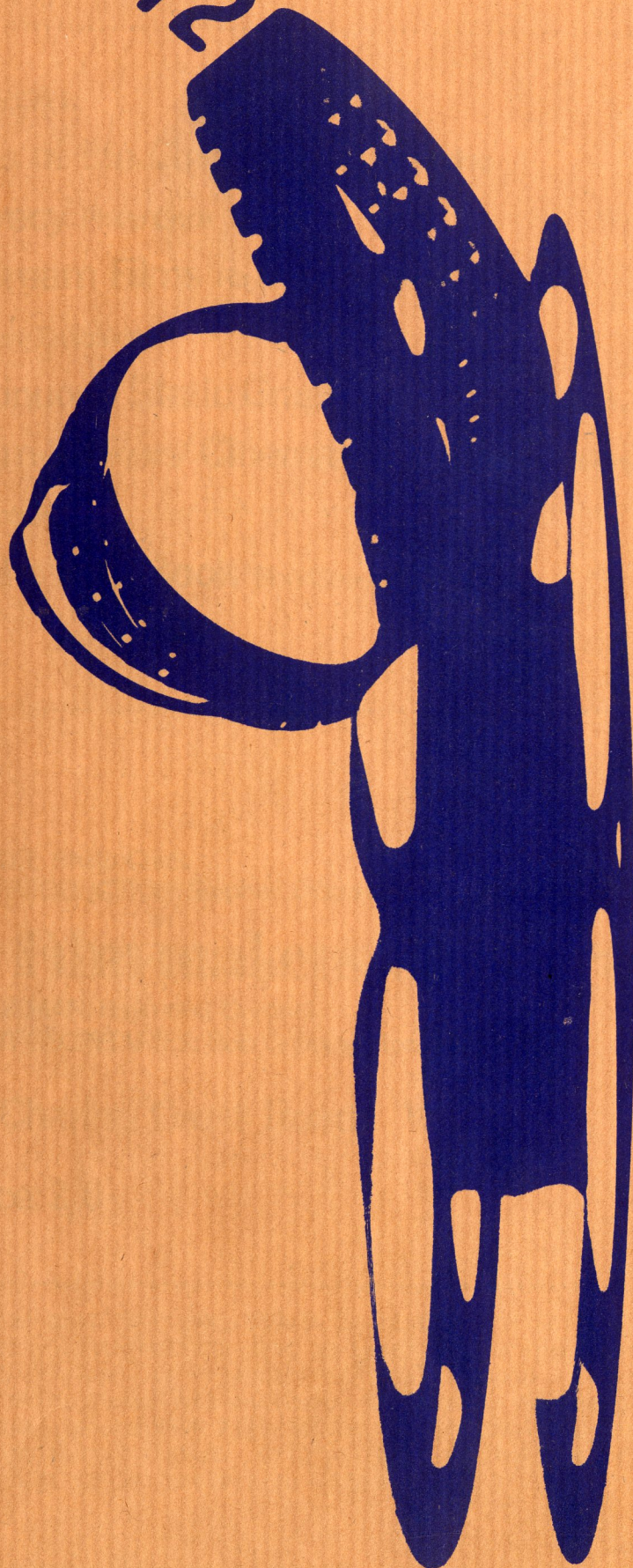


СИММ 2





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# **CINIM:2**

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**Editorial** Philip Crick

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**Notes from the Wee Book** Ron Geesin

**Cinimations**

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## **Cinim**

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CHAIRMAN: Raymond Durnat

JOINT SECRETARIES: Bob Cobbing, Ron Geesin

**94 Charing Cross Road W.C.2.**

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Correspondence, and contributions, should be sent to the Editor, CINIM, 25 Durlston Road, Kingston on Thames. Contributions must be typed double spaced and accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, or international reply coupon. Intending contributors are advised that our main, though not exclusive interest is in the growth-points of the contemporary cinema, in creative film-making, and in the study in depth of work by directors of international status. Original work in the area of film aesthetics is also welcome. (No payment can at present be offered).

# EDITORIAL

What inhibits the professionals?

Fear.

Fear of an overdraft.

Fear of the norm.

Fear of censorship.

Fear of speaking out in the language  
they control.

So they make inhibited films.

Or oblique films; insinuating sequences.

What inhibits the nonprofessionals?

Timidity.

The compulsive urge to copy.

And lack of money.

So they make ardent non-films.

Who, then, remains?

Lunatics, lovers, and poets.

Like a good poet, the film-creator must be:

1. a craftsman,
2. a technician,
3. unafraid.

These three to the limits of his strength.

These three to the extremes that each  
can bear.

