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New Canadian Cinema



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Small Talk

Hollywood Report

Sonny & Cher, that American folk-rock duo, have finished their first picture, *Good Times* and will make another one next winter. Their young director Bill Friedkin says *Good Times* should have the flavor of Mack Sennett and Laurel & Hardy. . . . Erich Pommer's burial in Hollywood was quiet and attended only by intimate friends, including Fritz Lang and Karl Freund. The 76-year-old pioneer of UFA and producer of the great German films of the 1920's died of cancer in his Encino, Calif., home May 8. Surviving is a son, John. . . . Seven Arts, the compact New York-based producing and distribution company, and Filmways, Martin Ransohoff's corporate entity, have called off a merger. Had the deal gone through, it would have created the first new U. S. major in more than 40 years. . . . Melina Mercouri and Jules Dassin will repeat "Never on Sunday" . . . on the stage. The Broadway engagement for a Kermit Bloomgarden adaptation of Dassin's film was announced May 19, the day after Mercouri and Dassin were married in Lausanne. . . . Steve McQueen, returning from the six-month long location shooting of Robert Wise's *The Sand Pebbles* in the Far East, says he will make no more pictures outside the U. S. for quite a while. "In Hong Kong we had to be careful what we said to people, on Formosa, we had our junks fired on by Nationalist troops." . . . Joseph Levine has bought the screen rights to



Irvin Kershner: *A Fine Madness*, Sean Connery, Joanne Woodward.

"Somerset And All The Maughams," a pretty nasty biography of the novelist Somerset Maugham by his nephew, Robin Maugham. The book, in which the writer admits his homosexuality and expresses his hatred for his daughter, Robin Maugham's mother, will be written for the screen by Robin Maugham

himself. . . . Expecting good business from the Sean Connery-as-Greenwich-Village-poet picture "A Fine Madness," Universal will now make a beatnik hero picture. The second one will be *What's So Bad About Feeling Good* to star George Peppard and to be directed by George Seaton.

AXEL MADSEN



Robert Wise: *The Sand Pebbles*, Steve McQueen, Richard Attenborough.

David Swift

The Hollywood filmization of *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying* is to be the first cheap musical in years.

How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying is getting onto the screen with sweat and stinginess, confirming the old contention that movie making isn't easy and denying for a change the Hollywood saying that the sky is the limit when it comes to mere money.

To 40-year-old David Swift, who started in Hollywood as a studio laborer, bringing *Succeed* to the screen is the result of four year's trying.

"I always wanted to do the picture, pursued it, wrote a script in seven days—which is not to my credit—and tried to get my regular company, Columbia, to buy it for me, but they wouldn't," says Swift. "When the Mirisch Brothers acquired the rights, I rushed over here and told them I wouldn't allow anyone else to make it—and I convinced

them!"

Succeed, which started shooting at Goldwyn Studios May 2, is expected to become one of Hollywood's cheapest film musicals in recent history. The production, scheduled to run 62 days, is calculated to be brought in on a record-busting low budget of \$2.5 million, a price that includes the million dollars paid Abe Burrows and Frank Loesser for the screen rights to their hit stage musical.

Whether it is part of the economy drive no one wants to say, but Mrs. Swift, billed as Micheline, has designed the costumes, described by Maureen Arthur as "sexier than those we wore in the show—but showing less!"

What helps Swift and the Mirisches in their budget squeeze is the presence of three New York leads — Robert Morse, who scored instantly on Broadway as the Machiavellian pixie who wants to get ahead fast, Michele Lee and Rudy Vallee as J. B. Biggley, the

Small Talk

big boss of the World Wide Wicket Co. Others repeating familiar roles are Ruth Kobart, Sammy Smith and Miss Arthur.

"We're trying to retain the spontaneity and pace that Burrows and Loesser created," says Swift. "We've kept it stylized—the trick is not to take your audience into the scene but deliver the scene to the audience. In essence, it's a fairy tale of big business."

The director of such light fare as *Under the Yum Yum Tree*, *Good Neighbor Sam* and *Pollyanna* former comedy writer Swift says he is leaning heavily on Nelson Riddle, his musical director, in this first try at filming a musical. The number filmed when I was on the set was "It's Been A Long Day." Not only had the song been pre-recorded and the cast rehearsed in advance, Swift had also had a cartoonist sketch certain gadgets to be used as gags to make things clear for the special-effects department, a way of shaving off days on editing.

Tacked on a story board was a step-

by-step outline for an elaborate Secretary Ballet, which will show what girls do when they get to their offices in the morning—"except work."

"Later, when we go to New York for a couple of weeks of streets shots, Bobby (Morse) will do a kind of dancing walk to the music of a transistor in his pocket connected to a plug in his ear," said Swift. "We can't guess what passers-by will think."

The relatively low budget filming of *Succeed* is a welcome change for the Mirisch Brothers, still far from happy with the still unreleased *Hawaii* by George Roy Hill, a picture that went months into overtime and millions of dollars over budget. Hill shot \$500,000 worth of background footage in Norway, was fired and re-hired the same day during shooting in Honolulu and Max von Sydow, who stars in *Hawaii* opposite Julie Andrews, was brought in from Sweden for redubbing of some of the footage.

