far enough in his claim that the two films are necessary to accomplish his purpose. Sjöman says that the films can be seen separately and that it doesn't matter much which you see first. I think they should be seen together and that *Yellow* should precede *Blue*. Ordinarily I regard the double feature as anathema, but with this film—or these films—it takes on a new meaning. Unfortunately, distributors and exhibitors will make more money showing the films at different times.

Sjöman says that in *I Am Curious (Blue)* he is treating the same subject matter from a different point of view—and he does not specify what point of view he is talking about. The implied question does not have a simple answer and the answer varies with the level of meaning one is talking about.

In the *Yellow* film much emphasis is placed upon Sjöman's perceptions of social ills. The relations between the characters in the film are developed as an effect of the social forces impinging upon the people.

I Am Curious (Blue) is much more concerned with the relations between people (cause) and the implications of these relations for the social structure of the nation (effect).

Yellow is a man's film—*Blue* is a woman's film. *Yellow* is Sjöman's film. *Blue* is Lena's.

Structurally the films are quite similar. In both Sjöman begins with an exposition of his understanding of Swedish social ills: direct and forceful in *Yellow* and much more subtle in *Blue*. In both films Lena is shown in her involvement with people, in the locale of Stockholm. In both her initial role is that of questioner, gadfly, social dissident. In both she leaves Stockholm and goes out into the country, searching for something. In *Yellow* she is searching for self-control and for a value system. In *Blue* she is again searching for values but also for her mother. Or for a mother-image.

Both films end with her return to the city and with disillusionment.

Yellow is about class structure, nonviolence, and value systems. *Blue* is about religion, the prison system, and sex. Much of the publicity about *Yellow* has described it as a "sex film." For example, the *New York Times* carried a headline—"U.S. Court Clears Swedish Sex Film." (November 27, 1968) But the explicit depiction of the sex act it contains is subservient to the main issues considered in the film. The *Blue* film does not contain nearly as much explicit sexual material but sex and its implications are the major thematic materials of the film.

In *Yellow* Sjöman has indicated in the film about the making of the film that the director and the principal male actor, Börje, are in conflict over the affections of Lena. In *Blue* this conflict runs through the film but Lena has no contact with Börje in the film within the film at all.

Early in *Blue* Sjöman, as the director, briefs Lena on the conflicts that led to the break-up of her fictional parents. As the fictional Lena, she spends much of her time searching for her mother in rural Sweden. Before she leaves on this quest, Sjöman establishes several themes which run through the film.

In the Stockholm sequence she is shown questioning people about religion, prison practices, the role of women, and sexual attitudes. This questioning follows the pattern of *Yellow* in that it is entirely separated from an emotional involvement with the people she is questioning. Up to a certain crucial point it is clear that the people Lena is questioning are real people, playing themselves. They are not actors and they will not be seen again. But in the *Blue* film, after a series of such encounters with ordinary people, selected at random off the streets, we see Lena interviewing a young woman in her usual interviewing style. While the interview is progressing a man walks up and joins the conversation. At this point Lena starts conversing with both of them as though they were people she had known earlier. We hear Lena's voice on the sound track saying, "I should have recognized Bim." When Lena steps out of her character as an interviewer and says, "I should have recognized Bim," is she speaking for herself? Or is she playing a role assigned her by Sjöman? As a matter of fact, the question remains ambiguous throughout the film. Indeed, the "real" characters, and the "fictional" characters gradually merge until by the end of the film they are virtually indistinguishable.

The man who has joined Lena and Bim's conversation is Hans, who is either married to or simply living with Bim on an old boat. Sjöman tells us that Hans has been Lena's chief mentor in the matter of nonviolence. This, of course, is a contradiction of the impression we had earlier in the *Yellow* film of Martin Luther King as Lena's primary influence in these matters. Thus we have another ambiguity.

In a sequence which takes place in a vaguely phallic-looking tower in a Stockholm amusement park we learn that Hans is impotent—or at least that he cannot make it with Lena. First he tells her it is because they are in the tower and he is afraid of heights. Then they tumble (by hoked-up film magic) to the ground and find he can't make it there either. Hans then tells Lena that he can achieve a climax with Bim. But he says that it is usually after they have had an argument. We only learn what this means when the *Blue* film is nearly over. More of that later.

There is considerable development of the relation between Hans and Lena—with Bim a shadowy figure in the background. One of the things Hans does is to make up little songs for Lena. In one he speaks of the earth as a great pillow on which Lena rests. And he asks whether the pillow is big enough for both beasts and men.

After laying the groundwork in Stockholm for further considerations of the social issues of sex, the status of women, religion, and the prison system, for further development of the conflict between Börje and Sjöman, and for later revelations regarding the complex relations among Bim, Hans, and Lena, Sjöman sends Lena out on her search for her mother.

Lena's search for her mother is another apparent contradiction. In the *Yellow* film she had the following conversation with her father:

Rune: . . . Just like I felt about you when you were little and your mother ran off.

Lena: Oh, that bitch!

Rune: Oh well, she was all right.

Lena: No, she wasn't—showing up after eight years and wanting me back.

Thus, in *Yellow* Lena rejects her mother completely; then in *Blue* she goes searching for her. In *Yellow* Lena tries to sort out her relationships with men—with her father-images. And in *Blue* she adds a search for relationships with women—with mother-images.

When Lena leaves Stockholm she travels north, towards the land of the midnight sun. In *Yellow* when she left the city she dropped her role of interviewer entirely. But in *Blue* she continues it throughout her quest.

The "fictional" Lena is investigating social attitudes as she searches for her mother. The "real" Lena is trying to extricate herself from her affair with Sjöman so that she can devote

herself exclusively to the "real" Börje. In the *Yellow* film "fictional" Lena was furious with Börje because he was dishonest with her about his relations with Marie. In the *Blue film,* "real" Lena is dishonest with Sjöman about wanting to leave him for Börje. By this time Sjöman has done such a convincing job of merging the real and the fictional characters that the audience expects the two roles to be consistent with each other. Ambiguities begin to shift freely from level to level.

Her journey takes Lena north on her bicycle, stopping along the way to camp for the night, then moving on, questioning and questing. She visits the prison at Kumla, talks with the prison doctor, and listens in as the doctor interviews a young prisoner who is about to be paroled. She occasionally hitchhikes, bicycle and all. One of her benefactors gives her a ride and a case of crabs to boot. Sjöman makes it quite clear that she gets the crabs only because her host rubs his hand affectionately over her face. The man's wife is riding in the backseat, so we are convinced nothing else has happened.

From time to time the film crew appears before the camera singing little songs which sum up the social issues Sjöman is dealing with.

Sjöman does not let the beauty of the Swedish countryside escape the eye of his camera. Although he does not make a major point of the scenery, he quite obviously loves the rural values of his country.

At the northern-most point of her pilgrimage Lena goes to a small country-town dance—armed with her tape recorder and her questions. Throughout the film Lena's questions about sex are aimed at pointing up the ideas Sjöman wishes to express about sexual discrimination, the double standard, and sexual responsibility. She asks both men and women what methods of birth control they prefer and who should be responsible for using them. She inquires about attitudes toward premarital sex and about the rights and privileges of men and women. While she is questioning the young people attending the dance about sexual attitudes, we see, intercut with Lena asking questions, a singer, Sonja, who is part of the band. Sonja is older than Lena and has an air about her of world-weariness and disillusionment.

Sonja and Lena become close friends. It develops that Sonja has a teenage daughter and that she does not seem to be attached to any man. Lena is camping by herself in the northern woods and Sonja comes to visit her from time to time. On one occasion they go swimming together in a rather shallow pond. Lena's entry into the water, an awkward, butt-first leap accompanied by a raucous, joyous screech, is a moment of lusty low comedy.

After the swim they come out of the shallow water covered with mud. Sonja carefully wipes the mud off Lena. They then part, agreeing to meet later that night, together with Sonja's daughter.

While waiting for Sonja and her daughter, Lena witnesses an explicit sexual encounter between two lesbians. Lena isn't quite peeking through a keyhole. As a matter of fact, she is peeking through a window. (Sjöman regards everybody as voyeurs.) We next see Sonja and her daughter searching for Lena in the woods. But Lena has left. She has decided that what was developing between herself and Sonja was not entirely appropriate to her concept of herself as a red-blooded heterosexual.

Lena, having found neither her real mother nor an adequate substitute, returns to Stockholm. For a place to be quiet and lick her wounds and recover from her traumas she moves onto the boat where Bim and Hans are living. Bim is jealous and annoyed, but at the same time understanding and protective toward Lena. Then, suddenly, Lena suffers another vast disillusionment. She finds out what Hans, her tutor in nonviolence, meant when he said he could get sexual satisfaction with Bim after they had had a little fight. For Hans is a sadist. His "little fight" is in reality a brutal beating he must administer to his victim, Bim, before he can become aroused.

Lena's several quests have led her to nothing. She has uncovered many social problems but no solutions. Her search for leadership has revealed human frailty and fallibility in place of strength. And she has found neither a father

nor a mother. The flag of Sweden has proven an empty symbol.

Sjöman ends the film with two sequences. First he replays the scene at the end of the *Yellow* film in which Lena told Börje she had scabies. Only this time she calls it the crabs. (I am trusting that the translator was accurate. I do not understand Swedish.) In the *Yellow* film Sjöman kept interrupting and we never saw the scene played out. In the *Blue* film Börje and Lena have a screaming set-to with Börje blaming Lena and Lena blaming Börje. Börje screams at her, "It's your fault, it's always the woman's fault." And this, of course, is at the heart of one of Sjöman's major concerns—the lack of acceptance of sexual responsibility on the part of the male.

As the film closes, we see bits of the shooting of the sequence regarding the de-crabbing process in the hospital. Then the film crew get into an argument about what they are going to shoot next. They decide to do the scene in which Lena finds her mother. So we see Lena leaving the hospital and finding her mother, walking down the path toward her. They rush into each others' arms.

This utterly fake ending is a little reminiscent of the ending of *The Magician,* in which the magician goes riding off in triumph to perform before the King. That wasn't what the magician wanted, and finding her mother thus is no solution to Lena's problems either.

But Sjöman has made some powerful statements. I am sure his Swedish audience came away from the films considerably shaken in whatever complacency they felt about Swedish institutions. And the films will not leave an American audience feeling comfortable either. Many of our unconscious assumptions will be questioned. As well they might be. As Hans asks in his song to Lena, "Is the great pillow of the earth big enough for both man and beast?" They're the same thing, you know.

—CLYDE B. SMITH (young film critic, age 50)

ISADORA

Director: Karel Reisz. Producers: Robert and Raymond Hakim. Script: Melvyn Bragg and Clive Exton, based on "My Life" by Isadora Duncan and "Isadora Duncan" by Sewell Stokes. Music: Maurice Jarre.

Most film biographies of artists deify and sentimentalize, without presenting anything but the most inoffensive generalities about their subjects. In films like *Moulin Rouge, Young Cassidy, A Song to Remember, Song Without End* (the list gets drearier), the plea is that the artist is ordinary and likeable: his problems are really not that different from yours or mine, they're just worse. *Isadora* doesn't pretend to woo the masses; its central figure is not like us, and we learn a great deal about her which is unpleasant, even sordid, in sharply defined vignettes which challenge us to reckon with some new aspect of her personality. The structure of the film is a pattern of cross-cutting between Isadora in her later life and her memories of the past, told in flashbacks, which gracefully expedite the clumsiness of time we're usually burdened with in film biographies. As she dictates her memoirs, we come to know Isadora in bits and fragments, as we would any new personality entering our lives.

Director Karel Reisz cleverly satirizes the seriousness and pretentious devotion to art of the youthful Isadora, whose antipodal extremes of spirituality and sensuality are as attractive as they are preposterous and comical. In her longing for immortality and immorality, Isadora is the contradiction of flesh and spirit; an iconoclast, yet stubbornly dogmatic about *her* conception of art. Calmly acknowledging her "destiny," endowed with the vitality, imagination, and spirited determination of youth to disarm and conquer, Isadora, supremely self-confident and self-important, refuses to accept any limitations about herself.

Reisz captures the idealism and innocence of young spiritual devotees, more passionate about art than they are about each other, who glory in the platonic, mystical, asexual aspects of love. The episode with Craig, her first lover, an artist as ethereal and egocentric as Isadora, dramatizes the way in which Isadora utilizes

nor a mother. The flag of Sweden has proven an empty symbol.

Sjöman ends the film with two sequences. First he replays the scene at the end of the *Yellow* film in which Lena told Börje she had scabies. Only this time she calls it the crabs. (I am trusting that the translator was accurate. I do not understand Swedish.) In the *Yellow* film Sjöman kept interrupting and we never saw the scene played out. In the *Blue* film Börje and Lena have a screaming set-to with Börje blaming Lena and Lena blaming Börje. Börje screams at her, "It's your fault, it's always the woman's fault." And this, of course, is at the heart of one of Sjöman's major concerns—the lack of acceptance of sexual responsibility on the part of the male.