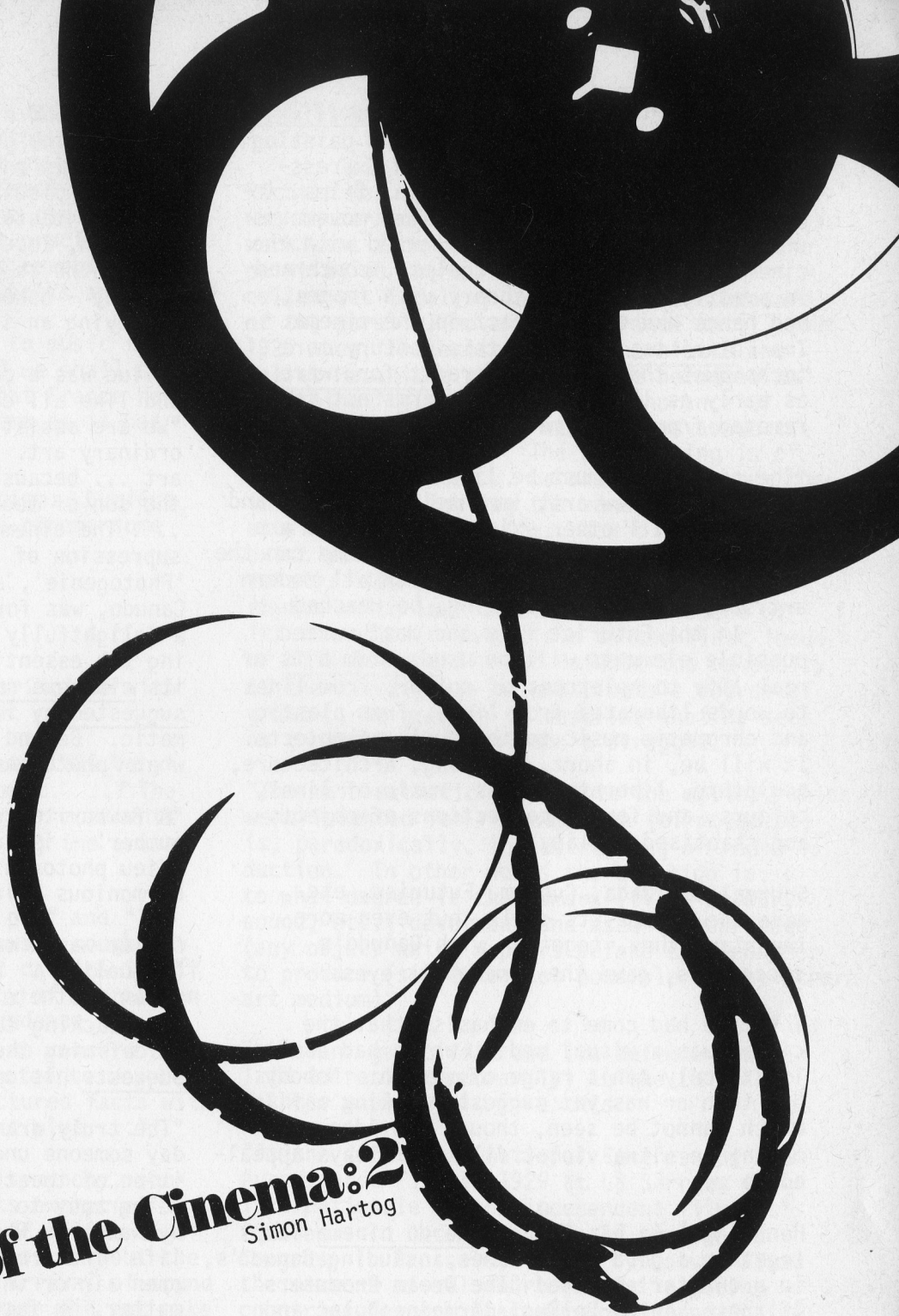
He must not be afraid.

Not afraid to connect through camera  
his pain with the worlds pain,  
his hate with the worlds hate,  
his own turbulence with the rage  
of the image.

PHILIP CRICK







# Aestheticians of the Cinema:2

Simon Hartog

"Ce qui est cinema, c'est ce qui ne peut être raconté." René Clair

## THE EYES HAVE IT

After Canudo the dam busted. The Word - as ever - had made the Image acceptable. Canudo's writings not only made the cinema acceptable it also made writing about the cinema legitimate. His cinematic millenarianism raised the potentiality of the film and expanded its formal limits. Canudo's message, however,

was not codifiable. He left more inspiration than information. The empty screen is a challenge, a chasm. The curtains are there for a reason. Affirmation is one thing; making a film is another. Or as Godard puts it, "Oui, que faire?" Canudo's immediate successors in speculation were, unlike Canudo, film-makers. They put their ideas on film as well as on paper.

Although Canudo's influence on the avant-garde movement of the twenties was immense, it was not the only one. The twenties was a period of great cross-fertilization in the arts, similar to what is happening in



America today. Léger and Dali made films. Caligari has, perhaps more than any painting come to be the example of German Expressionism. Most of the experimental films, in fact, drew their inspiration from movements which were not basically concerned with the cinema. They were, nevertheless, concerned in practice if not in theory with images, and hence had their effect on the cinema. The Futurists, who gave this century more techniques than they get credit for, were as early as 1916 talking in terms not far removed from mixed media and expanded cinema

"The cinema ... must be liberated so that it can become a new art, immensely more vast and agile than all other existing arts. We are convinced that only through the cinema can the 'polyexpressivity', towards which all modern artistic research is tending, be reached. ... In the Futurist film, the most varied possible elements will be used: from bits of real life to splotches of colour, from lines to words liberated from lines, from plastic and chromatic music to the music of objects. It will be, in short, painting, architecture, sculpture, liberated words, music of lines, colours, and forms, collections of objects and chaotised reality."

Surrealism, Dada, Cubism, Futurism, etc., gave the cinema its goals, but even more important they, together with Canudo's successors, gave the cinema its eyes.

The time had come to emphasise that the cinema was a visual medium which had as its limits only man's range of vision. Nobody did then or has yet suggested making a film which cannot be seen, though the idea of making an ultra-violet film has always appealed to me.

Henri Agel in his Esthétique du cinéma lumps together a good dozen names, including Canudo's, in a chapter entitled "The Dream Promoters". Of these Louise Delluc, Germaine Dulac and Hans Richter seem to be most characteristic and significant of that epoch. They share a passion for the avant-garde film, a concern for the visual expansion of the cinema, and a conviction that the cinema was contaminated with alien elements. They talked in terms of poetry and purity, of abstraction and rhythm. If they were "dream promoters", their dreams were sweet, and in spite of their connection with Dada and Surrealism, they never seem to have had nightmares.

#### Louis Delluc

Delluc is the most conservative - if that is appropriate in such company - of the three. In his films - the best known of which are Fièvre (1921) and La femme de nulle part

(1922) - and his writings he never loses sight of the demands of the commercial cinema. He is on the other hand, Canudo's most faithful disciple, not only because he shares Canudo's taste for 'mainstream' films, e.g. Griffith, Ince, and the Swedes, but also because he is primarily interested in the utility - however poetic - of the images in conveying an idea to the audience.

Delluc was a convert to the cinematic faith and like all converts he had no doubts: "We are assisting at the birth of an extraordinary art. Perhaps the only really modern art ... because it is at the same time ... the son of technology and the ideal of men. ... The cinema is a step towards that suppression of art which goes beyond art, life." 'Photogenie', a terminological legacy from Canudo, was for Delluc lo specifico filmico, a delightfully Thomistic Italian phrase meaning the essential cinematic characteristic, its cine qua non. Anything which could not be suggested by images in motion was not cinematic. Beyond that it is easier to discover what 'photogenie' is not.