Swift says he is especially grateful for composer Loesser's contribution to

the film version. "We have, incidentally, built up the boy-girl relationship; it didn't mean much in the play; otherwise, our goal is to recreate the show on the screen. We plan to keep it a big ball from start to finish, very much as in the theatre. After all, Feuer and Martin had an original Broadway run of 1,415 performances with it and it is forever being revived."

Swift first tasted success himself after World War II as a gag writer and then in television. He created U. S. TV's early "Mr. Peepers" and was a writer-director on such well-remembered past shows as "Kraft Theatre" and "Philco Playhouse." With *Pollyanna* and *The Parent Trap*, he graduated to the big screen at Walt Disney's, *The Parent Trap* is Disney's biggest-ever moneymaker), where he had started his career at 18 after having run away from his hometown of Minneapolis.

"Coming from the rat race of television, movies afford the opportunity of a lifetime for an uneducated man like myself to create," says Swift.

—A. M.

Brian Moore and Hitchcock's Latest



Brian Moore.

A few years ago, Irish-born Canadian Brian Moore wrote "The Luck of Ginger Coffey," a novel about his first winter in Montreal. Today, he's a screenwriter here, working on Alfred Hitchcock's 50th picture, *Torn Curtain*.

It's a story about the Berlin wall, although it's all been shot in southern California.

"Novel writing is my business," says Moore, "but if you have to go down to the market place, there's nothing quicker to make money than film.

"*Ginger Coffey* got very good reviews although it didn't make money. It was a pretty good filmization of my

novel and I don't disown the picture. But there's no transition between *Ginger* and *Torn Curtain* really.

"I gather Hitchcock had read some of my writings. On the telephone he asked me if I'd come to Hollywood and talk to him.

"I came out for a couple of days last February and he had one idea: it might be interesting to do a picture about a defector and his wife following him.

"He said he had had success with

people like Thornton Wilder years ago when he did *Shadow of a Doubt*, and was I interested in collaborating with him on such a movie?"

Moore came west a month later, signed a contract and for two months closeted himself with Hitchcock daily.

"He lives in what I think the French call *l'univers hitchcockien* and no matter who collaborates with Hitchcock, this universe imposes itself.

(Continued on page 66)



Alfred Hitchcock: *Torn Curtain*, Paul Newman, Julie Andrews.

Between Heaven And Hell

Interview with Carl Dreyer by Michel Delabaye

Dreyer's last film, *Gertrud*, and the circumstances surrounding its opening (the sad welcome given it — since compensated by the work's ever growing prestige) renders the publication of an interview with Dreyer, which has been scheduled for a long time, still more urgent. But Dreyer, beyond his natural repugnance for the worst, is one of those who, knowing how to say everything in their art, have little to add in words. However, (and he set himself, in addition, the duty of speaking French, a language he knows well—you will be able to judge this—but which he has little occasion to use), Dreyer lent himself with immense gracefulness to the game of the interview, and did it with a suppleness and vivacity that youth may well envy. The result is this commentary on his work, in which Dreyer knows so well how to utilize anecdotes in order to illustrate the profound sense of its course, to define it as well thus giving in a few words a quintessence of lessons to be drawn from art and from life. Let us add that this interview took place at Silkeborg, near Aarhus (Jutland), in a rest home where Dreyer, who had gone there to take his wife, realized that it would do him good to spend several weeks, if only in order to recover from his Parisian misadventure. This took place then not far from Himmelsbjerget and on the shore of the Gusena, that is to say, the Mountain of Heaven and the River of God.

CAHIERS: It seems that your films represent, above all, an agreement with life, a progress towards joy . . .

CARL DREYER: Perhaps this is because, quite simply, I do not at all involve myself with beings — men and women — who do not personally interest me. I can only work with people who allow me to realize a certain agreement.

What interests me — and this comes before technique — is reproducing the feelings of the characters in my films. That is, to reproduce, as sincerely as possible, the most sincere feelings possible.

The important thing, for me, is not only to catch hold of the words they say, but also the thoughts behind the words. What I seek in my films what I want to obtain, is a penetration to my actors' profound thoughts by means of their most subtle expressions. For these are the expressions that reveal the character of the person, his unconscious feelings, the secrets that lie in the depths of his soul. This is what interests me above all, not the technique of the cinema. *Gertrud* is a film that I made

with my heart.

CAHIERS: In order to arrive at what you want to obtain, I don't think there are precise rules . . .

DREYER: No. You must discover what there is at the bottom of each being. That is why I always look for actors who are capable of responding to this quest, who are interested in it, who can help me with it. They must be capable of giving me, or allowing me to take, what I seek to obtain from them. But it is difficult for me to express this the way it should be — and besides, is it possible?

CAHIERS: You choose your actors, therefore, from amongst those who can give?