As the film closes, we see bits of the shooting of the sequence regarding the de-crabbing process in the hospital. Then the film crew get into an argument about what they are going to shoot next. They decide to do the scene in which Lena finds her mother. So we see Lena leaving the hospital and finding her mother, walking down the path toward her. They rush into each others' arms.

This utterly fake ending is a little reminiscent of the ending of *The Magician,* in which the magician goes riding off in triumph to perform before the King. That wasn't what the magician wanted, and finding her mother thus is no solution to Lena's problems either.

But Sjöman has made some powerful statements. I am sure his Swedish audience came away from the films considerably shaken in whatever complacency they felt about Swedish institutions. And the films will not leave an American audience feeling comfortable either. Many of our unconscious assumptions will be questioned. As well they might be. As Hans asks in his song to Lena, "Is the great pillow of the earth big enough for both man and beast?" They're the same thing, you know.

—CLYDE B. SMITH (young film critic, age 50)

ISADORA

Director: Karel Reisz. Producers: Robert and Raymond Hakim. Script: Melvyn Bragg and Clive Exton, based on "My Life" by Isadora Duncan and "Isadora Duncan" by Sewell Stokes. Music: Maurice Jarre.

Most film biographies of artists deify and sentimentalize, without presenting anything but the most inoffensive generalities about their subjects. In films like *Moulin Rouge, Young Cassidy, A Song to Remember, Song Without End* (the list gets drearier), the plea is that the artist is ordinary and likeable: his problems are really not that different from yours or mine, they're just worse. *Isadora* doesn't pretend to woo the masses; its central figure is not like us, and we learn a great deal about her which is unpleasant, even sordid, in sharply defined vignettes which challenge us to reckon with some new aspect of her personality. The structure of the film is a pattern of cross-cutting between Isadora in her later life and her memories of the past, told in flashbacks, which gracefully expedite the clumsiness of time we're usually burdened with in film biographies. As she dictates her memoirs, we come to know Isadora in bits and fragments, as we would any new personality entering our lives.

Director Karel Reisz cleverly satirizes the seriousness and pretentious devotion to art of the youthful Isadora, whose antipodal extremes of spirituality and sensuality are as attractive as they are preposterous and comical. In her longing for immortality and immorality, Isadora is the contradiction of flesh and spirit; an iconoclast, yet stubbornly dogmatic about *her* conception of art. Calmly acknowledging her "destiny," endowed with the vitality, imagination, and spirited determination of youth to disarm and conquer, Isadora, supremely self-confident and self-important, refuses to accept any limitations about herself.

Reisz captures the idealism and innocence of young spiritual devotees, more passionate about art than they are about each other, who glory in the platonic, mystical, asexual aspects of love. The episode with Craig, her first lover, an artist as ethereal and egocentric as Isadora, dramatizes the way in which Isadora utilizes

the raw experiences of life, transforming reality into the form and rhythm of the dance. As the two make love in Craig's barren studio, Isadora fantasizes in a flash-forward, envisioning herself alone, performing a new dance which epitomizes her fulfillment (dancing to Isadora is primarily the expression of her sexuality), and is more dramatically erotic than the couple's physical passion. Ironically, the love-making excites her creativity (quite a departure from the typical feminine blackout depicted during sexual intercourse), as the cross-cutting makes clear. In her most intimate moments Isadora sees herself as more artist than woman. Appropriately, Craig seduces her through the language of art—she cannot resist the vision he has of her as a revolutionary, a priestess. When Craig disrobes her and pronounces her body magnificent, he makes an aesthetic evaluation, not a sexual response. And her unabashed affirmation of her own beauty is equally comic because it is unfeminine. It is artistic vanity, pride in the instrument of one's art.

The serious, devotional attitude of the inspired young artist is juxtaposed to the simpler, more urgent emotional needs Isadora reveals in her last scene with Craig and later with her mother. Despite the elaborate myths she has woven about herself, she is attracted to the ordinary, conventional pursuits of women. After Craig's departure, she begs her mother not to leave her, revealing her childish terror at being abandoned. Her emotional dependence, her need for the warmth of a simple, human relationship conflict with her bold declaration of freedom. Most important, it is Isadora herself who perceives at this moment her own eventual isolation; it is her recognition of punishment, the price of her artistic ambitions.

The most urgent moments in flashback deal with Isadora's haunting memories of the death of her children. Their death comes to us in flashes and fragments as it occurs in her memory: Isadora sees the frozen portrait of her children as her car roars through a darkened tunnel; "death by water," a phrase that casually pops up about a Tarot card, forces her to witness again their quiet river-grave. The dominant image—the sudden delicate portrait of the two children separated from her by a pane of glass—crystallizes her loss, and this memory finally overwhelms her. What is interesting about the death sequences is their poignant beauty. Isadora has transformed an ugly horror into an artistic vision—impressionistic stills, shot through with light, touched with muted pastels, capturing the grace of movements of immeasurable meaning to her: a mother's final kiss, a child's upturned face. It is the artist, almost in spite of herself, working upon the experiences of her life, even the most deeply painful, dignifying death with the eloquence of beauty.

The film has been plagued with problems. Reisz was forced to cut his original three-hour version drastically (some fifty minutes have been excised). The result is that the impact of the rich and startling contrast between past and present is very nearly obliterated because most of the scenes dealing with the aging Isadora have been cut. Vanessa Redgrave's performance suffers, too, from the loss of many interesting details which she established in her depiction of the aging dancer.

One is hard-pressed to remember any film which has met with such merciless mutilation. Officials at Universal are pleased with their shrunken version. They stated that too many critics complained of the original length and are much more satisfied with the skeletal remains now on exhibit. The irony is that so many good moments have been eliminated, while some really objectionable scenes which are at odds with the rest of the film still remain.

We are to take Isadora seriously, both as an artist and as a woman, and yet there are moments when the film collapses into heavy-handed emotionalism or sheer farce and Isadora becomes a caricature, whose complex nature is whimsically, inexplicably forsaken for a laugh. Are we to conclude that Reisz has some unresolved feelings of his own towards Isadora, and that they come out in the form of disastrously campy scenes like her conquest by a balding, ugly little pianist, her violent affair with a mad Russian poet, and her insipid idyl

with Paris Singer? The prolonged scenes with Singer and Sergei, the poet, are thrown in for those who couldn't care less about motivation or credibility, but who do like their stereotypes of the artist confirmed. It is an interesting idea to include some comedy in the characterization of the artist, to undercut our conception of her greatness, her passion, her seriousness. But these scenes are simply too blatant. There is also a problem with the dance scenes. Our nervous inclination to laugh at Isadora's joyous abandon or to reject the dramatic theatricality of her more serious efforts, like the dance of liberation, climaxed by the baring of breasts (whether this was meant as a spontaneous or premeditated gesture of defiance at American puritanism) makes us question whether the aesthetics of Isadora's artistry have been fittingly rendered. Perhaps this was the way Isadora danced, with an intense emotionality, and Reisz may be intentionally making a point about her limitations. But these scenes remain unclear—fuzzy.

The film does reveal Isadora's contradictions, it challenges us with what is ludicrous, vain, even ugly about her, as well as what is exciting and moving—just as *Morgan!* did in the treatment of its central figure. But we expect more, especially since both films promise so much—a final commitment, a point of view, which places these contradictions in some perspective. Ironically, *Isadora,* a film which deals with art, is finally unable to come to terms with its material.

In spite of its flaws, *Isadora* sustains our interest through its structure and visual beauty and through the emotional power and range of Vanessa Redgrave. As the aging dancer, sheathed in robes and scarves, dictating her memoirs in deliberate self-parody, Redgrave evokes the complexities and exaggerated eccentricities of Isadora: her stiff movements suggest the failing litheness of the dancer's body; her lips smack together the way a dowdy spinster's might; her voice, aping American dialect almost to perfection, grates on us, its irritating sharpness the subtle suggestion of the dominating crudeness of American females. A garish vision in carrot-colored hair, her face stained with blotches (the effects of alcohol), burdened by a nagging sexual appetite—Redgrave shows us what it means to grow old, confirming our most disturbing fantasies of mortality and loneliness. She suffers more because she is sensitive and complicated. Her sharp intelligence and pride, her cynical awareness of her own decadence, her childish superstitutions, her desire for romance, her painful isolation play off against each other to create a relentless kind of nightmare—the prelude to death, which has shrouded the film from its outset: the death of individual idealism, the plummeting of an era, the death of creativity, the death that stifles youth, suddenly, inexplicably, and the death she herself must face. These disparate elements convey, too, the raggedness, the sordidness of our final moments, and suggest the skepticism of the film in its conception of the artist.

The flashback structure heightens the fateful, tragic mood. Each time we return to the present, it is with greater apprehension. Reisz assumes that we know how Isadora died, and by postponing her death and yet signaling its inevitability with the subtle motif of her flowing scarf, the brutal reality catches us unawares, finally, as it does Isadora. Moreover, the flashback structure, the sense of time suspended, allow us to review and reflect upon her experiences, something denied us in a straight narrative sequence. And because we must confront youth and imminent death at once, we are never free to lose ourselves completely in the exciting segments of her early life, as we would be in a more conventional narrative. In *Isadora* no such relief is possible: the shifting, jarring movements from past to present, the startling contrast of the young woman and the aging dancer lock us into the sense of doom.

The final scenes in their evocation of the twenties skillfully dramatize the anachronism of the artist. When Bugatti, the young Italian tough she has pursued, appears unexpectedly at her final party, Isadora and he perform a slow, elegant tango; their style and expertise are in sharp contrast to the world around them.

Isadora and her Grecian ideals of simplicity, beauty, feeling have given way to the gyrations of an indistinguishable mass of jerky, peppy jazz babies—vapid, bob-haired, bow-tied automatons, whose dance is passionless frenzy. Her death—the sudden strangulation—stuns us with its abruptness and ugliness: we see the head flung back, the eyes frozen in a ghastly stare, the body imprisoned by her scarf, the symbol of her freedom. This brutal moment shocks us out of any sentimentality we cultivate about the artist's life. It is the final comment on Isadora's vulnerability; the harsh rebuttal to her creativity, her dedication to life; a mocking of her attempt to clarify reality through art; it is death, the ultimate absurdity art cannot answer. The camera moves from the body to the young dancers by the sea, blithely ignorant of tragedy, and finally to the sea, where even their buoyant strains become an eerie, ghost-like echo. Death comes suddenly to each generation. And "Bye, Bye, Blackbird" is an appropriate epitaph both for them and for Isadora. The song has the deceptive sense of life in its rhythmic vitality, but its melancholy words suggest finality. —ESTELLE CHANGAS

IF . . .

Direction: Lindsay Anderson. Screenplay: David Sherwin. Music: Marc Wilkinson. Photography: Miroslav Ondricek. Editor: David Gladwell. Paramount.

If there had ever been any doubt that Lindsay Anderson's second feature would surpass any of the recent films made in Great Britain, or that after all these years, the imagination and compassion for humanity exhibited in *This Sporting Life* (1963) would finally find a cinematic outlet again, then the time has come for suspension of doubt and acknowledgment of his genius. His new film, *If . . .* , is one of the most extraordinary studies of adolescence and education in the history of motion pictures: we may talk about it together with such masterworks as *Zéro de Conduite* and *Maedchen in Uniform.* This film is both a commentary upon and indirect indictment of the traditions of private education in England. The elements of satire and anarchy, of poetic fantasy and melodrama, are allegorically mingled into something rare and timeless. Each of the film's eight episodes is a challenging immersion into that mysterious world of youth-in-formation, a milieu that piques the curiosity of older generations beyond measure. *If* opens the doors to this private domain, explaining or intimating at will, with seeming indiscretion, the limitless angers, passions, and flights of imagination that youth encompasses.

(1) *College House. Return.* The script leads us at once into the school atmosphere of clamor. The students moving luggage or trunks along corridors and the shouts of disdainful upperclassmen recreate an uproar of first encounters for the spectator, through the eyes of a new boy, Jute (Sean Bury). Anderson beautifully delineates the interplay of charade and reality as we swiftly visualize the boys' cool acceptance of traditional routine and their humorous tolerance of Jute's anxiety to do everything correctly. It is this lofty fortitude, preached by the Old Guard ("a discipline not only to help others but to help yourselves") which so perfectly camouflages the boys' diffidence, their emotional vulnerability. On the walls of the study hall, or "sweat room" hang huge posters of Guevara or Sitting Bull, and when the film's major character, Mick Travers (Malcolm McDowell) first appears, a scarf around his face, a black hat adding mystery to his flamboyance, one is totally convinced that his nonconformist appearance will further inculcate moods of revolution. The scarf hides Mick's mustache (grown during the vacation period); when he first removes the scarf, a trembling of strings emphasizes his pride in his achievement and the wondrous effect it has upon those who see it. The mustache is shaved-off to a ringing of school bells, a death knell to a period of his freedom and individuality.