"A favourite trick of fools - what an imposing number! - is substitute photography for cinema. Adieu photogenie! ... Photogenie ... is the harmonious balance of cinema and photography."

Delluc was a self-confessed and self-defined 'visualist'. He was not, however, a purist or an aesthete. His vision was functional. In attacking the second oldest profession and in defining the role of the director, Delluc suggests his conception of the cinema.

"The truly dramatic film will be born on the day someone understands that the transposition of theatre actors and their plastic telegraphy to the screen must be eradicated by nature. When I say nature I mean 'still life' (nature morte). Plants or objects, open air or interiors, material details, all matter, in fact, gives a new aspect to the dramatic theme. Standing by itself this still and silent life animates itself according to the place given it by the composer of the film. This mise-en-avant of things accentuates the personality of the man, of the actor. He is no longer anything more than a detail, a fragment of matter. He is a note in the visual musician's great composition."

Inherent in Delluc's notion of 'photogenie' was the technique of juxtaposing images within a scene in order to make a point or suggest a feeling, and by extension the value of rhythm in joining the images. As a result of seeing Intolerance he extended his ideas on juxtaposition to include intercutting between different scenes. He was the first person to use the word 'montage' to describe this process.



Although he had a fondness for describing the cinema as poetry, he disliked the literary influence on the cinema almost as much as the theatrical. He accused Abel Gance of having read "too much, and badly". The cinema was for Delluc a truly popular art precisely because it did not demand, "this cerebral preparation which is required by books and music."

Even so the cinema was closer to music than to books. "I say to you - and we shall see if the future says it too - that France has as little feeling for the cinema as it has for music."

He wasn't alone in his scepticism. Lumière had predicted the death of the cinema some twenty years previous.

#### Germaine Dulac

Mme. Dulac did not differ in principle with Delluc, but she did go further.

"The cinema ... carries in itself the very essence of the universe: movement. ... The Cinema is more an art of interior movements than of exterior ones ... (it is) the art of spiritual nuances."

She was an apostle of "cinema pur" and "la musique des yeux". She rigorously sought Lo specifico filmico. "Every art carries itself a personality, an individuality of expression that gives it value and independence."

Action or external facts were no concern of hers. The screen should be devoted to movement and rhythm, not a set of structured facts with no cadence. "A theme but not a plot ..."

Her ideal film was, "a visual symphony, combinations of rhythmic movements exempt of characters where the movement of a line or a shape ... creates emotion with or without the crystallisation of ideas." The arrival of sound and the technical demands it made did not make her flinch, as it did many. "The ideal sound film will be the one in which there is only a word, only a cry ... Beyond that there is only room for silence."

Dulac, like her contemporaries, was making two real points. She wanted to find the "way to reach sensitivity and intelligence through the eyes," and she wanted to rid the cinema of its unnecessary and unfortunate baggage.

"A real film should not be able to 'tell' itself. It must search for its emotive and active principle in images made up only of visual vibrations. Do you 'tell' a painting? Or a sculpture? Certainly not. You can only evoke the impression and emotion that they create."

#### Hans Richter

Richter was a German painter, and Dada. He was concerned with painterly virtues, and his work went from painting on long scrolls to painting on short films. He and his colleagues Eggeling and Ruttman were unaware of the parallel movement in France until about 1925 when "The existence of Entre'acte and Ballet Mecanique proved that we belonged to something." In spite of his ignorance of Canudo and the rest he was worried about the same things: actors ("The best acting is of little importance ... because with proper positioning and lighting the same effect can be attained"), scripts ("... don't count or don't exist at all or have a completely subordinate role"). The poetry of a film depends upon rhythm which is, "... the basic element of its force". In an article in the first issue of Film Culture Richter defends the necessity of the avant-garde as the cinema's source of growth. He goes on to describe what he sees as the root of the cinema's struggle.

"The main esthetic problem in the movies, which were invented for reproduction (of movement) is, paradoxically, the overcoming of reproduction. In other words the question is: to what degree is the camera (film, colour, sound, etc.) developed and used to reproduce (any object which appears before the lens) or to produce (sensation not possible in any other art medium)?"

The avant-garde film and its defenders were laid to rest (temporarily) in the thirties. Richter explains it like this.

"At the first International Congress of the Avant-garde Film in 1929 at La Sarraz, the Internationale of the independent film was founded. In December 1930, at the second Congress in Brussels, it was dissolved after the members of all fourteen participating countries (except Italy-Mussolini and Spain-De Rivera) explained their desire to use the film more as weapon in the fight against fascism." (Experiment in the Film, Grey Walls Press Ltd. 1949.)

To our committed friends this was proof of the inadequacy of this kind of cinema. Its aestheticism makes it unable to cope with social realities. It is, therefore, useless. To them I would simply point out that the engaged film appears in force in time of war on both sides, and that the initial set back was not the fault of the films but of the film-makers. They managed to expand the cinematic discourse, but not the minds of the spectators.

Pour la suite, voir  
Film Culture & CINIM



# Against Secrecy

Philip Crick

**PORNOCRACY:** The influence of courtesans, esp. over the papal court in the earlier part of the 10th century. Etym: porne. Gk. a whore.

**PORNOGRAPHY:** Description or portrayal of prostitutes, and of prostitution. Obscene writing and the like.

**EROS:** The greek love-god. Identified by the Romans as Cupid. A minor planet discovered in 1898, notable for its near approach to the earth.

**THANK YOU** Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary. The card-index boys have done their best. But clearly it is not enough.

D.H. Lawrence was the first, in our time, to have a stab at this complex matter. In his pamphlet (*Pornography and Obscenity*, 1929) he defined it as "doing dirt upon sex". Setting aside the sixth-grade vernacular in which he couches his opinion, this is an improvement on the lexicon, but does not go far beyond the thesis of a mistaken merging of sacrament with excrement.

A more useful and more modern line of approach springs delightfully and surprisingly from the cult of birdwatching. It appears that you can fool certain wild birds (such as the plover) by placing a dummy egg (larger and glossier than real) in the middle of the true clutch. The poor plover kicks the actual eggs aside and tries instead to hatch out the dummy. In the language of science this is termed "super-normal stimulation".