DREYER: That is to say that I choose them from amongst those whom I hope will be able to give. And, in general they verify my choice as being correct. Having real characters for real roles is for me the first thing, the first condition for agreement.

CAHIERS: But from time to time perhaps it happens that an actor cannot give you what he is capable of giving?

DREYER: Then we do it over! We start over and we do everything again! Until he arrives at it. For if he is capable of giving he will always end up giving. It's a question of time and patience.

With Falconetti, it often happened that, after having worked all afternoon, we hadn't succeeded in getting exactly what was required. We said to ourselves then: tomorrow we will begin again. And the next day, we would have the bad take from the day before projected, we would examine it, we would search and we always ended by finding, in that bad take, some little fragments, some little light that rendered the exact expression, the tonality we had been looking for.

It is from there that we would set out again, taking the best and abandoning the remainder. It is from there that we took off, in order to begin again . . . and succeed.

CAHIERS: How did you discover that Falconetti had something to give?

DREYER: I went to see her one afternoon and we spoke together for an hour or two. I had seen her at the theatre. A little boulevard theatre whose name I have forgotten. She was playing there in a light, modern comedy and she was very elegant in it, a bit giddy, but charming. She didn't conquer me at once and I didn't have confidence in her immediately. I simply asked her if I could come to see her the next day. And, during that visit, we talked. That

is when I sensed that there was something in her to which one could make an appeal. Something that she could give: something, therefore, that I could take.

For, behind the make-up, the pose, behind that modern and ravishing appearance, there was something. There was a soul behind that facade. If I could see her remove the facade it would suffice me. So I told her that I would very much like, starting the next day, to do a screen test with her. "But without make-up," I added, "with your face completely naked."

She came, therefore, the next day ready and willing. She had taken off her make-up, we made the tests, and I found on her face exactly what I had been seeking for Joan of Arc: a rustic woman, very sincere, who was also a woman who had suffered. But even so, this discovery did not represent a total surprise for me for, from our first meeting, this woman was very frank and, always, very surprising.

I therefore took her for the film, we always understood each other very well, we constantly worked very well. It has been said that it was I who squeezed the lemon.

I have never squeezed the lemon. I never squeezed anything. She always gave freely, with all her heart. For her heart was always committed to what she was doing.

CAHIERS: This way of proceeding seems revelatory of what is constantly found in your films: the beauty of the soul and the body as revealed one by the other. This is also perhaps what you have in common with Kaj Munk who, for a pastor, eulogizes the body as well as the soul of woman, both creations of God. You do not separate them either.

DREYER: I was so much happier doing *Ordet* when I felt myself very close to the conceptions of Kaj Munk. He always spoke well of love. I mean to say, of love in general, between people, as well as love in marriage, true marriage. For Kaj Munk, love was not only the beautiful and good thoughts that can link man and woman, but also a very profound link. And for him there was no difference between sacred and profane love. Look at *Ordet*. The father is saying, "She is dead . . . she is no longer here. She is in heaven . . ." and the son answers, "Yes but I loved her body too . . ."

What is beautiful, in Kaj Munk, is that he understood that God did not separate these two forms of love. That is why he didn't separate them either. But this form of Christianity is opposed

by another form, a somber and fanatic faith.

CAHIERS: The first form relates, I believe, in Denmark, to the reform of Grundtvig, and the second to the ideas of the Interior Mission, born of the teachings of Kierkegaard. These are the two forms that define — or defines — the Danish faith. Did you experience this opposition?

DREYER: The latter form of Christianity, severe, often fanatic, which establishes a divorce between thought and action, is above all the faith of western Jutland. Me, I'm from Seeland . . . But I remember certain cases . . . Yes: one time in particular, an affair made quite a stir, born of the intransigence of a priest of the Interior Mission. He had given proof, in his church, of a particularly outrageous violence and harshness. The entire country was shocked by it. Everyone rose against this black Christianity. Everyone opposed him with the other form of Christianity: clear, joyous, illuminated . . . This is the antagonism incarnated by the rich farmer and the poor tailor.

But Kaj Munk, who obviously had sympathy for that bright form of Christianity (which, in the play, is that of the farmer), also had some for the other. He understood that there was much good faith among them, that they sincerely believed, acting as they did, they were living up to the mission of Jesus, which for them excluded indulgence. There was the same problem with this priest I spoke of, who was more Christian than Jesus himself; who burned, or believed he burned, with the same fire as he.

CAHIERS: I believe that a large part of Danish literature at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th was influenced by this struggle.

DREYER: Yes. Denmark was marked by a schism. In France you had something analogous at the time of Jansenism. For me, that also relates to a question I have always posed myself: that of tolerance and intolerance. That intolerance between two religious parties is a thing I did not like for never, in any case, have I accepted intolerance.

In *Day of Wrath*, for example, Christians show their intolerance for those who are attached to remnants of ancient religions, to superstitions. Even in *Gertrud*, you can also feel the presence of intolerance. Here it is Gertrud's, for she cannot accept anything she herself does not feel, which, in a sense, requires everyone to bow to her.