Such stylistic devices as changing from color imagery to sepia when we are among the teachers or headmasters (a new teacher's top-floor room could not be bleaker), adds to our

Isadora and her Grecian ideals of simplicity, beauty, feeling have given way to the gyrations of an indistinguishable mass of jerky, peppy jazz babies—vapid, bob-haired, bow-tied automatons, whose dance is passionless frenzy. Her death—the sudden strangulation—stuns us with its abruptness and ugliness: we see the head flung back, the eyes frozen in a ghastly stare, the body imprisoned by her scarf, the symbol of her freedom. This brutal moment shocks us out of any sentimentality we cultivate about the artist's life. It is the final comment on Isadora's vulnerability; the harsh rebuttal to her creativity, her dedication to life; a mocking of her attempt to clarify reality through art; it is death, the ultimate absurdity art cannot answer. The camera moves from the body to the young dancers by the sea, blithely ignorant of tragedy, and finally to the sea, where even their buoyant strains become an eerie, ghost-like echo. Death comes suddenly to each generation. And "Bye, Bye, Blackbird" is an appropriate epitaph both for them and for Isadora. The song has the deceptive sense of life in its rhythmic vitality, but its melancholy words suggest finality. —ESTELLE CHANGAS

IF . . .

Direction: Lindsay Anderson. Screenplay: David Sherwin. Music: Marc Wilkinson. Photography: Miroslav Ondricek. Editor: David Gladwell. Paramount.

If there had ever been any doubt that Lindsay Anderson's second feature would surpass any of the recent films made in Great Britain, or that after all these years, the imagination and compassion for humanity exhibited in *This Sporting Life* (1963) would finally find a cinematic outlet again, then the time has come for suspension of doubt and acknowledgment of his genius. His new film, *If . . .* , is one of the most extraordinary studies of adolescence and education in the history of motion pictures: we may talk about it together with such masterworks as *Zéro de Conduite* and *Maedchen in Uniform.* This film is both a commentary upon and indirect indictment of the traditions of private education in England. The elements of satire and anarchy, of poetic fantasy and melodrama, are allegorically mingled into something rare and timeless. Each of the film's eight episodes is a challenging immersion into that mysterious world of youth-in-formation, a milieu that piques the curiosity of older generations beyond measure. *If* opens the doors to this private domain, explaining or intimating at will, with seeming indiscretion, the limitless angers, passions, and flights of imagination that youth encompasses.

(1) *College House. Return.* The script leads us at once into the school atmosphere of clamor. The students moving luggage or trunks along corridors and the shouts of disdainful upperclassmen recreate an uproar of first encounters for the spectator, through the eyes of a new boy, Jute (Sean Bury). Anderson beautifully delineates the interplay of charade and reality as we swiftly visualize the boys' cool acceptance of traditional routine and their humorous tolerance of Jute's anxiety to do everything correctly. It is this lofty fortitude, preached by the Old Guard ("a discipline not only to help others but to help yourselves") which so perfectly camouflages the boys' diffidence, their emotional vulnerability. On the walls of the study hall, or "sweat room" hang huge posters of Guevara or Sitting Bull, and when the film's major character, Mick Travers (Malcolm McDowell) first appears, a scarf around his face, a black hat adding mystery to his flamboyance, one is totally convinced that his nonconformist appearance will further inculcate moods of revolution. The scarf hides Mick's mustache (grown during the vacation period); when he first removes the scarf, a trembling of strings emphasizes his pride in his achievement and the wondrous effect it has upon those who see it. The mustache is shaved-off to a ringing of school bells, a death knell to a period of his freedom and individuality.

Such stylistic devices as changing from color imagery to sepia when we are among the teachers or headmasters (a new teacher's top-floor room could not be bleaker), adds to our

sense of two worlds coexisting in the name of education. British gentility in the midst of restless, guileful lads is hilariously spoofed in the school nurse's (Mona Washbourne) medical inspection, examining the boys' genitalia with a flashlight, as if she were abstractedly exploring the merits of *amaryllis belladonna*. The successive vignettes are carefully arranged remembrances of things past and still-present: the obdurate ignorance among educators who cannot see the symbolic warning of an American Negro rioter's bloodied figure held fast in a distorted photograph on a student's wall, or hear, in the talk among students in the afterdark of lights-out, a calmly-spoken, "Paradise is for the sex-obsessed."

(2) *College. Once Again Assembled.* (3) *Term Time.* (4) *Ritual and Romance.* The idea that young boys are capable of setting up their own moral code when left to themselves has always been one of the sublimated horrors of educators, and both the director and scriptwriter David Sherwin have chosen subtle means by which they disclose, in the atmosphere of this particular school, the demonic innocence that embraces violence as a form of diversion. While Jute struggles to learn the slanguage of the school, we are treated to a deliciously satirical sequence in which a gloriously disheveled, cynical history master (Graham Crowden) gives a lecture, and during the full-throated singing of "Stand Up! Stand Up!" in chapel (this hymn is also the title of one of Anderson's most famous pleas for cinema commitment to modern problems), we are shown the confessions of a boy who tells the chaplain of his "dirty thoughts," only to receive a consoling hand atop the head and the phrase "Fight the good fight". Aside from Anderson's tongue-in-cheek approach to such moments, it is clear that the Kipling implications of the title (and the connotations of that famous poem) are the standards by which ironies within the film are strengthened. The jocular, unconcerned headmaster bumbles along with patchy intellectual name-dropping (he manages to place Buxtehude in the wrong century), remaining unaware of students like Mick, who prefers the provocative absorptions of primitive rhythms in the "Sanctus" from the African *Missa Luba*.

Mick and his loyal room-mates, Johnny (David Wood) and Wallace (Richard Warwick) are *contemporary* people. The latter two are not consciously rebellious against the world, but extremely *aware* of it in the school's tradition-bound, musty labyrinth of demoralizing routine. In a sequence reminiscent of Schlondorffs' *Young Torless*, Wallace sits on a toilet, calmly strumming a guitar, while two stalls away, a group of younger students seize a classmate (Brian Pettifer), and hang him upside down in a toilet bowl, just for fun. When Wallace hears the choking boy, and rescues him, the boy's only statement is "Excuse me, sir. You're standing on my clothes." No explanations are given; the hierarchy of stronger vs. weaker is accepted without question. Long before the advent of sequences involving physical discipline (we *know* that Mick's attitudes will not remain unnoticed; the suspense is with us from the moment he appears behind the scarf), Anderson has defined the meting-out and acceptance of violence within the moral codes of the boys themselves. The dicta of Kipling's poem would demand the *endurance* of physical humiliation, and in the public (*private* in the American sense) school system of England, this unusual Victorian paradox of behavior (bolstered by memorizations of Kipling's disciple Henley), creates the most exemplary amalgams of heroes, cowards, and mixtures of each ever to be assembled along the march toward manhood.

Within the hierarchical society of the public school, it is to be expected that the boys' emotions will be stimulated to some extent, and the understated manifestations of homosexuality are presented on a double level. On one hand, the archly supercilious attitude of the young prefects toward the school's Ganymede, a boy named Phillips (Rupert Webster) is shown to be a matter of playful flirtatiousness, hiding physical desire and insecure egotism. Phillips is aware of the implications behind the veiled questions and epigrams thrown in his direction, but, imperturbably silent, performs his duties as a "scum"—serving tea or helping them with their

morning toilette. Faced with the tension of these inexpressible longings, the prefects seeth with hostility. Within seconds, they will exercise their prerogative to whip a boy or subject him to standing under cold showers: behind the repressions lie sensual despair and wellsprings of savagery. It is this demoralization of masculine love that is obliquely criticized in the film. The senior prefect, Rowntree (Robert Swann) is half-crazed by his conflicting emotions toward students like Phillips (whom he admires for his beauty) and Mick (whom he hates for his independence). With the former, the student is like an *objet d'art* to be appreciated and "traded" to another prefect, the cruelly introverted Denson (Hugh Thomas).

In contrast to the love-hate relationship between prefect and student, there is the profound *Blutbruderschaft* of Mick, Johnny, and Wallace —a comradeship that represents friendly, sincere loyalties at their most Kiplingesque. In addition, there is the idealized love between Phillips and Wallace which is delicately introduced in an exquisite, wordless interlude where the younger boy watches Wallace proudly exhibit his gymnastic grace in some horizontal-bar exercises. The purity of this friendship, moving from attraction, to communication (Wallace protects Phillips from the ubiquitous Denson) to intimacy (they are seen sleeping together), is indicative of the uncomplicated attachments in adolescence that transcend the distortions of established morals. The relationship is treated with respect and a rueful sense of its ephemeralness.

Anderson's abrupt shift into fantasy in *If* is at its most exceptional in a sequence describing the escape of Mick and Johnny into the neighboring city (Cheltenham). They sneak away from a football match, cavort along the streets, and blatantly steal a motorcycle from a showroom. Their wild ride into the countryside, past those bright green fields and docile landscapes of Gloucestershire, has a sense of exhilaration, a swirling freedom that one never quite experienced in such films as Benedek's *The Wild One* or, more recently, the cinematic careenings of the angels-on-wheels genre. In a roadside café, Mick and Johnny confront a beautiful, dark-haired waitress, her tresses à la Veronica Lake. This confrontation is sparked by meaningful looks, and the girl assumes the presence of a challenging demi-goddess, a provocative, sensual creature from a world beyond the masturbatory confines of the school dormitory. Mick confidently kisses the girl and receives a slap in the face, yet this is merely the acknowledgment of her pleasure. Mick plays the jukebox and the *Missa Luba* is heard: the music immediately transforms the realistic setting into the realm of Pinter—all further action is a stark charade of undefined, adolescent passion, enacted with unrestrained animality. The girl approaches Mick and says, "I like tigers," and he sniffs and growls at her. Soon, the two of them hiss, scratch, and pull at one another until they are embroiled in a wild, nude convolution of primitive union—a compelling day-nightmare of cinema-of-the-absurd, when adventure becomes myth and the culmination of an experience is the surreal spectacle of the girl (quite nameless) riding on the motorcycle with Mick and Johnny on a clear, free journey to Wherever. The effect of this sequence is so magnificent, this leap from realism to epic camera-metaphor (the work of Ondricek is splendid throughout the film) that one is hard put to rummage through memories for comparisons. It is very exciting, indeed, because it bursts through the confines of the early atmosphere of the school, evoking a wonder about humanity and youth that places the Cheltenham episode in the center of *If* like a glittering treasure: it is one of those dazzling moments that will be admired for decades to come.

(5) *Discipline.* (6) *Resistance.* It was the experience of this writer, during a sojourn in England, to listen to a young Oxonian relate that one of his old Housemasters would constantly quote "He that hateth reproof shall die," whenever protest against caning was heard. In Lindsay Anderson's *If*, there is a particularly brutal caning sequence in which Rowntree flogs Mick, Johnny, and Wallace for "setting a bad example." The whipping of Mick is the longest and most savage, and American audiences will be appalled, not only by the spectacle of such

disciplinary action, but by Mick's reaction. With tears in his eyes, he shakes the prefect's hand, saying, "Thank you, Rowntree," and walks out of the gymnasium. The statement, like "God Bless Captain Vere!" is a blood-curdling affirmation of unjustifiable defeat, but one must keep in mind the point of view expressed in Kipling's poem. Mick is already much more of a man than Rowntree and his acceptance of the beating gives him an ominous, heroic stature. If criticisms are indirectly leveled against the system earlier in the film, it is in this section of the narrative that Anderson launches his major attack on the existing situation regarding discipline in public schools. One feels that it is a controversy that is still unresolved, because the prefectorial system varies in different schools regarding the use of the whip. However, the prefects in *If* are decidely villains, whose motives for punishment are moralistic and retributive. Although Rowntree and Denson are a far cry from the likes of Squeers or M'ChoaKumchild, they embody the flaws of their more intelligent modern counterparts, in public schools where housemasters depend upon the prefects, who really control the power. Besides, the sixties have brought a generation of rebels, strong personalities who are irked by even the most moderate restraints. Just as, in Kipling's day, there was no room on Parnassus for the androgyne, so is there no quarter for Kipling in Pepperland. For instance, the privilege of simply normally going into the town is one of the most dramatic events in *If*, so that the discipline sequence has tragic implications beyond the film itself.

(7) *Forth To War.* (8) *Crusaders.* A staged war maneuver, in uniforms and packs, with marches and fake explosions, (they are part of the school's curriculum—a sort of ROTC drill) is used as an episode of farce and mockery. Young Jute looks upward quizzically when he hears "Jesus Christ is our Commanding Officer!" and Denson snarls, "We will *attack* and *destroy* that tree!" Anderson manages to bring enormous mirth into these episodes, and while the boys are absent, he shows Mrs. Kemp, the housemaster's wife (Mary McLeod), strolling nude through the dormitory like a bemused, pre-

The schoolboy crusaders: David Wood, Richard Warwick, and Malcolm McDowell in IF . . .