Maybe pornography is an application of super-normal stimulation to the tired optic nerve? Or to the sensory system in general? Anyhow it surely is a kind of emotional fraud, that has success only with the gullible or the immature.

Photography gives the porn-man fresh scope. The maker of the blue film is the crude con-man of the cinecamera, interested not in his product, but in returns.

But everything in this life seems to shade eventually into something else. There are no hard edges. At some point, impossible to fix, very cunning, skilled pornography begins to shade over into the art of the erotic. In this aesthetic twilight-zone some notable artists, now dead, have found it

imperative to work.

As, for example, Aubrey Beardsley. His work fuses elegance of line, pre-Raphaelite overtones, and a fastidious fashion-sense into a style so exotic and so full of faint hints of the devilish that it runs (like caricature) along the edge of the absurd.

If it is not to be classed as porn, Beardsley art must be admitted to be both erotic and neurotic, in the most classical way. It has a talent for theatre and extravagance which offers a universe of the unstated within the stated. Beardsley sets a hairtrigger on the human imagination.

Today's tabloid porn merchant knows nothing of Beardsley's refined accents. Contemporary verbo-visual porn, playgirl porn, is a blunt instrument, a blatant form of shock-treatment for people who are sensually more than half dead anyway. The blue film belongs in this sad, comic, category of the inept. The transparent (and translucent) swindle that is the blue film guarantees its failure as art, or as anything else. As entertainment, even.

Yet every man/woman, man/man, or woman/woman tale is in some sense erotic. Broadly, all love narrative is erotic. What else could they be? Even the staging of rape, as in *Virgin Spring* or *Rocco and his Brothers* is the reverse of porn. Obscenity then lives in the eye of the beholder; or not at all. TRE TREATMENT and INTERPRETATION taken together decide finally that which sets up an effect of porn and that which does not. This is why the inquisitor ("Censors are dead men" DHL) whose mind is scared of pure fact can misconceive a work of art as porn. He smears with his own misgivings. He invokes law to blot out his own disturbance.

Stephen Dwoskin's *Chinese Checkers*, which touches the quick of erotic imagination (and in an unexpected quarter) making it shake like a seismic pointer, is not porn, except perhaps to the inquisitor. The paradox is that such a film which treats of a passage from 'normalcy' to the heat of a lesbian wrestle is boundlessly more tender and more anguished than any man/woman relation which received cinema has so far managed to produce.

The magic ferocity of this compulsive, if barren, dance offers us the most sensually immediate sequence ever to be made. If images can be made physical then Chinese



Checkers achieves it. Yet inside this film, there is no clipjoint cliché. As with Beardsley, pure theatre, dress, display, mask and gesture, writhe of wrist, and face, work toward an electrification of consciousness. We are exhumed from oblivion. Made aware. The film stands a thousand light-years away from porn.

Dwoskin films have a kind of poetic realism. They render what is. And they comprise a facet of the current REVOLT AGAINST SECRECY which is our urgent need.

Selfdeception happens in two prime spheres: the political, and the erotic. A wide reaction against secrecy now begins to unfold. The passion for an accuracy of seeing (both inward and outward seeing) has unleashed

two waves of endeavour, one in science and one in art. New developments in avant-garde cinema throughout the world are a significant part of these waves. From laboratory and clinic, to novel. From novel to poem. From poem to cine-frame. Such has been the trend.

But porn thrives upon secrecy.

.....  
POSTSCRIPT.

For accuracy of outward seeing, try Goldman's Pestilent City or Genet's Chants d'Amour.

For accuracy of inward seeing, the filmic trace of pure urban subjectivity, try David Larchers' long fragment: K.O.

## ***Dwoskin's Dream-Films*** Ray Durnat

I've seen Alone three times. After the first time, I was left with a vague impression that it was one long take of a lonely girl in bed, halfheartedly trying not to masturbate, and then despite herself, indulging.

After the second view, I thought of Warhol, and of Stroheim - of a Warhol who had disciplined his showmanship enough to "bat it and run"; that is to say of a Warhol whose de-Mille-nial weakness for the supercolossal had been replaced by the terse toughness of a Howard Hawks; and of a Stroheim who had freed himself of his Griffithian ethic.

At the third view, I began to count the cuts (33) as if to assure myself that they were there. I nearly began counting the one softly repeated chord engineered by Ron Geesin as a tocsin for the images; and I grew infatuated with the shadows on Zelda's face - chunky shadows of pullulating grain.

The Swedish short, Enligt Lag showed a convict masturbating, and then cut to an expressionistic image of a lonely figure scrambling out of a gravel-pit. This grain is that gravel. That metaphor becomes this form. Not until the third view did the grain emerge from shadow, because this is a well-made film with the old-fashioned virtues which are newer than new.

It tells a story; and telling a story is the only way of not repeating oneself.



ALONE

Because the story is told only in three or four gestures, and could happen tonight or any night, it is also as timeless as that lone, de-musicalised note.

The note resembles a ghost's pulse-beat. The drifting it depicts is also a fight. (There is pain in the emptiness). And the despair it reveals is beyond self-pity; the honesty in it, beyond pity. For some, the film is a photograph of total despair. For me it is the only matter-of-fact film about eroticism ever made.

The film is fiercely anti-subjective. Everything is vaporised, except this rendezvous of a physiology with its own loneliness. The girl's fantasies are painfully absent, yet lucidly so - no flaming creatures in shadow gardens, no door marked gents opening on to



burning christmas trees in the empty grate, no strip cartoons stuck to a patch of bare brick beyond her bed. Or maybe this girl is so far gone that her finger is only her finger and no dreams live. The primitivism of the act is matched by the camera, invariably full-face to her bedshead, and by the editing, pitted by shadows that now block out her eyes, now mass under her cheekbones, now caress the long, lean legs whose posture evokes the compositions of Pabst (another master of erotic energy wasted in squalor). Perhaps squalor is the wrong word - there is an eerie solemnity to the nothingness, like the rite of a priestess.