CAHIERS: How was *Gertrud* received in Denmark?

DREYER: The critics didn't like *Gertrud* very much. But they didn't like *Day of Wrath* either. However, after a few years, they ended up accepting that film. I hope it will be the same with *Gertrud*.

CAHIERS: How did your other films fare?

DREYER: *Ordet* was well received.

So was *Joan of Arc*. But, personally, I think that *Ordet* is more successful than *Joan of Arc*, although in *Joan of Arc* there are certain greater possibilities in the heart of the film that can open a way. Other directors could take it up again, pursue this path and do better than I in this style of close-ups and very intimate acting.

If I were to remake the film today, perhaps I would do it in another way. Although . . . No. After all, I am not sure I would re-do it any differently. *Joan of Arc* was a big thing for me. Previous to that I had never undertaken such a big film. Nevertheless, I had a free hand, I did absolutely what I wanted and, at that time, I was very satisfied with what I had done. Actually, I see the film a bit differently but, in spite of everything, perhaps today I couldn't do it any other way.

For me, it was, before all else, the technique of the official report that governed. There was, to start with, this trial, with its ways, its own technique, and that technique is what I tried to transpose to the film. There were the questions, there were the answers — very short, very crisp. There was, therefore no other solution than to place close-ups behind these replies. Each question, each answer, quite naturally called for a close-up. It was the only possibility. All of that stemmed from the technique of the official report. In addition, the result of the close-ups was that the spectator was shocked as Joan was, receiving the questions, tortured by them. And, in fact, it was my intention to get this result.

CAHIERS: The thing that the heroines of *Day of Wrath* and *Joan of Arc* had in common is that they were both accused of sorcery . . .

DREYER: Yes. And both ended on the stake . . . Except that Lisbeth Movin didn't come to it in the same fashion . . . Moreover, I envisaged another ending for *Day of Wrath* that I found nicer. You didn't see the sorceress going to the stake. You only heard a young choir boy singing the Dies Irae and, from this, you understood that she, too, was destined for the flames. However, the actual ending, in certain respects, appeared to me to be necessary. It was necessary to give a material form to the consequences of this intolerance.

CAHIERS: This idea of intolerance — that you recognize as having put in your films — is found in a very noticeable fashion in, for example, *Master of the House*.

DREYER: Yes. The husband treats his wife like a sort of inferior, a slave, and that is why he must be taught to show a little more understanding.

CAHIERS: But this idea of intolerance is, it seems to me, less obvious with *Gertrud* whom one has a tendency to see as a more absolute woman, but also richer and freer than the men she meets.

DREYER: Yes but, even so, there is

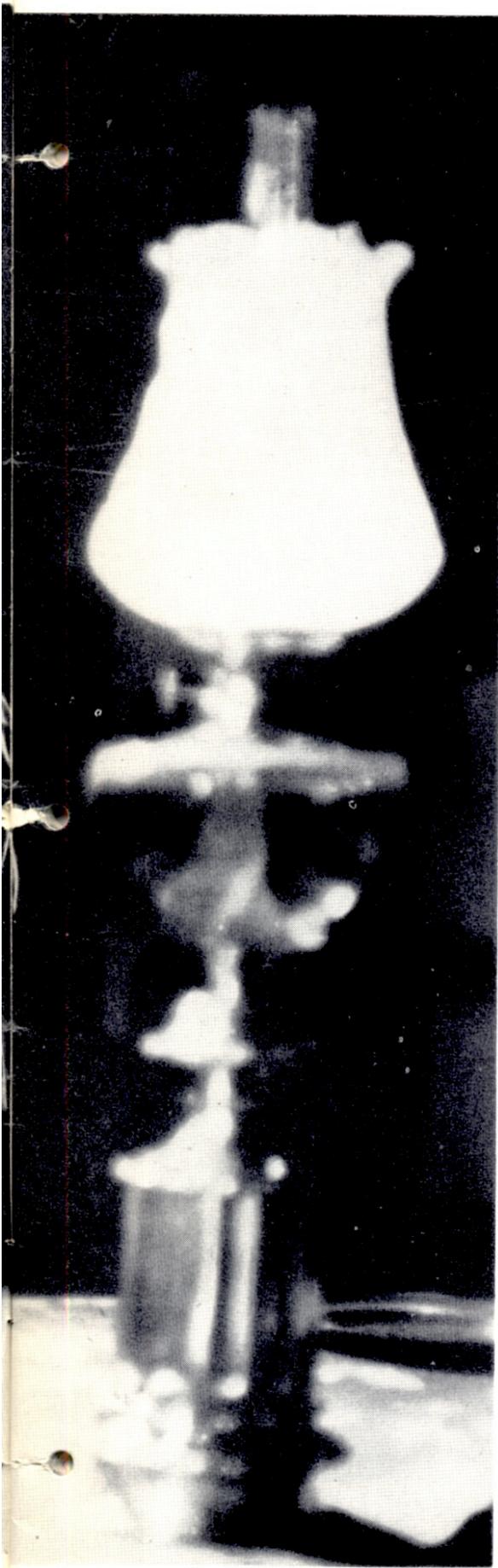




Carl Dreyer: *Gertrud*, Nina Pens Rode, Bendt Rothe.