Raphaelite castoff. Her introversions have been treated humorously throughout the film, but in this brief instance, her character becomes larger-than-life, an ironic symbol of melancholy repression. While the maneuvers are reduced to a shambles by Mick and his room-mates, there are again, two abrupt visual shifts to fantasy that are disconcertingly vague: the headmaster opens a drawer and therein lies the chaplain who has been "frightened to death" (we have not been led to expect such whimsey from either character during the film) by the real bullets that Mick had been firing at everyone. Then, later, when the trio of rebels came across a cache of ammunition and a cupboard filled with bottled forms of animal life, including a human foetus, the girl from the café suddenly appears, takes the jar from their hands and quietly places it back upon the shelves. Having already been exposed to the omniscient foetus as possibly becoming mankind's highest form of life *(2001: A Space Odyssey),* one is inclined to be a bit querulous about the awesome implications of this brief moment in *If*. It is just as well that this confrontation with a bottled life, symbolically locked-away in the recesses of a school storage bin, be taken at face value—a visual summation of the Establishment's attitude toward youth, of new ideas, unfulfilled and lost. A stunning moment, nevertheless.

When Mick and all those whose sensibilities have been thwarted finally turn against the

school, it is during a ritualistic charter-day ceremony. An old general gives a speech about tradition (while a wonderful lady in red sits in a crouchlike position of approval, holding a bunch of yellow flowers), as the hall gradually goes up in smoke. Anderson's final fantasy sequences of anarchy ultimately become ferocious warnings quite pertinent for the real world. In a way, *If* bolsters the Godardian conclusions in *Weekend,* viewed with compassion from the towers of academe. Although the spectator sympathizes throughout the film with Mick, the man, he may be horrified by his understanding and acceptance of Mick, the monster, leveling a machine gun upon his teachers below. On the old school grounds everywhere, the guerrillas are among us, Lindsay Anderson is himself again, and all's right with the film world—for a time.

—ALBERT JOHNSON

HELL IN THE PACIFIC

Director: John Boorman. Producer: Reuben Bercovitch. Screenplay: Alexander Jacobs, Eric Bercovici. Photography: Conrad Hall. Music: Lalo Schifrin. Cinerama.

Shot by shot John Boorman's new film *Hell in the Pacific* must be the most thoughtfully, beautifully composed American movie since Boorman's own *Point Blank.* There can no longer be any question that his control of the medium is extraordinary. And yet the film is unsatisfying; the technical brilliance of *Hell in the Pacific* cannot entirely compensate for some crucial dramatic failures. Even more obviously than *Point Blank,* this film adds up to considerably less than the sum of its impressive parts.

But at least it is not what we expect of a desert island story. An American and Japanese soldier (Lee Marvin and Toshiro Mifune) find themselves marooned on the same Pacific island during World War II. Suspicion, fear, hatred eventually give way to a measure of understanding when they build a raft together and sail to another island, where reminders of the war estrange them once again. The script by Alexander Jacobs and Eric Bercovici—which Boorman follows roughly but compresses—was remarkable for its care in detailing all of the stages in the painfully gradual evolution of the relationship. The script had a concentrated, steady momentum that has been lost in the film. Everything has been speeded up, the transitions have been blurred or simply obliterated, and the film comes at us in pieces, almost like a series of blackout sketches, still intriguing and unorthodox, but without a cumulative power.

Both script and film put a great deal of emphasis on the first stages of the relationship, basically a relationship of torturer to victim, with the roles constantly shifting back and forth, until they become almost indistinguishable. In their first actual face-to-face confrontation, murder is on their minds; in brief fantasy sequences we see each man's vision of his brutal murder by the other. But their hostility soon begins to change tone slightly; as the torments they devise for each other become more subtle and more complicated, we can see that they are growing to *need* each other to keep themselves alive. At one point Mifune has the opportunity to kill Marvin, but he demurs, and makes Marvin his slave instead. The film's most striking variation on the Robinson Crusoe story is its study of the psychology of persecution. The hostility of Marvin and Mifune is the archetypal hostility of two strangers, but it is still a desperate mutation of human intimacy, and it enables them to survive; the most profound sadism, in other words, includes a feeling of mutual dependency that, twisted slightly, may slip into friendship and affection. *Hell in the Pacific* probes the convolutions and ambiguities of hatred with startling rawness and imagination. This is not to say that the film is realistic. In fact, to accept it at all, it has to be understood as a metaphoric study of prejudice and aggression, and the impossibility of tolerance. But Boorman does not quite establish that he is focussing on a *symbolic* encounter, and so we are bothered by questions of plausibility—for instance, how did both men happen to get to the same island?—which should have been irrelevant. The film's opening should have been much stranger, much less literal. We have to

school, it is during a ritualistic charter-day ceremony. An old general gives a speech about tradition (while a wonderful lady in red sits in a crouchlike position of approval, holding a bunch of yellow flowers), as the hall gradually goes up in smoke. Anderson's final fantasy sequences of anarchy ultimately become ferocious warnings quite pertinent for the real world. In a way, *If* bolsters the Godardian conclusions in *Weekend,* viewed with compassion from the towers of academe. Although the spectator sympathizes throughout the film with Mick, the man, he may be horrified by his understanding and acceptance of Mick, the monster, leveling a machine gun upon his teachers below. On the old school grounds everywhere, the guerrillas are among us, Lindsay Anderson is himself again, and all's right with the film world—for a time.

—ALBERT JOHNSON

HELL IN THE PACIFIC

Director: John Boorman. Producer: Reuben Bercovitch. Screenplay: Alexander Jacobs, Eric Bercovici. Photography: Conrad Hall. Music: Lalo Schifrin. Cinerama.

Shot by shot John Boorman's new film *Hell in the Pacific* must be the most thoughtfully, beautifully composed American movie since Boorman's own *Point Blank.* There can no longer be any question that his control of the medium is extraordinary. And yet the film is unsatisfying; the technical brilliance of *Hell in the Pacific* cannot entirely compensate for some crucial dramatic failures. Even more obviously than *Point Blank,* this film adds up to considerably less than the sum of its impressive parts.

But at least it is not what we expect of a desert island story. An American and Japanese soldier (Lee Marvin and Toshiro Mifune) find themselves marooned on the same Pacific island during World War II. Suspicion, fear, hatred eventually give way to a measure of understanding when they build a raft together and sail to another island, where reminders of the war estrange them once again. The script by Alexander Jacobs and Eric Bercovici—which Boorman follows roughly but compresses—was remarkable for its care in detailing all of the stages in the painfully gradual evolution of the relationship. The script had a concentrated, steady momentum that has been lost in the film. Everything has been speeded up, the transitions have been blurred or simply obliterated, and the film comes at us in pieces, almost like a series of blackout sketches, still intriguing and unorthodox, but without a cumulative power.

Both script and film put a great deal of emphasis on the first stages of the relationship, basically a relationship of torturer to victim, with the roles constantly shifting back and forth, until they become almost indistinguishable. In their first actual face-to-face confrontation, murder is on their minds; in brief fantasy sequences we see each man's vision of his brutal murder by the other. But their hostility soon begins to change tone slightly; as the torments they devise for each other become more subtle and more complicated, we can see that they are growing to *need* each other to keep themselves alive. At one point Mifune has the opportunity to kill Marvin, but he demurs, and makes Marvin his slave instead. The film's most striking variation on the Robinson Crusoe story is its study of the psychology of persecution. The hostility of Marvin and Mifune is the archetypal hostility of two strangers, but it is still a desperate mutation of human intimacy, and it enables them to survive; the most profound sadism, in other words, includes a feeling of mutual dependency that, twisted slightly, may slip into friendship and affection. *Hell in the Pacific* probes the convolutions and ambiguities of hatred with startling rawness and imagination. This is not to say that the film is realistic. In fact, to accept it at all, it has to be understood as a metaphoric study of prejudice and aggression, and the impossibility of tolerance. But Boorman does not quite establish that he is focussing on a *symbolic* encounter, and so we are bothered by questions of plausibility—for instance, how did both men happen to get to the same island?—which should have been irrelevant. The film's opening should have been much stranger, much less literal. We have to

accept the men's hostility as a rather shaky "given."

In the script the tortures were drawn out relentlessly, almost surrealistically, but even somewhat truncated in the film, these scenes have a strong impact. They are not clearly motivated, but they expose the stark, primitive quality of human animosity in some memorable images: Mifune tempting Marvin to approach his water supply by pretending to swim away, then suddenly rising from the sea like a samurai warrior, his face contorted in rage as he rushes at the stupefied Marvin; Marvin pounding a rock against his canteen in regular beats, bellowing "Come and get it, come and get it," until the hysterical Mifune shrieks as if trying to exorcise the devil himself; the abrasively funny moment when Marvin urinates on Mifune's back and face from a point far above him—accentuated by making us look up at Marvin with Mifune; Marvin blindfolded and shackled, hobbling around the beach as Mifune tosses stones that make him turn first one way, then another. The two men are not sharply realized individual characters, but larger-than-life representatives of their cultures (and this description luckily seems to fit the actors as well as their roles)—Mifune wilder, more savage, more adapted to jungle survival, but at the same time more contemplative, more religious, more aesthetic; Marvin more pragmatic, more literal-minded, with a peculiarly American kind of wisecracking humor even in this weird, preternatural world. The only problem with dealing in archetypes is that they often look more like stereotypes.

Boorman is a director with marvelously kinesthetic energy. In *Point Blank* the car-smashing sequence or the fight in the psychedelic nightclub were literally nerve-shattering; the screech of tires, the impact of a car smashing into a concrete pillar, the wailing of a singer were strong, immediate, unforgettable sensations. In *Hell in the Pacific* the sense impressions can be brusque and powerful, or remarkably subtle—the brush of leaves against a man's body as he runs through the jungle, the sound of water lapping into a canteen, or of urine striking a piece of cloth, the afternoon sunlight streaming through the treetops as through the ceiling of a cathedral. Boorman gives us the look and feel and sound of *things* with matchless authority. With this much sensuousness in his films, it takes a while to realize that an emotional resonance is missing. Boorman does not render the nuances of psychological relationships with anything like the explosiveness he can bring to purely physical contact. And so although *Hell in the Pacific* has only two characters in perpetual confrontation, we never feel that we are quite close enough to see beyond the stereotypes. Boorman cannot sustain an intense emotional drama, so he chops it into fragments. There are many searing individual moments—for example, the one when Mifune finds Marvin lying unconscious, apparently dead, and turns him over tentatively, fearfully, as if handling a hideous jungle beast —but they have no context; the film is strangely disjointed and episodic.

Boorman's failure is most obvious in the sequences concerning the reconciliation and growth of affection between the men. In the script these scenes of the building of the raft, and especially of the journey itself, were worked out in as much detail, as painstakingly and as convincingly as the various tortures at the beginning. But Boorman tries to imply the men's friendship in a few simple, inadequate touches —their raising a sail together, Marvin shielding Mifune from the sun with his shirt. The raft journey had an implicit sexual quality in the script—at one point Marvin rocked Mifune's head in his lap—that Boorman may have felt uncomfortable with. But this evasiveness hurts the film; we know what Boorman wants us to feel, but his assertion of the men's comradeship is too glib and superficial to be persuasive.

Still, in purely cinematic terms, the raft sequence is one of the most beautiful in the film. It is night, the men have been sailing for a long time, and they begin to lose their bearings, which Boorman conveys by draining the color from the film (the most effective and meaningful transition from color to monochrome film I have ever seen) and completely eliminating all natural sound effects; the only sound is a bar-

racks ballad that Marvin's voice sings haltingly, wearily over the sequence. In contrast to the sharp intrusiveness of sound in the rest of the film, the sudden silence is almost unearthly, and we begin to lose our bearings too. The film seems to have been turned inside out; for an instant we are allowed to share the men's reveries. The sequence works very much like the lyrical flashback sequence in *Point Blank*—Walker's first meeting with his wife. It is interesting that Boorman can present a moment of warmth, of calm, of beauty only by changing style completely and playing the scene as fantasy. This section of the raft journey seems unreal, a poignantly brief dream of tenderness in a world of hate and fear and physical anguish.