Chinese Checkers, by contrast, is a fiesta. A lesbian fiesta certainly, but at least its a bicycle made for two. But can we really speak of homosexuality when the partners are hetero-geneous as the softly-insisting Oriental girl and the strong-jawed brightly confused friend-antagonist of the game? Once again, a Pabstian link occurs; one thinks of the chess-game ascendancy between Queen and her victim in L'Atlantide. Here, the girls drift, as in a dream, from a game to a form of communication that communicates nothing but the Chinese Checkers is not so much avant-garde as stone-age in its deploy pre-Bazin cinema: low angles, contre-jour (whites of the eyes glimmering in grisaille), first-person, reverse angles; etc.

After the first viewing, I had the impression that the camera looks up at the Chinese girl, from, or below board-level, while looking more evenly at her white victim; almost as if Dwoskin had amused himself by this ultra-classic use of camera-angles; but that he had done this so non-committally that they take on a new sense entirely, a dreamlike dislocation of levels.

At a second view, I began to doubt if the camera-angles had any such one-for-one significance, and wondered if I had not happened only to remember the angles as and when they fitted the glances. That first-person reverse angling is authentic too, and never mechanical. Each shot makes us one of the girls absorbing the other, by a kind of cannibal osmosis. Perhaps this is why the film disturbs and enriches us more than the orthodox encounter would do. With a childlike candour the camera looks in at two perverse young mothers, and and a highly sexual film establishes an erotic archetype.

It is never a peeping tom film; the point of it being that we are drawn into it; we become both girls, each as mysterious as the other, each a mass of psychic being, pure feminine energy.

I would hazard that this film is a direct

rendering of a dream. And to dream in celluloid so impeccably is a tour-de-force of fidelity. One thinks less of Robbe-Grillet than of Maya Deren.

Sleep and Solo are lighter hearted. In particular, Solo touches at times on the sprightly whimsy of the world of Ken Russell. Sleep might be termed a jocular mock-up of Kuri's Chair. A pair of soles(those of a sleeping girl?) move restlessly about under the lower edge of a sheet.(Again the unvarying Alone angle.) The image is underscored by Ron Geesin's lively music until what we accept as the "dormant" state reveals an opaque life as unremitting as that of day. Why film feet rather than a sleeping face? Perhaps because feet have a faint air of the blackly comic about them, whereas watching a face would make us feel too powerful or too tender. Ron Geesin's piano occasionally mickey-mousing the feet's jab and twitches makes them resemble malformed hands, or the stunted fingers of some thalidomide pianist. What are toes after all, if not near-fingers that have suffered centuries of cramp, like Chinese footbinding? They are also very sprightly things, those feet, the toes sprouting and wiggling with daffodil joy.

At a first view, I was disappointed to find Solo evoking the Temperance Seven/Biographic/Mukkinese Battle Horn/vein of Edwardian spoof-nostalgia. (A youth polishes a huge horn among audio-visual incunabula.) I prefer Dwoskin in his bleaker, weirder dream key. But at a second view, the film spoke in new accents. The black sun of Dwoskin's melancholy began showing a rim round the shape of the film's whimsy. And this takes a darker turn when the hero's audio-visual museum of a room is infested suddenly with nude fantasms, while a comedian from the days of Edison-Bell chortles out a whiskery song about being happy every day.





One of the main aims of films is to communicate to people; to communicate to them what they in everyday life have failed to do. Unfortunately people look at films in the same way that they look at each other - very distant from it all. In other words they "look at" but are seldom involved in. Films are now an everyday, accepted situation; and like television all are accustomed to sitting down and "looking at" moving representations of life. As in daily life, people "look at" others and other events, unmoved and from a distance. They can witness murder and rape and register these events as if they were just another film on television! Films in themselves have contributed to this removed attitude. For too long now the Erroll Flynns have swung from the rigging in some romantic impression of the past (in the guise of reality) which never was that way anyhow. The same applies to documentary reporting in "Look at Life". Because you are not there (but here) - you are always removed.

This display of removed romance and murder too, is fantasy disguised and then called reality. The flamboyant romances of the "big films" are false and dishonestly untrue, but they are absorbed by the viewer merely because they look "so real". They are the lies that everyone believes; but the truth disappears. People tend to seek and see only this romance which they try to apply to their lives; and they blind themselves to their own reality as humans, living with other humans. Godard or Fellini come closer to this truth but the viewers see less in them because visually they seek the romance which they are accustomed to seeking and so cannot see these realities. People, in effect, see their world as a Hollywood film, and do not feel their world for what it is.

The barrier between looking at life and experiencing life can be bridged by most expressive media. Film is no exception, but has an advantage. Films, at least, are accepted in that people habitually go to them and they are not rejected "in principle" as often as painting or poetry. People go to "look at" films or to be "entertained" by films. However, with painting or poetry, when they have selectively and statically to present themselves, their intellectual guard is up. Films have a chance which no other expressive medium has had, and it has its own

strength of the visual in time and motion. With this strength it can possibly by-pass the barriers and intellectual filters enough so that it can seep into the instinctive self to allow experience and therefore involvement.

To start making this involvement possible the film should dwell on what is basically instinctive and emotionally common to most humans. Film has only the visual and sound senses to work upon. The present lack of involvement of the other senses contributes to a removed "looking at" a two dimensional plane. Therefore, what must be presented within the limitations (through the strengths of the medium) must contain elements with which the viewer can make a strong immediate contact. These must be enough to make them enter and then, within composed time, develop with the images; and with the aid of sound, find the basic and deepest innate instincts within them. As in music, the film can do this quite satisfactorily (thus sound and film complement each other so well) with a structure that maintains change while it maintains theme.

If the theme is strictly a human emotional one and not a romantic story line of hero-association, where an intellectual objective projection is made, it can only then be done by a subjective emotional association. If the visual space is of a forward motion of changing time, then discovery can be made at each moment, forcing an involvement, at least, through anticipation, so forming a mild anxiety. If the images are quite abstract without any common association then no previous rationalization or romanticization can have taken place. The viewer will then have to give some degree of attention (or walk out) to know what is happening. This, at least, would create some amount of involvement. By composing just these two elements, the "direct literal" and the "abstract," or either one or the other, within an emotional, subjective theme, in time, the viewer begins to find some difficulty in merely "looking at" the film. Since time is constant, any sensation of time alteration, or conversely any steady maintenance of exact time can induce the viewer into involvement. Sudden changes in constant time without changing the image or action, can create a vacuum that draws the viewer in. Changes that shift from one scene to the next, each one of near equal duration, are a physical reminder of time. This kind of time-awareness allows for a removal from an involve-



ment to a process of "looking at" a story. Though time is used, the viewer should not be conscious of it but, rather, be in it. The use of time as a reality (subjective involvement) instead of a conscious separation (objective) between the viewer and the film allows for a physical involvement.