Gertrud, Nina Pens Rode, Baard Owe.



a certain form of intolerance at the bottom of her character. This is less marked than with Hjalmar Sjöderberg (Gertrud recognizes that the man must also live for what interests him, for his work), but all the same she is jealous of his *métier*, she doesn't want that to have the place she believes is hers. She doesn't want to be an accessory in the man's life. She wants to be number one, have the first place. After that, he may pursue his work . . .

CAHIERS: Let us go back now to your beginnings. Are there cinéastes who have influenced you?

DREYER: Griffith. And, above all, Sjöström.

CAHIERS: When you started in the cinema, had you seen many films?

DREYER: No, not many. I was above all interested in the Swedish cinema: Sjöström and also Stiller. Then I discovered Griffith. When I saw *Intolerance* I was, above all, impressed by the modern episode but all of his films have moved me: *Way Down East*, and the others . . .

CAHIERS: Isn't the principle of *Intolerance* (in which your theme is found again) rather similar to that of *Pages From The Book of Satan*?

DREYER: It was not I who did the scenario for the film. It was by a Danish playwright, Edgar Hoyer, after a novel by Marie Corelli. After having written this scenario he gave it to the Nordisk Company. They submitted the scenario to me. I spoke with the author and he said he would be very pleased if I were to make the film.

CAHIERS: But if you interested yourself in this scenario it was doubtless because it related to certain preoccupations of yours.

DREYER: It was only after having seen *Intolerance* that the idea came to me that I might, in fact, attempt to do something analogous. But Griffith mixed his four stories while, as for me, I treated them separately.

CAHIERS: And didn't you collaborate on the scenario?

DREYER: Gradually as I studied it, certain ideas came to me, on which I reflected and took notes. Afterwards, I asked for, and obtained, the right to change it a little bit. Above all, concerning the modern episode, which unfolds in Finland, at the time of the revolution of 1918: the war between the Whites, sons of the bourgeoisie, and the Reds, Russian revolutionaries.

CAHIERS: And doesn't the inquisition episode have some relationship with *Joan of Arc* and *Day of Wrath*?

DREYER: Doubtless, but in any case do not forget that I was above all, at that time, the disciple who has everything to learn and who must, before all else, learn. I was happy to make this relatively important film, for this gave me the possibility of having new experiences.

CAHIERS: There is a great proportion of adaptations in your work. Es-

pecially of plays.

DREYER: Yes. I know that I am not a poet. I know that I am not a great playwright. That is why I prefer to collaborate with a true poet and with a true playwright. The last, to date, is Sjöderberg, author of the play, "Gertrud." Sjöderberg is a great author, who was not highly enough esteemed when he was alive, but whose qualities are beginning to be discovered. Up to now, he has always been in Strindberg's shadow, for which he was approached as he was considered much the inferior.

CAHIERS: What rules, or what intuitions guide you when you adapt a play or a novel?

DREYER: In the theatre, you have time to write, time to linger on words and feelings, and the spectator has time to perceive these things. In the cinema it is different. This is why I have always concentrated on the purification of the text, which I compress to the minimum. I did this as early at *Master of the House*, for example, which was also originally a play. We compressed it, cleaned it, purified it and the story became very clear, very clean. That was the first time I employed this method. Later, I employed it for *Day of Wrath*, *Ordet*, *Gertrud*, which are also plays.

"Day of Wrath" was a play I saw in 1920. But, at that time, it was still too soon to make the film. Therefore I put the play in a drawer and, later, in 1943-1944, I took it up again and began thinking about how one might transpose it, as cinematically as possible. For that, I was obliged to proceed exactly as I had already previously done, but to a further extent: I had to clean the text as much as possible to the maximum.

If I proceed in this way, it is because I believe that in the cinema, one may not permit what is permissible in the theatre. In the theatre, you have words. And the words fill the space, hang in the air. You can hear them, feel them, experience their weight. But in the cinema the words are very quickly relegated to a background which absorbs them and that is why you may retain only what words are absolutely necessary. The essential is sufficient.

CAHIERS: The way you have of illustrating this problem of adaptation by passing from *Master of the House* to *Joan of Arc*, *Ordet* and *Gertrud* is also very revelatory: you do not separate the different forms of cinema any more than you separate the soul from the body. The same problem is posed by the limitations of silent films and those of sound films and you have resolved it in an analogous fashion.

DREYER: I seek before all else, and in all cases, to work in such a way that what I must express becomes cinema. For me, *Gertrud* is no longer theatre at all, it has become a film. Obviously, a talking film . . . therefore with dialogue, but a minimum of dialogue. Just what is required. The essential.

CAHIERS: The greatest part of critical misunderstanding comes from the fact that, too often, critics see things in a disassociated way. Thus, for them, in your case there is *Joan of Arc* which is made of images and *Gertrud* with words, while . . .