For when Marvin and Mifune arrive at the end of their journey, on the second island, they find only a deformed monument to man's hatred —a Japanese war camp, utterly devastated by battle, a Bosch-like apparition of crooked poles, piles of bricks and ammunition, muddy pits, crumbling walls gouged with giant holes. Mifune stops for a moment, haunted by what was once a Japanese garden, now overgrown and withered, an eerie, inappropriate patch of faded color in the middle of a ruin. They walk into the camp hospital, now a swamp, the floor covered with water, pieces of white gauze hanging everywhere like empty shrouds in the air. There is no sign of human life, no bodies even, just hideous souvenirs that only human beings could have left. This entire sequence is brilliantly conceived and brilliantly shot, to approximate the vision of a traveler arriving for the first time on a strange, hellish planet. But we know the planet—some of the rubbish is insinuatingly familiar. The idea of the *Life* magazine that Marvin finds buried in the dirt is particularly inventive. As Mifune flips through the pages of the magazine, looking at the gaudy advertisements and then the photographs of Japanese soldiers dead and wounded, with the words of American congratulation, we can feel his bewilderment and humiliation. Marvin's sudden, drunken questions to Mifune, "They tell me you don't believe in God," are less convincing, more arbitrary, since Marvin has not seemed especially concerned about God at earlier moments. The separation happens much too abruptly considering the months of gradual reconciliation, but it is less bothersome than it should be, probably because the film has never really convinced us of the men's affection anyway.

Boorman was working from a script that emphasized this affection, but because of a strange reticence about dealing with intimate feelings between people and a basically skeptical temperament, he turns the film colder and more cynical than it was originally intended to be. Boorman's personality proves stronger than his material. His previous films have concerned a journey begun with a great sense of hopefulness that is unfulfilled, and finally crushed. In *Having A Wild Weekend* Dave Clark and Barbara Ferris, two fugitives from the advertising world, arrive at the girl's romantic desert island a step behind the omniscient ad executive who is waiting to take her back to work; when the tide goes out, she sees that the "island" is connected to the mainland. In *Point Blank* Walker, traveling through a glittering, labyrinthine Los Angeles underworld in search of money and revenge, comes to the end of his journey on Alcatraz, where his betrayal began, and realizes that he has been duped a second time. Similarly, the two men in *Hell in the Pacific* set out on a journey that promises a new brotherhood, a new humanity, only to find that they have unwittingly returned to the war they have tried to flee. The three films all have strangely anticlimactic endings that seem intentional, integral parts of Boorman's chilly vision. The trouble with *Hell in the Pacific* is that the script and the director's personal vision genuinely seem to cross purposes; Boorman's skepticism, his inability to present tenderness between people as anything but a dream work against what is essentially a humanistic (though not sentimental) script. Perhaps that explains why the film, though apparently precise and controlled, seems always lurching to find a tone.

I have used the word "skeptical" to describe Boorman's spirit. His approach is intellectual, rational, disinterested, rather than passionate and involved. Everyone has heard the saying

HELL IN THE PACIFIC

that life is a comedy to those who think and a tragedy to those who feel. And Boorman's films, though not exactly comedies, have a great deal of comedy in them. Perhaps "sardonic" is a better word than "skeptical" to describe his temperament. I have not really suggested how much of *Hell in the Pacific* is funny. Boorman takes particular advantage of Lee Marvin's cool, ironic sense of humor; when Marvin finally breaks free of his slavery and strings Mifune to a tree, he shrugs simply, with hyperbolic understatement, "Win a few, lose a few." Later there is a wickedly funny scene in which Marvin, bored and looking for a new game, tries to show the captive Mifune how to fetch a stick with his mouth, but ends up only demonstrating it himself. There are many casual sight gags: Mifune discovering a bizarrely inappropriate gas mask in Marvin's kit; Marvin cooking some roots over a fire, with a seashell for a frying pan, following the instructions in his survival book with the kind of seriousness one would give to the recipe in a gourmet cookbook; Marvin propped up in a broken chair with his feet on a piece of debris, reading a magazine and looking out of a gaping mortar hole as if it were his livingroom window. In fact, *Hell in the Pacific* often seems to be the battle for survival, the Robinson Crusoe story played for laughs. And if this approach is not really profound enough for a film that evidently means to deal with very large, elemental issues, it still provides moments of illumination into the absurd perversity of two human beings hanging desperately to their cultural identities and the conditioning that has lost all its relevance, frightened and unable to start life fresh. Boorman's talent is a unique one; he combines a truly poetic eye with an unsettling black comic sensibility. But these qualities may undermine each other, which is perhaps a way of accounting for the unevenness of his films. Whether he will be able to find the material that can utilize his gifts harmoniously and effectively, or whether his sardonic defensiveness will thaw to allow for a deeper sense of commitment in his work, are questions that remain to be answered.

A note on two of the other contributors to the film: Lalo Shifrin's music is atrocious, anticipating every moment of suspense with stereophonic squeals and drumbeats. Since Schifrin provided the same disservice for *The Fox*, someone should have realized that he was not the composer for a tense two-character movie; his crescendoes seem to have escaped from the soundtrack of *Ben-Hur*. Boorman expressly mentioned his desire to avoid a "powerful score" in my interview with him last year, so I assume this decision was forced on him. Conrad Hall's photography, on the other hand, is magnificent. I understand he is set to direct his first feature, which gives us something besides Boorman's next film to look forward to.

Since its opening, the film's executive producer, Henry Saperstein, has inserted some stock battle footage, including an ambiguous explosion that seems to kill off the two men at the end. Boorman originally ended the film with the men deciding to separate, and walking off in opposite directions. He was not even informed of the change, and has recently pro-

tested to ABC, but he did not have the contractual right of final cut, so there is no action he can take. But we now have a warning of what to expect from the television networks that have stretched their tentacles into feature film-making. —STEPHEN FARBER

STOLEN KISSES

Director: Francois Truffaut. Script: Truffaut, Claude de Givray and Bernard Revon. Photography: Denys Clerval.

François Truffaut's work has begun to form a pattern. Following his first feature-length film, *The Four Hundred Blows,* a semi-autobiographical film in which he introduced his alter-ego, Antoine Doinel, Truffaut embarked upon highly personalized filmic adaptations, *Shoot the Piano Player* (from David Goodis) and *Jules and Jim* (Henri-Pierre Roche). After these films he returned to Antoine in his episode of *Love at Twenty.* Then, after an original screenplay, *The Soft Skin* (the only one of Truffaut's original scripts which does not concern Antoine), more adaptations—*Fahrenheit 451* (Ray Bradbury) and *The Bride Wore Black* (Cornell Woolrich). In *Stolen Kisses,* Truffaut resumes the story of Antoine. The director is presently at work on *The Siren of Mississippi,* another Cornell Woolrich adaptation. The inconclusive ending of *Stolen Kisses* gives the option of continuing the pattern in the future with another chapter in the life of Antoine.

At the end of the episode of *Love at Twenty,* Antoine, experiencing his first disappointment in love, enlists in the army. *Stolen Kisses* begins as Antoine is discharged from the service for "insubordination." (Biographical note: Truffaut also enlisted for military service but later deserted.) He visits his girl-friend, Gabrielle, but she is not interested and avoids him. Gabrielle's father, however, obtains a job for Antoine as a night-clerk in a hotel. He loses the job when he aids a private detective in entering a hotel room where a client's wife is found *in flagrante delicto.* The detective gets Antoine a job in his agency. Antoine is attracted to Fabienne, the wife of one of his clients, and eventually they make love. Gabrielle, in the meantime, has become interested in Antoine, since he has been ignoring her for Fabienne. As the film ends, the young couple spend their first night together.

In many of its details, *Stolen Kisses* is charming. It is filled with the wry observation and quick jabs of unexpected humor that are characteristic of Truffaut. Some examples: when the cuckolded husband finds his wife with the other man, he picks up a vase of flowers to throw at her—instead of the vase he throws the flowers; a beautifully comic scene, superbly played by Michel Lonsdale, in which a seemingly bland, baby-faced shoe-store owner inadvertently reveals his own paranoia; a tender scene in which Gabrielle teaches Antoine an infallible method of buttering a *biscotte* without breaking it and in which the couple first express their love, not through words, but through writing notes across the table. There is also the fascination with the way things work—a fascination I think Truffaut found and expanded from a similar tendency in Hitchcock's films. (It first appears in *The Soft Skin* in which gear shifts, car ignitions, pay telephones, light switches, keys and locks are all highlighted by close-ups.) In *Stolen Kisses,* one is shown in documentary detail how the speedy mail service in Paris works so efficiently. The sequence is really extraneous to the plot but in its inanimate way it has the exhilarating balletic grace which marked the more essential thieving sequence in Bresson's *Pickpocket.* Then, too, there is the sensuous enjoyment of the Paris atmosphere, of the food people eat and the way they eat it, the quirky ways in which they give themselves away. (Although in *Stolen Kisses,* Truffaut invention in this latter area seems rather low; a client trying to remain calm exposes his inner anquish through twisting a ring on his finger.)

Yet for all its pleasing qualities, *Stolen Kisses* is in the long run a curiously flat and unsatisfying film. Truffaut has returned to the episodic structure that he used for his earlier films. Yet in *Four Hundred Blows* and *Jules and Jim,* despite the meandering and the room left for incidental observation, there was always a sense of destination. *Stolen Kisses,* however, looks for all the world as if its director had no idea

tested to ABC, but he did not have the contractual right of final cut, so there is no action he can take. But we now have a warning of what to expect from the television networks that have stretched their tentacles into feature film-making. —STEPHEN FARBER

STOLEN KISSES

Director: Francois Truffaut. Script: Truffaut, Claude de Givray and Bernard Revon. Photography: Denys Clerval.

François Truffaut's work has begun to form a pattern. Following his first feature-length film, *The Four Hundred Blows,* a semi-autobiographical film in which he introduced his alter-ego, Antoine Doinel, Truffaut embarked upon highly personalized filmic adaptations, *Shoot the Piano Player* (from David Goodis) and *Jules and Jim* (Henri-Pierre Roche). After these films he returned to Antoine in his episode of *Love at Twenty.* Then, after an original screenplay, *The Soft Skin* (the only one of Truffaut's original scripts which does not concern Antoine), more adaptations—*Fahrenheit 451* (Ray Bradbury) and *The Bride Wore Black* (Cornell Woolrich). In *Stolen Kisses,* Truffaut resumes the story of Antoine. The director is presently at work on *The Siren of Mississippi,* another Cornell Woolrich adaptation. The inconclusive ending of *Stolen Kisses* gives the option of continuing the pattern in the future with another chapter in the life of Antoine.

At the end of the episode of *Love at Twenty,* Antoine, experiencing his first disappointment in love, enlists in the army. *Stolen Kisses* begins as Antoine is discharged from the service for "insubordination." (Biographical note: Truffaut also enlisted for military service but later deserted.) He visits his girl-friend, Gabrielle, but she is not interested and avoids him. Gabrielle's father, however, obtains a job for Antoine as a night-clerk in a hotel. He loses the job when he aids a private detective in entering a hotel room where a client's wife is found *in flagrante delicto.* The detective gets Antoine a job in his agency. Antoine is attracted to Fabienne, the wife of one of his clients, and eventually they make love. Gabrielle, in the meantime, has become interested in Antoine, since he has been ignoring her for Fabienne. As the film ends, the young couple spend their first night together.

In many of its details, *Stolen Kisses* is charming. It is filled with the wry observation and quick jabs of unexpected humor that are characteristic of Truffaut. Some examples: when the cuckolded husband finds his wife with the other man, he picks up a vase of flowers to throw at her—instead of the vase he throws the flowers; a beautifully comic scene, superbly played by Michel Lonsdale, in which a seemingly bland, baby-faced shoe-store owner inadvertently reveals his own paranoia; a tender scene in which Gabrielle teaches Antoine an infallible method of buttering a *biscotte* without breaking it and in which the couple first express their love, not through words, but through writing notes across the table. There is also the fascination with the way things work—a fascination I think Truffaut found and expanded from a similar tendency in Hitchcock's films. (It first appears in *The Soft Skin* in which gear shifts, car ignitions, pay telephones, light switches, keys and locks are all highlighted by close-ups.) In *Stolen Kisses,* one is shown in documentary detail how the speedy mail service in Paris works so efficiently. The sequence is really extraneous to the plot but in its inanimate way it has the exhilarating balletic grace which marked the more essential thieving sequence in Bresson's *Pickpocket.* Then, too, there is the sensuous enjoyment of the Paris atmosphere, of the food people eat and the way they eat it, the quirky ways in which they give themselves away. (Although in *Stolen Kisses,* Truffaut invention in this latter area seems rather low; a client trying to remain calm exposes his inner anquish through twisting a ring on his finger.)

Yet for all its pleasing qualities, *Stolen Kisses* is in the long run a curiously flat and unsatisfying film. Truffaut has returned to the episodic structure that he used for his earlier films. Yet in *Four Hundred Blows* and *Jules and Jim,* despite the meandering and the room left for incidental observation, there was always a sense of destination. *Stolen Kisses,* however, looks for all the world as if its director had no idea

where he was going in the film and as if he accidentally stumbled upon its theme half-way through. Indeed, for much of the film, given its detective-agency locale, its tailing of clients (Gabrielle is also being mysteriously followed by a man in a trench coat), the early introduction of the theme of adultery, the jealousy of Fabienne's husband, as well as the viewer's knowledge of Truffaut's recent absorption in Hitchcock, there lurks the latent possibility that the plot will evolve into a crime passionel à la *Soft Skin*. Eventually, however, these private-eye trimmings turn out to be so many red herrings disguising or standing in for the real theme.