One of the strongest elements that can induce involvements are those images and actions which are associated with the erotic sense. That which falls into this area tend to have a far greater (and softer) impact on the instinctive, subjective self and to by-pass the intellectual filters which maintain the "looking at" process. That which is erotic is, at least, still based on human associations, coming from and represented by humans. They are, in the greater sense, that which is considered today far too personal and forbidden. Yet they are only human. The erotic direction appeals to those non-intellectual instincts, fantasies (not considered realities imagined as truth) and to basic desires hidden somewhere in all of us. Fantasies

and dreams are difficult to rationalize when in process and therefore make for involvement.

The combination of such visual-time, space and motion, and human emotion, or the attempt to combine these basic elements, creates a film that is "totally dependent on itself as a film". In this area the film can then begin to free itself (the film-makers and the viewers as well) from the "distance" of the reproduced unreal story romance and so become genuinely expressive. When the film-maker can use the film medium to express his own self and his own emotions, the film, as expressive form, will start to involve the viewer. Film is a new means by which the viewer can experience what the artist himself experiences. By attracting and using the erotic; by attracting the emotions and the instinctive self, the film can pass through into that most unguarded part of us, and open us up to involvement, awareness and experience, and (hopefully) to interrelation. The film can do this if it is presented as open emotion; to the viewer as his emotion; as if the film were himself.

.....

## ***Film as Continuous Static Graphic Images***

JEFFREY SHAW, TJEBBE VAN TYEN, AND WILLIAN BREUKER.

180 FEET, 16.MM, HIGH CONTRAST BLACK AND WHITE FILM.

PAGES A AND B ARE TWO SHEETS OF A TOTAL OF 808 IMAGES MADE ALTERNATELY BY TJEBBE VAN TYEN AND JEFFREY SHAW

PAGES C AND D ARE PART OF THE MUSIC SCORE COMPOSED AND PRODUCED BY WILLIAN BREUKER THEN FOLLOWS PART OF THE WORKING SCORE FOR THE FILMING OF THE IMAGES - THE BOXES INDICATE GRAPHICALLY THE SOUND DURATIONS ON A TIME SCALE OF 24 FRAMES PER SECOND. THE NUMBERS REFER TO PARTICULAR IMAGES, AND THEIR INTERVALS APART ON THE GRAPH SHOW THE NUMBER OF FRAMES TO BE SHOT OF EACH.

'X' INDICATES A BLACK FRAME, 'W', A WHITE FRAME, 'N' IS A NEGATIVE IMAGE AND 'M' IS A MIRROR IMAGE.

WHILE IN MANY AREAS SOUND AND IMAGE ARE STRICTLY SYNCHRONISED, IN OTHERS THE RELATIONSHIP IS FREE. THE DURATION OF THE IMAGES RANGE FROM ONE FRAME (1/24TH SEC) TO TWENTY FOUR FRAMES (1 SEC) AND THE AVERAGE TIME IS ABOUT 4 TO 6 FRAMES.

THE FILM IS PLANNED TO BE SHOWN ON FOUR SCREENS ARRANGED AS A SQUARE OPEN AT THE FOUR CORNERS FROM A CENTRAL GROUP OF FOUR PROJECTORS. THE IMAGES CAN BE SEEN ON BOTH SIDES OF THE SCREENS. EACH FILM IS ON A LOOP AND RUNS CONTINUOUSLY. THE FOUR PROJECTIONS ARE SIMULTANEOUS BUT NOT SYNCHRONISED SO THAT A DIFFERENT PART OF THE FILM IS SEEN ON EACH SCREEN. SIMILARLY THE FOUR SOUND TRACKS INDETERMINATELY COMBINE. THIS SITUATION RESEMBLES THAT OF THE GALLERY INASMUCH AS THE SHOWING IS A LONG TERM ONE AND THE SPECTATORS ENTER, MOVE AROUND AND LEAVE AT WILL.