DREYER: Oh but! . . . *Joan of Arc* is also words! And it is even more of a tragedy, more theatrical than *Gertrud*? And then, there is also something I always say to myself: it hardly matters what appears on the screen, provided it is interesting. Whether the text predominates, or the image — it is all the same. In addition, it is a proof of stupidity not to recognize the very important role of the dialogue. Each subject implies a certain voice. And that must be paid attention. And it is necessary to find a possibility for expressing the voice as much as one can. It is very dangerous to limit oneself to a certain form, a certain style.

A Danish critic said to me one day, "I have the impression that there are at least six of your films that are stylistically completely different, one from the other." This moved me, for that is something I really tried to do: to find a style that has value for only a single film, for *this* milieu, *this* action, *this* character, *this* subject

Vampyr, *Joan of Arc*, *Day of Wrath*, *Gertrud*, are completely different, one from the other, in the sense that they each have their style. If something links them it is the fact that, little by little, I am approaching closer and closer to tragedy. That, I have become conscious of but, at the beginning, I didn't do it on purpose. It came by degrees.

CAHIERS: And now, you would doubtless like to get close enough to tragedy to coincide with it?

DREYER: Yes, I would like to. And I hope to arrive at it with the film about Christ, and with "Medea". "Medea" is a very cinematic thing and I will treat it very freely. For I asked Mr. Euripides to give me a free hand and he made no trouble. Briefly, I have tried to make a cinematic tragedy out of this theatrical tragedy. We'll see whether I have succeeded.

CAHIERS: Are you very far along with the project?

DREYER: The scenario is worked out, along its major lines, but I have not yet finished the dialogue. Now I need someone to help me.

CAHIERS: Do you have other projects in the same realm?

DREYER: Yes. There is Faulkner's "Light in August". And "Orestes" . . . But I won't be able to do "Orestes", because I met Mr. Jules Dassin and Mr. Jules Dassin has sort of reserved "Orestes" for himself. So we came to an agreement by which he will do "Orestes" and I will do "Medea". In any case I have been thinking of "Medea" for years and I believe I'll be able to make a good film from it.

CAHIERS: And "Light in August"?

DREYER: It is a very beautiful subject, but very difficult. However, I am set on doing it, all the more so because it is tragedy. An American tragedy and, obviously, it should be made in America.

CAHIERS: Do you have other American projects?

DREYER: I would like very much to adapt O'Neill. Particularly "Mourning Becomes Electra", which I find a very fine play.

CAHIERS: These are adaptations which you will again approach from the standpoint of the purification of the text . . .

DREYER: Yes. Always the same thing. But I will try to go farther, to do it in depth. In a theatre play, there are always so many little inessential things. Well, everything that is not absolutely necessary is a stumbling block. Things that block the way must be removed. The path must be clear, and lead towards what is essential, which is at the end of the road. When you take a theatrical dialogue there are too many accessory possibilities in it. And there is too much risk, in an adaptation, that the words, the sentences will be lost. It calls for pruning in such a way that what remains has an importance. By purification I want to make it possible for the spectator, who is following the images, the words and the intrigue, to have an open path so that he may get to the end of the road. It is for him that the dialogue must, so to speak, be put in close-ups.

CAHIERS: During the shooting, do you continue the work of purification?

DREYER: Yes, but in terms of the continuity. I mean to say that I eliminate anything that may cause fragmentation of the continuity that I am seeking to obtain. Continuity within the shot is for me a very important thing, for I like the actors to be involved with their dialogue and I respect the love they have for scenes that work.

I also take into consideration their way of working. When an actor makes it apparent to me that it is difficult for him to say something, then we discuss the problem and I modify the thing in question somewhat. And if, while they are working, I notice that the actors are cheating on the idea of a scene, or that it is difficult for them to respect certain movements that they find too complicated, well, then too, we discuss and often I rectify, that is to say, I continue to purify . . . The work of purification is a work that must be pursued constantly.

CAHIERS: Do you always collaborate in this way with the actors?

DREYER: Always. Because it is they who speak, who must feel the importance of what they are saying. That is why we have rehearsals. Above all for the dialogue. And that is how we come to feel, from time to time, that the dialogue must be concentrated. Sometimes it is the actors who come to an agree-

ment, amongst themselves, to ask me to delete several words or a few lines.

CAHIERS: But you don't rehearse only for dialogue?

DREYER: No. Everything must be rehearsed in such a way that everyone feels the movement and perfectly understands what he is doing. For *Gertrud*, we rehearsed a great deal. And I was very happy with the result. All the more so because all the work was done during the shooting so that the editing no longer posed any problem at all. In three days, the editing was completed. Terminated. Definitive. I thus realized a progress, for *Ordet* was edited in five days and *Days of Wrath* in twelve. Before that, I spent a month, or even longer, on the editing of my films.

Yes, I very much believe in long takes. You gain on all levels. And the work with the actors becomes much more interesting, for it creates a sort of ensemble, a unity, for each scene, which inspires them and allows them to live the relationships more intensely and more accurately.