Gilles Jacob in a highly laudatory review of the film in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* wrote, ". . . *Stolen Kisses* is a gay and tender composition: an *éducation sentimentale* of first love, first heartbreak . . ." I think that Jacob has located what the film wants to be about. When we first see Antoine, he is reading *La Lys de la Vallée*, a novel in this tradition by Honoré de Balzac. Anyone familiar with Truffaut's work will know what Balzac is to him. In *The Four Hundred Blows*, the young Antoine builds an altar to the writer. In *The Soft Skin*, the hero lectures on Balzac and money. Never before, however, has Balzac played a central, thematic role in Truffaut's work.

Antoine immediately identifies Fabienne with Mme. Mortsauf, the heroine of *La Lys de la Vallée*, who dies of unconsummated love. Although Fabienne responds to Antoine's interest. he runs away when he senses that she is about to make an advance. (Whether his flight is motivated by shyness or because he feels that it would be dishonest to accept her advances when he is being paid to investigate her or because he wishes to keep her in the idealized role in which he has cast her is never clear. He does however attempt to quit his job.) He writes Fabienne a letter telling her that they must never meet again and in the letter compares her to Mme. Mortsauf. Fabienne, however, is not put off. She goes to Antoine's room and tells him that, although she too admires Mme. Mortsauf, it is no longer necessary to die of unconsummated love. She then proposes an *entente cordiale:* she will spend a few hours with Antoine and then they will never meet again. Antoine agrees.

Truffaut reinforces this theme when the man in the trenchcoat who has been following Gabrielle approaches her and Antoine as they sit in the park. He swears eternal love for Gabrielle in a passage that might have come from Balzac or Stendhal. As he leaves, Gabrielle turns to Antoine and says, "He must be crazy." Antoine nods in agreement.

Antoine's sentimental education seems to be that love as it is presented in nineteenth-century novels doesn't apply anymore. The point is obvious enough not to need arguing. What is arguable is how that point is related to the rest of the film. We never really sense in the first part of the film that Antoine's ideas on love have been formed by nineteenth-century literature. His attitude towards Gabrielle seems very modern indeed. (She complains at one point of him being all hands whenever they go out.) Nor, Jacob to the contrary, does Antoine seem heartbroken when he leaves Fabienne. Most tenuous of all is how Antoine's affair with Fabienne is related to his love for Gabrielle. (Although Fabienne does of course act as a catalyst in dissolving Gabrielle's indifference.) In the old cinematic tradition of the *éducation sentimentale (La Blé en Herbe* is the classic example), an older woman initiated a young boy in the affairs of sex after which he initiates a young girl who has been waiting off-screen. Antoine, however, does not learn anything in bed with Fabienne that presumably he did not know before—we have seen him with several prostitutes. Jacob's explanation, "In 'adultery' is contained another word: 'adult' " is not only morally astonishing but logically sophistic: committing adultery may be part of growing up but it's by no means a guarantee of reaching the goal.

The real problem is that we never know how Antoine is reacting to anything. This failure results from Truffaut's direction of Jean Pierre Léaud as Antoine. Truffaut's direction of actors has, I think, been influenced by Hitchcock in

his last two or three films. In Truffaut's interview book with Hitchcock, Hitchcock speaks about the fact that he prefers stars to actors because "the public attaches less importance to the worries and problems of a character interpreted by an actor who is not well-known to them." Continuing his discussion, he emphasizes the importance of obtaining an actor whose physical presence is correct for the role. He cites a specific example: "In *Saboteur,* the role of the hero was played by a very competent actor, Robert Cummings, but who belonged to the category of light comedians. His face has an amusing air and when he is really in a bad situation, we can't read it on his face."

I don't think Hitchcock's influence on Truffaut has ever been particularly felicitous but in this case it has been disastrous. Truffaut has followed Hitchcock's dictum to ultimate perversity: find a star whose countenance is exactly right for the part and use that countenance as total motivation and explanation for the character. The star is used not as an actor, even in the most rudimentary sense that the term "star" implies, but as a kind of hieroglyph to which the audience responds by supplying the correct reading.

This becomes clear if one compares Truffaut's use of Jeanne Moreau in *Jules and Jim* and *The Bride Wore Black.* In the earlier film, Truffaut was certainly using her "star" image but pushing it to the very brink, so that new and deeper aspects of that personality became evident. In *The Bride Wore Black,* however, Truffaut demands nothing more from Moreau than her famous frozen look, a blank, enigmatic expression that has kept alive the tradition of the "femme fatale" in the sixties. It might have worked since not much more characterization is required in the mystery genre to which *The Bride Wore Black* belongs. It doesn't finally because by the time that the film appeared, Miss Moreau's over-exposure in a series of mediocre films had made her "bit," done without any surprises or nuances, really quite boring.

Truffaut uses Jean-Pierre Léaud in exactly the same way. Léaud, like Moreau, has been over-exposed in the last few years. A number of film-makers have pondered that final frozen image of *Four Hundred Blows* and come up with their responses—Godard in *Masculine-Feminine* and *La Chinoise,* Skolimowski in *Le Départ,* Jean-Pierre Eustache in *Santa Claus Has Blue Eyes,* all seen within the last two years. Léaud has become the leading portrayer of the modern French youth. Truffaut trades upon this image without developing or exploring it as did Skolimowski who uncovered a kooky charm in the actor, or as did Godard by revealing a hitherto unexpected strength.

Truffaut offers only the correct face and the correct image and stops there. It is as if we in the audience, given these, should be able to provide the character's motivation and responses that the director stubbornly will not require of the actor. It doesn't work not only because Léaud's over-exposure is leading to boredom, but also because the character of Antoine is complex enough so that the symbol can't totally fill it. We have to know at certain points in the film what the character is experiencing—we need the actor to step in in place of the image. Although Léaud does show some animation at given moments in *Stolen Kisses,* they are the extraneous, throw-away moments and they stand apart from the rest of the film as almost inconsistencies in the otherwise blank and lethargic character portrayal.

With this fatal flaw, the film shatters into unrelated sections. Antoine is the only thing that might have pulled the film together. But Antoine is indecipherable. I can make a stab at guessing what is meant to happen to Antoine —that his disillusion with Gabrielle's indifference and his sense of being ill-matched with society leads to his idealization of Fabienne and his love for her; Fabienne's sweet puncturing of this ideal leads Antoine to accept love for its momentary pleasures and for whatever reasons it is offered. But I not at all sure that that's the right reading.

Nonetheless, *Stolen Kisses* may be the darling of this year's film audiences. Like Jacob, I think most people are going to respond to the film's persuasive charm and be totally satisfied. That

its plot doesn't parse won't matter. There has been so much talk about film being an autonomous art, ideally as untainted by the theater and literature as possible, so much emphasis on the visual aspect of film, so much denigration of the necessity for plot and character motivation, that many people today refuse to notice bad plot construction or explain it away as the new narrative technique. The visual aspect of a film seems enough to hold their attention; incidental amusing episodes are sufficient to guarantee their pleasure. Some people with whom I have talked have recognized the central hollowness of *Stolen Kisses* but are still able to admire the film because "its point is that nothing really *does* happen to Antoine." Because I respect much of Truffaut's earlier work, I'd rather live with the fact that this time the director muffed whatever point he was trying to make rather than accept the muddle as artistic intention. —GARY CAREY

Short Notices

Brandy in the Wilderness is a short feature by Stanton Kaye, who made *Georg*, a remarkable first-person short feature, several years ago. The new film pursues some of the same self-reflective themes: like other recent works, it is also about its own making. Brandy is the name of a girl who is the "patron" and later girl-friend of the film-maker within the film—played by Kaye himself. Using this autobiographical form, the film traces the groping and doubting and reversals by which it got made, with sideline excursions into the lives of the two central figures. In earlier "print" decades, autobiographical sub-Joycean first novels often turned out to be about the writing of the hero's first novel, featuring lots of innocent narcissism and usually pretty dull since other people's neuroses are never as interesting as our own; additional problems arose from the fact that the actual production of art is not very interesting since it mostly consists of hard invisible internal work. (When everything is said and done, we usually prefer the song to the singer.) Kaye has largely surmounted such difficulties through giving *Brandy* a curiously dominant nostalgic tone—like *Georg*'s, a nostalgia for one's own past life. This sense of time and loss has been a fundamental in Welles, particularly emerging in the elegiac tone of his sound track; for Kaye too, though in a less elaborate way, the sound track's voice-over narration sets the basic style, and gives coherence to material that otherwise might seem banal. And the strength of the ambivalences the film reveals is also a saving grace: the hero records himself as (like the American wilderness in which he and Brandy travel) savage and moody, dedicated and lost, strong and helpless. Like many other recent films, *Brandy* has a kind of *cinema-verite* approach to performance: simple camera set-ups within which the actors can move fairly freely. It's easy to see why film-makers are attracted by such spontaneity and the possibility of less "bad faith." And Kaye is, moreover, interested precisely in the question of whether art-making and living can or should be separated. In *Georg*, the hero's mania for self-recording gave the film a simple, over-riding stylistic force. Kaye has made *Brandy* more subtle, as well as more painful and personal, but at the price of a certain stylistic diffidence. For myself, I remain convinced that highly personal improvisation is inevitably a half-way house. In the end, the film-maker faces a sharply defined decision: you can either make a film about something which is happening in its own right, or about something which you make happen. The "moral" advances registered by Godard are largely due to the greater sophistication and irony which he has brought to the latter kind of work; paradoxically, we feel that there are real people in Godard's films, but there is nothing documentary about them, and he rejects *cinéma-vérité* outright. In *Brandy*, on the other hand, we feel the over-all presence of a documenting spirit, but we are not entirely convinced that the people are real. Yet it is clear that Kaye, like most serious film artists working in narrative forms, is pushing on into this disputed territory where the relation between the artist and his instruments is still very unsettled.—ERNEST CALLENBACH

Pretty Poison. The particularly American preoccupation with teenage psychology has driven scriptwriter Lorenzo Semplar, Jr. to create a very exciting film study of beauteous evil—the sort of human being who is able to set great events into motion, but in most cases, simply remains a "pretty poison," a tolerable but dangerous scourge to the unsuspecting. In the old silent days, these people, usually women, were known as vamps, driving men to ruin by their beauty, ungovernable sexual appetites, and seductive boudoirs permeated by musk and ocelots. Male counterparts to these creatures are much rarer in American cinema, and, except for cherished memories of Lowell Sherman and Monroe Owsley,

its plot doesn't parse won't matter. There has been so much talk about film being an autonomous art, ideally as untainted by the theater and literature as possible, so much emphasis on the visual aspect of film, so much denigration of the necessity for plot and character motivation, that many people today refuse to notice bad plot construction or explain it away as the new narrative technique. The visual aspect of a film seems enough to hold their attention; incidental amusing episodes are sufficient to guarantee their pleasure. Some people with whom I have talked have recognized the central hollowness of *Stolen Kisses* but are still able to admire the film because "its point is that nothing really *does* happen to Antoine." Because I respect much of Truffaut's earlier work, I'd rather live with the fact that this time the director muffed whatever point he was trying to make rather than accept the muddle as artistic intention. —GARY CAREY