THE FILM SETS OUT TO EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

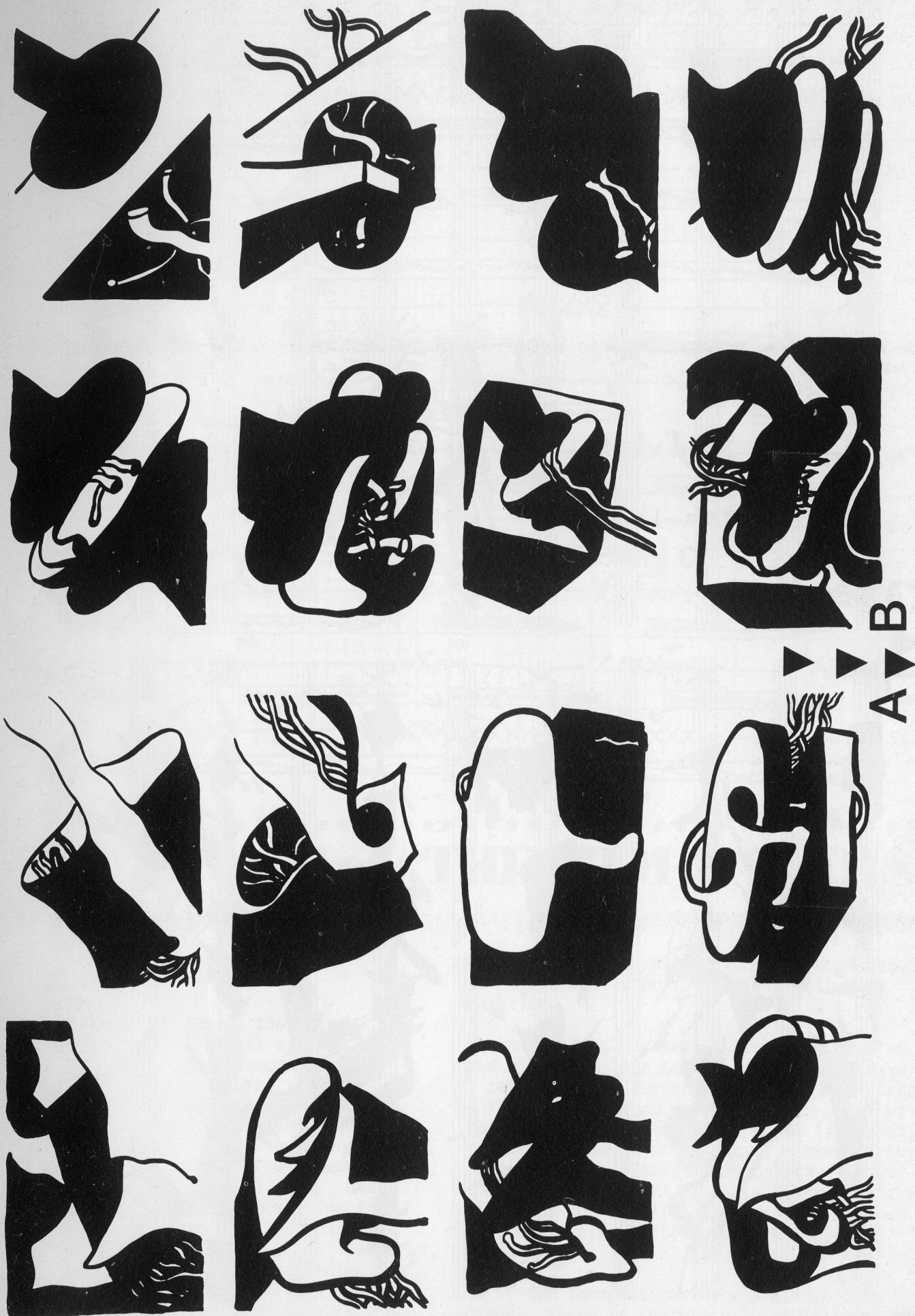
THE ESSENTIAL MULTIPLICITY AND CONTINUOUS POTENTIAL OF A GRAPHIC SERIES.

THE SPATIAL CONTINUITY IMPLICIT IN THE CHARACTER OF THIS PARTICULAR GRAPHIC SERIES. A NEW SPATIAL DYNAMIC OF AUDIENCE AND FILM.

THE CONFRONTATION OF THE SPECTATOR WITH A GRAPHIC FLUX WHOSE UNDERLYING FORMS AND ORGANIZATION WILL EVOLVE TO PERCEPTION AS A TIME-EXPERIENCE.

THE LIMITS OF COMPREHENSION IN TIME CONTAINED WITHIN FILM AS A 24 FRAME PER SECOND SOURCE OF DATA.











# E

To the American film Avant-garde:

Film-Makers Cooperative, to the Cinematheque,  
to me personally or to the Film Culture  
magazine.

As if the international scene wouldn't be enough, there is another pile of letters and



telephone messages - from newspapers, magazines, book writers, university program directors, visiting cinema professors, film directors from abroad (passing through New York) - they all want us to show them the work of the American film avant-garde. We keep telling them we can't do that, that the prints of the films they want to see are out of town on rentals, etc., etc., - but they don't seem to want to leave us in peace that easily.

After trying a number of ideas, we have come up with the following solutions to the above problems:

As of now, that is April 1st 1967, the Film-Makers' Cinematheque is establishing three different Avant-garde Film Libraries:

- a) The International Travelling Avant-garde Film Library (operating from New York)
- b) The Avantgarde Film Study Library (stationed in New York),
- c) The International Avantgarde Film Archive Library (stationed in Stockholm, at the Filmhistoriska Samlingarna).

The Film-Makers' Cinematheque will buy three sets of all outstanding Avantgarde film works. One set will be used for the international expositions in Asia, Europe and South America; the second set will be in the permanent Cinematheque collection in New York, available for study purposes free of charge to visiting guests, newspapermen, book writers, film teachers, visiting film directors, etc. The third set will be deposited with the Swedish Cinematheque (Filmhistoriska Samlingarna) in Stockholm and will be used for screenings at the various national film archives and Cinematheques where paid admission is not involved.

The prints will be bought at the price of the laboratory costs. There will be no "direct" income from the New York Avantgarde Film Study Library set. The film-maker has to have vision enough to see the indirect profits. The International Travelling Avantgarde Film Library set will be bringing some income. Most of the organizations that want our films in other countries can not afford to pay for them. But this is beginning to change. We know already that Berlin, Aachen, Caracas and Rome have offered to pay rentals for the shows, so that we can begin counting on some income from the international expositions. Wherever it is reasonable, the Cinematheque will make all human attempts to collect some money for the film-makers. We can neither accept nor understand the situation, where people are willing to spend their money in support of commercial melodramas but they feel that the serious work of the

avantgarde film-makers should be given to them for free.

The Swedish Cinematheque will house the International Avantgarde Film Archive Library. It will serve exclusively those Film Archives (Cinematheques) which usually can not pay for the shows. Upon the instruction of the film-maker, however, the Stockholm prints will be sent to whatever place desired. It will not act as a rental agency, but only as an archive service. The Swedish Cinematheque, in cooperation with the International Federation of Film Archives, will pay for one set of prints and for one master of each film involved. The master will remain at all times in Stockholm. Upon the instructions of the film-maker or the Cooperative they will strike the prints from the master for shipping to whomever it's desired.

I have discussed this plan in detail with Peter Kulbelka, Robert Breer, Stan Brakhage, Jerome Hill, Shirley Clarke and P. Adams Sitney - all of them familiar with the international archive scene, and particularly with the Swedish Cinematheque - and we have come to the conclusion that we can entrust our films to the Swedish Cinematheque and that neither our films nor our trust will be misused.

So, we are proceeding with establishing these three libraries.

Since the funds are limited (we don't have any yet but we are working on acquiring the necessary funds) the acquisition of prints will be gradual and selective. The selection of acquisition prints will be made by P. Adams Sitney, Ken Kelman, Stan Brakhage, and myself.

All three libraries discussed above are in the process of preparing detailed sheets of information which will be mailed to you soon. The Seven Directors of the Film-Makers' Cooperative have knowledge of this project and are watching over the film-makers' interests.