CAHIERS: Have you always used direct sound?

DREYER: Not absolutely, but, as a general rule, yes. For *Day of Wrath*, I added much of the sound after the shooting. With *Ordet*, much less and, with *Gertrud*, none at all. Except, obviously, for the music. Another thing I like, in *Gertrud*, is that it is a modern subject and I attempted somewhat, to draw it towards tragedy. That is what I wanted to approach. I do not like big effects. I like to approach gently.

CAHIERS: *Gertrud*, a very modern subject that tends toward tragedy, reveals, on another level, your sense of totality . . .

DREYER: Yes. But in this case it is the rhythm, above all, that makes the tragedy. As for the style . . . Everyone always believes that I wanted such a style. And everyone sets himself to look for the style — here, there and everywhere. But it is much more simple, for, basically, everything in the film is always natural. The actors act in a completely natural way. They walk, they talk, in a natural rhythm, and they behave completely naturally in all the situations. What is curious is that there is a journalist, in Aarhus, who liked the film very much and wrote to me: "There is something I admire very much, and that is that you have *Gertrud* wear a cape, on the bottom of which is found a *Greek* motif. This is a sign that reveals that you were thinking of tragedy." I liked that thought a great deal, although this motif was in no way a function of my idea of tragedy: it was there purely by chance.

CAHIERS: It is perhaps a chance revelation of your preoccupation . . .

DREYER: In any case, this motif is the work of the film's couturiere — who is, by the way, Anna Karina's mother — and I accepted it without thinking much about it. Therefore it is

really by chance. But this relationship worked out by the journalist pleases me all the same . . .

CAHIERS: I met a Dane one day who said to me that the dialogue in *Gertrud* is false because spoken in a very artificial way. As for me, I am absolutely persuaded of the contrary but I absolutely could not discuss this with my Dane who could always answer: "You — you don't know Danish. . ."

DREYER: Obviously, the dialogue is not artificial! I simply wanted to make a film that is set in a certain period — the turn of the century — and that unfolds in a well-defined milieu. It is therefore certain that the language reflects something of this time and this milieu, that it possesses a special coloration. Perhaps that is what got your interlocutor off the track.

CAHIERS: Did you demand intonations, certain rhythms, certain vocal forms, of the actors?

DREYER: Yes. But with good actors, that is generally an easy thing to achieve, and we always arrive at an understanding of what we are to do. Good actors understand the necessity for this work. They know that poetic phrases must be brought out in a certain fashion, with a certain rhythm, and every day speech in another fashion. And it is not only the tone that is concerned.

If you are in front of a screen, at

the cinema, you have the tendency to follow everything that unfolds on it, which is different from the theatre where the words move through space and exist there, hanging in the air. At the cinema, as soon as they left the screen, the words die. Therefore I tried to make little pauses in order to give the spectator the possibility of assimilating what he hears, of thinking about it. That gives the dialogue a certain rhythm, a certain style.

CAHIERS: Doubtless, you would also like to have the possibility of working in color? Do you envisage it for your next films?

DREYER: Yes. For all of them.

CAHIERS: Do you envisage color in, for example, "Medea?"

DREYER: I have an idea, very simple. But I prefer not to talk about it now. I think it is better this way.

CAHIERS: Among the films you have made, are there any you would have liked to do in color?

DREYER: I would very much like to have made *Gertrud* in color. I even had a certain Swedish painter in mind, who has studied the period in which the film takes place and who has made many drawings and paintings in which he utilizes very special colors.

CAHIERS: More exactly, what would you have wanted to obtain?

DREYER: That is very difficult to

describe. The painter of whom I speak whose name is Halman, above all does drawings for newspapers. You know, these big colored pages for the Sunday edition. It is very pretty and done with very few colors. Four or five at the most. It is in that spirit that I would have wanted to do *Gertrud*. Soft colors, few in number, that go well together.

CAHIERS: Did you also see *Ordet* in color?

DREYER: No. At that time the problem did not interest me. It was with *Gertrud* that I thought about it and, of course, I am thinking about it now for my coming films.

CAHIERS: *Gertrud* was recently shown on French television. What do you think, in general, of television?

DREYER: I don't like television. I need the big screen. I need the communal feeling of the hall. A thing made to be moving must move a crowd.

CAHIERS: What do you like in today's cinema?

DREYER: I should tell you first of all that I see very few films. I am always afraid of being influenced. I have, however, seen, among the French films, *Hiroshima mon amour* and *Jules et Jim*. I liked *Jules et Jim* very much. *Hiroshima* too, especially the second half. Briefly, I like Jean-Luc Godard, Truffaut, Clouzot and Chabrol.

CAHIERS: Have you seen Robert



Gertrud, Nina Pens Rode, Bendt Rothe.

DREYER: That is a film I like very much. Not too long ago, in Copenhagen, there was a gathering of Danish students. On that occasion, one of my films was to be presented and I proposed that they show this one. They appreciated it a great deal, they laughed heartily the whole time. I was very surprised.