Short Notices

Brandy in the Wilderness is a short feature by Stanton Kaye, who made *Georg*, a remarkable first-person short feature, several years ago. The new film pursues some of the same self-reflective themes: like other recent works, it is also about its own making. Brandy is the name of a girl who is the "patron" and later girl-friend of the film-maker within the film—played by Kaye himself. Using this autobiographical form, the film traces the groping and doubting and reversals by which it got made, with sideline excursions into the lives of the two central figures. In earlier "print" decades, autobiographical sub-Joycean first novels often turned out to be about the writing of the hero's first novel, featuring lots of innocent narcissism and usually pretty dull since other people's neuroses are never as interesting as our own; additional problems arose from the fact that the actual production of art is not very interesting since it mostly consists of hard invisible internal work. (When everything is said and done, we usually prefer the song to the singer.) Kaye has largely surmounted such difficulties through giving *Brandy* a curiously dominant nostalgic tone—like *Georg*'s, a nostalgia for one's own past life. This sense of time and loss has been a fundamental in Welles, particularly emerging in the elegiac tone of his sound track; for Kaye too, though in a less elaborate way, the sound track's voice-over narration sets the basic style, and gives coherence to material that otherwise might seem banal. And the strength of the ambivalences the film reveals is also a saving grace: the hero records himself as (like the American wilderness in which he and Brandy travel) savage and moody, dedicated and lost, strong and helpless. Like many other recent films, *Brandy* has a kind of *cinema-verite* approach to performance: simple camera set-ups within which the actors can move fairly freely. It's easy to see why film-makers are attracted by such spontaneity and the possibility of less "bad faith." And Kaye is, moreover, interested precisely in the question of whether art-making and living can or should be separated. In *Georg*, the hero's mania for self-recording gave the film a simple, over-riding stylistic force. Kaye has made *Brandy* more subtle, as well as more painful and personal, but at the price of a certain stylistic diffidence. For myself, I remain convinced that highly personal improvisation is inevitably a half-way house. In the end, the film-maker faces a sharply defined decision: you can either make a film about something which is happening in its own right, or about something which you make happen. The "moral" advances registered by Godard are largely due to the greater sophistication and irony which he has brought to the latter kind of work; paradoxically, we feel that there are real people in Godard's films, but there is nothing documentary about them, and he rejects *cinéma-vérité* outright. In *Brandy*, on the other hand, we feel the over-all presence of a documenting spirit, but we are not entirely convinced that the people are real. Yet it is clear that Kaye, like most serious film artists working in narrative forms, is pushing on into this disputed territory where the relation between the artist and his instruments is still very unsettled.—ERNEST CALLENBACH

Pretty Poison. The particularly American preoccupation with teenage psychology has driven scriptwriter Lorenzo Semplar, Jr. to create a very exciting film study of beauteous evil—the sort of human being who is able to set great events into motion, but in most cases, simply remains a "pretty poison," a tolerable but dangerous scourge to the unsuspecting. In the old silent days, these people, usually women, were known as vamps, driving men to ruin by their beauty, ungovernable sexual appetites, and seductive boudoirs permeated by musk and ocelots. Male counterparts to these creatures are much rarer in American cinema, and, except for cherished memories of Lowell Sherman and Monroe Owsley,

its plot doesn't parse won't matter. There has been so much talk about film being an autonomous art, ideally as untainted by the theater and literature as possible, so much emphasis on the visual aspect of film, so much denigration of the necessity for plot and character motivation, that many people today refuse to notice bad plot construction or explain it away as the new narrative technique. The visual aspect of a film seems enough to hold their attention; incidental amusing episodes are sufficient to guarantee their pleasure. Some people with whom I have talked have recognized the central hollowness of *Stolen Kisses* but are still able to admire the film because "its point is that nothing really *does* happen to Antoine." Because I respect much of Truffaut's earlier work, I'd rather live with the fact that this time the director muffed whatever point he was trying to make rather than accept the muddle as artistic intention. —GARY CAREY

Short Notices

Brandy in the Wilderness is a short feature by Stanton Kaye, who made *Georg*, a remarkable first-person short feature, several years ago. The new film pursues some of the same self-reflective themes: like other recent works, it is also about its own making. Brandy is the name of a girl who is the "patron" and later girl-friend of the film-maker within the film—played by Kaye himself. Using this autobiographical form, the film traces the groping and doubting and reversals by which it got made, with sideline excursions into the lives of the two central figures. In earlier "print" decades, autobiographical sub-Joycean first novels often turned out to be about the writing of the hero's first novel, featuring lots of innocent narcissism and usually pretty dull since other people's neuroses are never as interesting as our own; additional problems arose from the fact that the actual production of art is not very interesting since it mostly consists of hard invisible internal work. (When everything is said and done, we usually prefer the song to the singer.) Kaye has largely surmounted such difficulties through giving *Brandy* a curiously dominant nostalgic tone—like *Georg*'s, a nostalgia for one's own past life. This sense of time and loss has been a fundamental in Welles, particularly emerging in the elegiac tone of his sound track; for Kaye too, though in a less elaborate way, the sound track's voice-over narration sets the basic style, and gives coherence to material that otherwise might seem banal. And the strength of the ambivalences the film reveals is also a saving grace: the hero records himself as (like the American wilderness in which he and Brandy travel) savage and moody, dedicated and lost, strong and helpless. Like many other recent films, *Brandy* has a kind of *cinema-verite* approach to performance: simple camera set-ups within which the actors can move fairly freely. It's easy to see why film-makers are attracted by such spontaneity and the possibility of less "bad faith." And Kaye is, moreover, interested precisely in the question of whether art-making and living can or should be separated. In *Georg*, the hero's mania for self-recording gave the film a simple, over-riding stylistic force. Kaye has made *Brandy* more subtle, as well as more painful and personal, but at the price of a certain stylistic diffidence. For myself, I remain convinced that highly personal improvisation is inevitably a half-way house. In the end, the film-maker faces a sharply defined decision: you can either make a film about something which is happening in its own right, or about something which you make happen. The "moral" advances registered by Godard are largely due to the greater sophistication and irony which he has brought to the latter kind of work; paradoxically, we feel that there are real people in Godard's films, but there is nothing documentary about them, and he rejects *cinéma-vérité* outright. In *Brandy*, on the other hand, we feel the over-all presence of a documenting spirit, but we are not entirely convinced that the people are real. Yet it is clear that Kaye, like most serious film artists working in narrative forms, is pushing on into this disputed territory where the relation between the artist and his instruments is still very unsettled.—ERNEST CALLENBACH

Pretty Poison. The particularly American preoccupation with teenage psychology has driven scriptwriter Lorenzo Semplar, Jr. to create a very exciting film study of beauteous evil—the sort of human being who is able to set great events into motion, but in most cases, simply remains a "pretty poison," a tolerable but dangerous scourge to the unsuspecting. In the old silent days, these people, usually women, were known as vamps, driving men to ruin by their beauty, ungovernable sexual appetites, and seductive boudoirs permeated by musk and ocelots. Male counterparts to these creatures are much rarer in American cinema, and, except for cherished memories of Lowell Sherman and Monroe Owsley,

only Dmytryk's *They Won't Believe Me* and Lewin's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* can qualify as companion-pieces to *Pretty Poison.* Noel Black, in his first feature film, makes a very successful debut with this film. Unfortunately, the film is quite difficult to see, for its distribution has been quite limited. It is beautifully made. The dialogue is crisp, realistic, and convincing; the photography (by David Quaid) is filled with images that stay in the mind, exploring a part of America (Massachusetts) that is interesting to look at and revelatory of the details of a segment of American life. The characters move through summery forests, predawn highways, hot-dog stands, chemical plants, trailer camps, suburban rooms – establishing a mood, a visual whiff of reality that alerts the senses. Obviously, a great deal of care has been put into the structure of this film, because the story is one of youthful despair and violence, one that has been told so often in motion pictures, but there are no clichés here at all. The acting is superb. An exarsonist named Dennis Pitt (Anthony Perkins) is paroled and then employed at a menial task in a chemical plant. He is a fantasist, his dream-world full of Bondian adventure and sexual longing. Quite by chance, he is attracted to a lovely blonde teenager, Sue Ann (Tuesday Weld), and with disarming bravado, convinces her that he is a CIA agent. Sue Ann's boring life of drill teams, hygiene classes, and desultory make-outs on lover's lane is immediately brightened by Dennis's promise of excitement, and gradually, she forces him to act out his suppressed dreams of domination and revolt. The film builds to a horrific examination of the extent to which America can breed a generation of thrill-hungry, destructive dreamers. Although Perkins and Miss Weld are on the far side of adolescence, they are overwhelmingly fascinating. In his best performance since *Psycho,* Perkins is quite moving in an emotionally complex, hysterical role, exhibiting once more that he is without enough parts in films to encompass his unique personality. Tuesday Weld's portrait of a contemporary, deranged Pollyanna is so intricate and truthful that it seems incredible for her to have been so misused in films for many years. *Pretty Poison* is a summery chiller, and even Johnny Mandel's rich musical score (quite a good one, with just a smidgeon of *The Sandpiper* lingering in those Massachusetts forests) cannot dispel the Oresteian mood of Noel Black's quiet, American tragedy.–ALBERT JOHNSON

The Strange Affair has my vote as the neglected film of 1968. David Green's previous film, *Sebastian,* was underrated too, but at least it got a general release. *The Strange Affair* disappeared after being blasted by most of the New York critics last summer (only Andrew Sarris tried to save it), and didn't turn up in Los Angeles until six or seven months later, on the lower half of neighborhood double bills. Italian Westerns and Jerry Lewis pictures get better treatment, but this film is an extremely provocative consideration of the role of the police in a depraved and violent society. The movie is structured around the disillusionment of a young constable (Michael York), but the most interesting character is the psychotic detective (excellently played by Jeremy Kemp), somewhat reminiscent of Quinlan in Welles's *Touch of Evil,* who bribes informers, blackmails witnesses, and plants evidence in his obsessive determination to scourge the world of evil; what makes him most disturbing is that, like Quinlan, he is usually *right* about the men whom he frames. But this film is more cynical than *Touch of Evil,* for when the detective is discredited, the guilty men go free. The criminals are not petty lawbreakers, but vicious, sadistic killers, while the policeman is frighteningly messianic and ruthless too; the film does not make it easy for us to decide which is the lesser evil. The plot of the movie is too elaborate, and the various pieces of the story are connected by unconvincing coincidences and contrivances, but its themes are nonetheless powerful and relevant. And it's a beautifully made film. David Greene's images–a group of white-clad flower children waiting for the arrival of their guru, antiseptic New Scotland Yard and prefab apartment complexes adjacent to ashen dumpheaps, the horror of English schoolboy brutality juxtaposed with the overripe cosiness of an elegant Victorian mansion–are always surprising and tantalizing. It would have been easy to rely on mod clichés, but David Greene forcefully communicates a unique, personal vision of London. If he is lucky enough to find material strong enough to make him a "major" director, *The Strange Affair* will no doubt be rediscovered; but it deserves to be searched out and appreciated *now.*–STEPHEN FARBER

The Thomas Crown Affair is a chrome and plastic concoction, liberally sprinkled with "significance," that solidifies Norman Jewison's claim to be the Stanley Kramer of the new generation. But while Kramer's films usually cohere on some level, Jewison remains confused throughout. Kramer debases and flattens out ideas and human reality; Jewison doesn't even seem to care that much. Jewison's dialogue frequently implies some important theme

only Dmytryk's *They Won't Believe Me* and Lewin's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* can qualify as companion-pieces to *Pretty Poison.* Noel Black, in his first feature film, makes a very successful debut with this film. Unfortunately, the film is quite difficult to see, for its distribution has been quite limited. It is beautifully made. The dialogue is crisp, realistic, and convincing; the photography (by David Quaid) is filled with images that stay in the mind, exploring a part of America (Massachusetts) that is interesting to look at and revelatory of the details of a segment of American life. The characters move through summery forests, predawn highways, hot-dog stands, chemical plants, trailer camps, suburban rooms – establishing a mood, a visual whiff of reality that alerts the senses. Obviously, a great deal of care has been put into the structure of this film, because the story is one of youthful despair and violence, one that has been told so often in motion pictures, but there are no clichés here at all. The acting is superb. An exarsonist named Dennis Pitt (Anthony Perkins) is paroled and then employed at a menial task in a chemical plant. He is a fantasist, his dream-world full of Bondian adventure and sexual longing. Quite by chance, he is attracted to a lovely blonde teenager, Sue Ann (Tuesday Weld), and with disarming bravado, convinces her that he is a CIA agent. Sue Ann's boring life of drill teams, hygiene classes, and desultory make-outs on lover's lane is immediately brightened by Dennis's promise of excitement, and gradually, she forces him to act out his suppressed dreams of domination and revolt. The film builds to a horrific examination of the extent to which America can breed a generation of thrill-hungry, destructive dreamers. Although Perkins and Miss Weld are on the far side of adolescence, they are overwhelmingly fascinating. In his best performance since *Psycho,* Perkins is quite moving in an emotionally complex, hysterical role, exhibiting once more that he is without enough parts in films to encompass his unique personality. Tuesday Weld's portrait of a contemporary, deranged Pollyanna is so intricate and truthful that it seems incredible for her to have been so misused in films for many years. *Pretty Poison* is a summery chiller, and even Johnny Mandel's rich musical score (quite a good one, with just a smidgeon of *The Sandpiper* lingering in those Massachusetts forests) cannot dispel the Oresteian mood of Noel Black's quiet, American tragedy.–ALBERT JOHNSON