We hope all three libraries will be in working condition by this Summer. This letter is being mailed to; the Avantgarde film-makers, to the film archives, to all those who have requested our shows.

Sincerely,

your servant Jonas Mekas.

.....  
LATEST REPORT: MEKAS HAS NOW SAID THAT HE WILL BE COMING TO EUROPE SOMETIME IN SEPTEMBER WITH FILMS.



# REPORT:

## LONDON FILM MAKERS CO- OPERATIVE

Bob Cobbing

The first issue of *Cinim* appeared a bare three months after the Co-op was formed. Now, six months later, what is there to report?

First, our disappointment at the almost complete lack of co-operation from the New York Film-Makers Co-operative. Jonas Mekas was to arrive here late last November or in December with fifteen to twenty complete programmes of films. Films from the New York Co-op were to be easily available through the London Co-op. Or so it was said. Mekas' recent open letter, reproduced elsewhere in this issue, explains that this is not to be.

True, a number of American film-makers have come here and have been glad to avail themselves of the facilities of the Co-op for them to leave copies of their films with us for distribution, and there was always some good reason why they could not do so.

It seems to us that the reason is entirely financial. Hire charges for films are three, five or even seven times greater in the States

than here. For instance, Peter Emanuel Goldman's *Echoes of Silence*, in our catalogue at £8 10s 0d, is in the catalogue of the New York Co-operative at \$80. Several films by Stan Brakhage, available from Contemporary Films at 15/- or £1, are in the New York catalogue at \$10 or \$11. It seems that the American underground film-makers are more concerned to stick out for the utmost cash they can screw out of their customers than co-operate in the surely very desirable operation of getting their films seen in Britain and in Europe.

However, this lack of co-operation on the part of New York has at least ensured that the London Co-op has got onto its own feet unaided and has established itself as a fully independent body with its own policy and individuality.

Film-makers here are co-operating with one another. Equipment is being loaned; advice is being given. A library has been established and nine films are already in distribution, the film-maker receiving 60% of hire fees. Many viewing sessions of films have been held, including a dozen or more open screenings when members have produced interesting and exciting films in large numbers.

Membership now stands at 100. The committee is now a very active body. Having lost Paul Francis and Harvey Matusow and gained Ron Geesin as a new co-secretary and Raymond Durnat as Chairman, the way is opening to new enthusiasm and new projects.

Shortly, we hope to organise regular late-night showings in a London cinema. A second festival of 'underground' films is under consideration. The work room, for editing and other processes, should soon be a reality. Many excursions are already planned to near or remote towns and cities taking lectures, film shows, advice and encouragement. The Co-op is already fulfilling the purposes for which it was set up and far-reaching developments can be expected in its second half-year.

Teething troubles there have certainly been, and we must apologise for a certain amount of inefficiency in our early days, especially in the answering of letters. But things are better now and the way ahead seems clear.

## Notes from the *Wee Book*

Ron Geesin

I think that the inability of the film to communicate is due to the film-maker rather than the unawareness of the audience.

If the film-maker were to use better ideas

and technique, the audience would be provoked into awareness.

What is awareness?

A complete realisation on the part of the



individual of all or most of what is going around him and the consequences of these things in life.

What is life?

This is largely decided by, or forced upon the individual. Life to me at the age of twenty-three seems to be a quest on the part of humans to discover the reasons for our existence. This is beyond our comprehension at the moment but, with space exploration and the delving into the complex workings of the brain, we seem to be getting nearer. But with all the discoveries it has become easier to get lost and confused in this modern world because humans latch onto certain aspects and use and pursue them wrongly.

With the amazing increase in intensity and speed in communications, one society is able to see the other society's religion objectively. Therefore each separate religion is being laid bare and faults are being noticed. It seems that separate religions will eventually vanish and maybe a greater awareness of life will be the result, along with a great deal of chaos on the way as things crash into each other.

Psychedelia (or however it's spelt) is one thing which has happened because of the confusion of the reasons for human existence. In this there seems to be no purpose for human existence

In this there seems to be no purpose or future but rather a searching to get the most out of the present - at the expense of the sensitive and very easily damaged parts of the human brain.

There is much in the films of today which clearly depicts confusion and void. The thing is to get through this transition period with maximum effort so that the mentally secure and strong creators will survive the frenzied, senseless thrashing about of confused humans, will survive their present cardboard-constructed imitators or antagonists and present a clear picture of the future path of life.

Additional Note: As a creator I do not seem to have yet achieved sufficient knowledge of life to present a clear picture of the future, but am mostly tied up with very sarcastic criticisms of the present. If I am any good, I shall progress to clarify the future for myself and others. -14/5/67.

# ANIMATIONS

Of course, the cinema is finished; otherwise how could it begin again?

P-P PASOLINI

The cinema is finished.

R. ROSSELLINI

A film producer is a person who rides around in a large American car, because he can't afford the bus fare.

R. LEVY

... the cinema is the worst manifestation of the mass ideal. It represents not the end of the world but the end of a civilisation.

ANATOLE FRANCE

It's a shame you can't superimpose everything, absolutely everything, on a single frame of film.

L. MOORE

Someone once asked me if I considered the cinema to be an art; I replied that for me the word "art" had no importance. Painting is an art, and there are a lot of bad paintings ...

PAUL VALERY

The more spectators walk out of the cinema the better the film must be.

JONAS MEKAS

The only film I really want to make, I'll never make because it's impossible. It is a film about love, or of love, with love. To talk into the mouth, to touch the breast, for women to imagine and see the body, the sex of the man, to caress a shoulder - things as difficult to show and understand as horror, war, and disease. I don't understand why, it makes me suffer. What can I do then? I don't know how to make films, simple and logical, like Roberto, humble and cynical like Bresson, austere and comic like Jerry Lewis, lucid and calm like Howard Hawks, rigorous and tender like Francois, hard and plaintive like the two Jacques, courageous and sincere like Resnais, pessimistic and American like Fuller, romanesque and Italian like Bertolucci, Polish and desperate like Skolimowski, Communist and bonkers, like Dovzhenko.

Yes, what can I do?

JEAN-LUC GODARD

The future is just another flashback.

ANON