The Strange Affair has my vote as the neglected film of 1968. David Green's previous film, *Sebastian,* was underrated too, but at least it got a general release. *The Strange Affair* disappeared after being blasted by most of the New York critics last summer (only Andrew Sarris tried to save it), and didn't turn up in Los Angeles until six or seven months later, on the lower half of neighborhood double bills. Italian Westerns and Jerry Lewis pictures get better treatment, but this film is an extremely provocative consideration of the role of the police in a depraved and violent society. The movie is structured around the disillusionment of a young constable (Michael York), but the most interesting character is the psychotic detective (excellently played by Jeremy Kemp), somewhat reminiscent of Quinlan in Welles's *Touch of Evil,* who bribes informers, blackmails witnesses, and plants evidence in his obsessive determination to scourge the world of evil; what makes him most disturbing is that, like Quinlan, he is usually *right* about the men whom he frames. But this film is more cynical than *Touch of Evil,* for when the detective is discredited, the guilty men go free. The criminals are not petty lawbreakers, but vicious, sadistic killers, while the policeman is frighteningly messianic and ruthless too; the film does not make it easy for us to decide which is the lesser evil. The plot of the movie is too elaborate, and the various pieces of the story are connected by unconvincing coincidences and contrivances, but its themes are nonetheless powerful and relevant. And it's a beautifully made film. David Greene's images–a group of white-clad flower children waiting for the arrival of their guru, antiseptic New Scotland Yard and prefab apartment complexes adjacent to ashen dumpheaps, the horror of English schoolboy brutality juxtaposed with the overripe cosiness of an elegant Victorian mansion–are always surprising and tantalizing. It would have been easy to rely on mod clichés, but David Greene forcefully communicates a unique, personal vision of London. If he is lucky enough to find material strong enough to make him a "major" director, *The Strange Affair* will no doubt be rediscovered; but it deserves to be searched out and appreciated *now.*–STEPHEN FARBER

The Thomas Crown Affair is a chrome and plastic concoction, liberally sprinkled with "significance," that solidifies Norman Jewison's claim to be the Stanley Kramer of the new generation. But while Kramer's films usually cohere on some level, Jewison remains confused throughout. Kramer debases and flattens out ideas and human reality; Jewison doesn't even seem to care that much. Jewison's dialogue frequently implies some important theme

only Dmytryk's *They Won't Believe Me* and Lewin's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* can qualify as companion-pieces to *Pretty Poison.* Noel Black, in his first feature film, makes a very successful debut with this film. Unfortunately, the film is quite difficult to see, for its distribution has been quite limited. It is beautifully made. The dialogue is crisp, realistic, and convincing; the photography (by David Quaid) is filled with images that stay in the mind, exploring a part of America (Massachusetts) that is interesting to look at and revelatory of the details of a segment of American life. The characters move through summery forests, predawn highways, hot-dog stands, chemical plants, trailer camps, suburban rooms – establishing a mood, a visual whiff of reality that alerts the senses. Obviously, a great deal of care has been put into the structure of this film, because the story is one of youthful despair and violence, one that has been told so often in motion pictures, but there are no clichés here at all. The acting is superb. An exarsonist named Dennis Pitt (Anthony Perkins) is paroled and then employed at a menial task in a chemical plant. He is a fantasist, his dream-world full of Bondian adventure and sexual longing. Quite by chance, he is attracted to a lovely blonde teenager, Sue Ann (Tuesday Weld), and with disarming bravado, convinces her that he is a CIA agent. Sue Ann's boring life of drill teams, hygiene classes, and desultory make-outs on lover's lane is immediately brightened by Dennis's promise of excitement, and gradually, she forces him to act out his suppressed dreams of domination and revolt. The film builds to a horrific examination of the extent to which America can breed a generation of thrill-hungry, destructive dreamers. Although Perkins and Miss Weld are on the far side of adolescence, they are overwhelmingly fascinating. In his best performance since *Psycho,* Perkins is quite moving in an emotionally complex, hysterical role, exhibiting once more that he is without enough parts in films to encompass his unique personality. Tuesday Weld's portrait of a contemporary, deranged Pollyanna is so intricate and truthful that it seems incredible for her to have been so misused in films for many years. *Pretty Poison* is a summery chiller, and even Johnny Mandel's rich musical score (quite a good one, with just a smidgeon of *The Sandpiper* lingering in those Massachusetts forests) cannot dispel the Oresteian mood of Noel Black's quiet, American tragedy.–ALBERT JOHNSON

The Strange Affair has my vote as the neglected film of 1968. David Green's previous film, *Sebastian,* was underrated too, but at least it got a general release. *The Strange Affair* disappeared after being blasted by most of the New York critics last summer (only Andrew Sarris tried to save it), and didn't turn up in Los Angeles until six or seven months later, on the lower half of neighborhood double bills. Italian Westerns and Jerry Lewis pictures get better treatment, but this film is an extremely provocative consideration of the role of the police in a depraved and violent society. The movie is structured around the disillusionment of a young constable (Michael York), but the most interesting character is the psychotic detective (excellently played by Jeremy Kemp), somewhat reminiscent of Quinlan in Welles's *Touch of Evil,* who bribes informers, blackmails witnesses, and plants evidence in his obsessive determination to scourge the world of evil; what makes him most disturbing is that, like Quinlan, he is usually *right* about the men whom he frames. But this film is more cynical than *Touch of Evil,* for when the detective is discredited, the guilty men go free. The criminals are not petty lawbreakers, but vicious, sadistic killers, while the policeman is frighteningly messianic and ruthless too; the film does not make it easy for us to decide which is the lesser evil. The plot of the movie is too elaborate, and the various pieces of the story are connected by unconvincing coincidences and contrivances, but its themes are nonetheless powerful and relevant. And it's a beautifully made film. David Greene's images–a group of white-clad flower children waiting for the arrival of their guru, antiseptic New Scotland Yard and prefab apartment complexes adjacent to ashen dumpheaps, the horror of English schoolboy brutality juxtaposed with the overripe cosiness of an elegant Victorian mansion–are always surprising and tantalizing. It would have been easy to rely on mod clichés, but David Greene forcefully communicates a unique, personal vision of London. If he is lucky enough to find material strong enough to make him a "major" director, *The Strange Affair* will no doubt be rediscovered; but it deserves to be searched out and appreciated *now.*–STEPHEN FARBER

The Thomas Crown Affair is a chrome and plastic concoction, liberally sprinkled with "significance," that solidifies Norman Jewison's claim to be the Stanley Kramer of the new generation. But while Kramer's films usually cohere on some level, Jewison remains confused throughout. Kramer debases and flattens out ideas and human reality; Jewison doesn't even seem to care that much. Jewison's dialogue frequently implies some important theme

is lurking, only to be flushed: Steve McQueen, as the businessman-bankrobber, stops every few scenes for perfunctory lines like "It's not the money. It's me and the system." Faye Dunaway, as an insurance investigator specializing in bank robberies, seems to make some effort to deepen this kind of anti-establishment banality. She is festooned in high-fashion curlicues courtesy of Thea Van Runkle, designer for *Bonnie and Clyde*. Her sophisticated gloss and lacquered hair become a visual metaphor for her actual moral indifference, her coldblooded attempt to entrap McQueen sexually, and the ethical void behind her ironic banter. Paul Burke, as an unimaginative but honest police lieutenant, who detests the insurance company's methods, adds further shading to this theme. Dunaway becomes ambivalent about what she is doing to McQueen, but her ambivalence shows in her clothes rather than her actions. She waits for the kill at the end in a darker, more demure outfit, and let-down hair. Other fragments can be placed into this unrealized approach to the world of consumer objects and *Vogue*-defined beauty: the drop-off place for the robbery is a cemetery; the first moments of real talk (as opposed to banter) between McQueen and Dunaway occur on an empty bench, on the floor of an unfinished house, not in some sumptuous interior. But these possibilities remain frozen gestures. As in *In the Heat of the Night*, Jewison expects his stylistic virtuosity to distract the audience from the basic illogic of the plot, its cheap ironies and false suspense. His interest in manufacturing a slick entertainment and dazzling his audience with surface destroys the deeper complexity that the film might have achieved. Jewison neither trusts nor is interested in his actors or his story. Whenever McQueen and Dunaway succeed in achieving some small humanity or in conveying some reality to their relation, Jewison slams in with colored lights, angle shots, or a jarring and irrelevant score that mingles bop singing, ersatz Simon and Garfunkle from Noel Harrison, and surging inhuman periods. Jewison's giddy camera drains all sexual content from a Hitchcock-derived kissing scene, and transforms the psychically appealing charms of McQueen and Dunaway into the gross planes and angles of mannikin. The split screen is an appropriate metaphor for the debacle of *The Thomas Crown Affair*. It never demands a synthesis of forces, but stays decorative, like a giant jigsaw puzzle. It's hard to hold out any hope for Jewison after this film. For all his attachment to what is "cinematic," he has no sense of the shape of a film.

—Leo Braudy

Fascinating investigations into the films and philosophy of

JEAN Cocteau and FEDERICO Fellini

Good news for the film buff — the highly acclaimed series, SEGHERS' CINÉMA D'AUJOURD'HUI is being translated into English. Each volume contains a thorough critique on the director and his films by a major film writer, provides excerpts from his screenplays, and includes — besides major critics' comments — the filmmaker's own comments on his films, on the film medium and on the work of other filmmakers. Each study has a complete bibliography and is illustrated with photographs.

The first two volumes, ready now, are:
Jean Cocteau, by RENE GILSON
Federico Fellini, by GILBERT SALACHAS

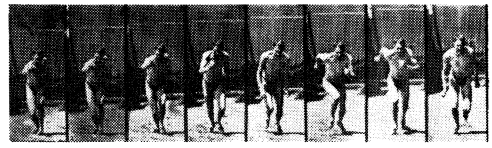
IN ENGLISH —

Editions Seghers' Cinéma d'Aujourd' hui

$2.95 each, now at your bookstore
419 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10016

Crown

Animal Locomotion



An Electro-Photographic Investigation of Consecutive Phases of Animal Movements

by **Eadweard Muybridge**

A reprint of the 1887 edition

Regarded as basic documents in the history of the motion picture, these 781 plates of humans and animals in motion are made from photographs taken by Eadweard Muybridge in the 1870's and 1880's. Each plate portrays the successive stages of a particular kind of human or animal movement—walking, running, laying bricks, climbing stairs, fencing, jumping. This Da Capo press edition of *Animal Locomotion* includes *full-size* reproductions of all 781 plates included in the rare 1887 edition, with each plate printed on one side of a heavy sheet and left loose in portfolio so as to be easily available for close study or display.

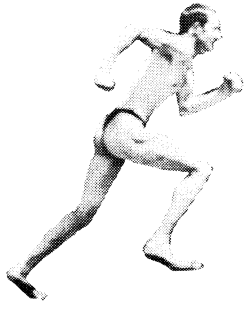
ELEVEN VOLUMES IN EIGHT:

1) Males (Nude) (100 plates)*	$150.00
2) Females (Nude) (100 plates)	150.00
3) Males (Nude) and Females (Nude) (111 plates)	165.00
4) Males (Pelvis Cloth) (72 plates)	110.00
5) Females (Semi-Nude & Transparent Drapery) and Children (79 plates)	120.00
6) Males (Draped) and Females (Draped); Abnormal Movements—Males and Females (Nude and Semi-Nude); and Miscellaneous Subjects (100 plates)	150.00
7) Horses and Domestic Animals (135 plates)	200.00
8) Wild Animals and Birds (84 plates)	125.00

*Available 7/69

781 plates (13½" x 19½") in portfolio (Volumes are available hardbound for an additional $10.00 per volume.)

Price til 7/31/69: $ 800.00 the set
Price thereafter: 1,000.00 the set



DA CAPO PRESS
A division of Plenum Publishing Corporation
ONE FOURTEEN FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10011

"I WANT TO EXPRESS MY UNBOUNDED ADMIRATION of Jan Troell's 'Here's Your Life.' You don't just watch the film, you live through it. Here, Sweden, is your life."

—Vernon Young, FILM IN SWEDEN

SVENSK & BRANDON FILMS PRESENT A FILM BY **JAN TROELL**

HERE'S YOUR LIFE

Directed, photographed, edited by Jan Troell & screenplay by Mr. Troell & Producer Bengst Forslund. Based on a novel by Eyvind Johnson. Music by Erik Nordgren (Wild Strawberries, Seventh Seal, Smiles of a Summer Night, etc.). Starring **Eddie Axberg,** with Ulla Sjoblom, Per Oscarsson, Gunnar Bjornstrand, Ulf Palme. A Svensk Filmindustri Picture. Released by Brandon Films.

"IMMEDIATELY THERE'S A THRILL OF EXPECTATION, that this film is in the hands of a director with a vision of his own, and the expectation is quickly confirmed. The film is generally lovely, made with an ingenuity that enriches its materials. Superb photography!" —Stanley Kauffmann, NEW REPUBLIC

"IT IS UNCOMPROMISING IN ITS ARTISTRY, HONESTY AND HUMANITY. And it really is your life — yours, mine, everybody's — examined and illuminated!" —John Simon, NEW LEADER

Available in 35 mm and 16 mm.

Theatrical Distribution / Non Theatrical Distribution

BRANDON FILMS, INC.

Dept. FQ, 221 West 57 St., New York 10019 (212) CI 6-4867