CAHIERS: How did you choose the subject for this film?

DREYER: It was a question of finding a little subject that could be made very quickly. So I found that story — a Norwegian story — which was very nice, and which was transposed nearly intact to the film. It was also a question of finding a role for the old woman, who was 76 years old, who died immediately after the shooting. Before starting, she was already very sick but she said to me, "Don't worry, I won't die before having finished the film." I had confidence in her. She kept her promise. Yes . . . I very much liked this story of three young pastors, one of whom is obliged to marry the old woman. It was a very original subject.

CAHIERS: It was both grave and gay.

DREYER: Yes! Joy on a background of gravity.

CAHIERS: Then, you made a film in Germany: (*Die Gezeichneten, Aimez-vous les uns les autres*).

DREYER: A print of this was found again, about a year ago. Mr. Ib Monty, the director of the Danish *Cinematheque*, went on a trip to Russia and someone there told him that a print of the film had been found. He asked to see it, as that interested him, and he was given that print, which is now in the Cinema Museum, where you could have seen it. Mr. Monty was told, in Moscow, that the film — which takes place in Russia during the revolution of 1905 — was exceptionally successful concerning the style and the milieu.

CAHIERS: Didn't you have Russian actors for this film?

DREYER: Yes. Bolevslavski and Gadarov, the two principal actors, as well as Polina Piekovska, were Russian. Duvan was also known. He had been the director of the Russian cabaret "The Bluebird". As for the others, they were Russian, Danish, German and Norwegian. Besides that, the film was made in Berlin. But the film was adapted from an enormous novel ("Die Gezeichneten", which sort of means "The Stigmatized Ones"), which we had to compress a great deal. Perhaps it was wrong to want to condense this big work in order to make a film out of it. It was necessary to cut, to prune, endlessly . . . This proves that novels shouldn't be filmed. It's too hard. I prefer to film theatre. There is also another of my films that was recently found again: my other German film, *Michael*, which I made in 1923 or 1924.

CAHIERS: Did you have a free hand with these two films? Were they successful?

DREYER: For *The Stigmatized Ones*,

I was very free. For *Michael*, I had a practically free hand. As for their success, the first was well enough received by the public but it was, above all, *Michael* that was a big critical success in Germany. It was called the first *Kammerspiel* (chamber music?) film, and I was very flattered by that, for this film was very important for me. The subject for *Michael* came from a Danish author, Herman Bang. It is the story of a young man who finds himself torn between his "protector" and the woman he loves. The "protector", Zoret, is a celebrated master, a sculptor and a painter (a little along the lines of Rodin) who has adopted the young boy and who cherishes him as a son. Well, the young man betrays him, and for the woman: a princess. And the old master, at the end, dies in solitude. The action takes place during a period when passion and exaggeration were in fashion, when feelings were willfully exacerbated; a period with a certain very false manner, which is seen in its decoration with all its outrageously supercharged interiors. The author of the novel, Herman Bang, belonged to the same period as Hjalmar Sjoderberg, the author of "Gertrud", and it was even said of Sjoderberg that he imitated Bang, although it was Bang who imitated Sjoderberg . . .

CAHIERS: Don't you think there is a very profound relationship between *Michael* and *Gertrud*?

DREYER: Yes. That is certain. There is, basically, a certain resemblance. In the tone, in the way the actors act, in the lighting . . . These are also two films that are set in periods that are very close: the end of the 19th century, for *Michael*, and the beginning of the 20th, for *Gertrud*. There is also, in both of them, the same sweetness, the same bitterness . . . I just spoke to you of the relationship between the works of Bang and Sjoderberg. Well, it turns out that they knew each other and were even very friendly.

For me, this film counts for a lot, even though I see it differently, through somewhat different eyes. It is one of my first films to clearly show a specific style.

CAHIERS: How would you define this style?

DREYER: That's not easy to explain . . . but what I just told you also refers to this style and is part of it: a certain reflection of the period. It was, for example, the period when, in France, the monasteries were expropriated by the government. Piles of accessories that came from churches and monasteries were put up for sale, and many people bought sacerdotal ornaments, chairs, benches and other furniture. For example, I knew a Danish actress — she lived in France and was married to the composer, Bereny — who, when she moved back to Copenhagen, set herself up in an apartment filled with horrible things of this genre, all lighted by a bunch of chandeliers. Well, all that was

also part of the film's atmosphere which reflects this rich taste . . . which was in bad taste but which, obviously was considered excellent at that time.

I collaborated on the decors but they were done by an architect who understood my intentions very well and who was absolutely amazing. This was Hugo Haring. He had never done decor for the cinema, and after that he never did any again, for following *Michael*, he went back to his true métier, to being an architect. For him, it was an *entracte* in his career (and the period was not so much one for the construction of new houses), an amusement, a fantasy that offered itself . . .

CAHIERS: The name Thea von Harbou appears on the credits . . .

DREYER: Ah yes! . . . This was the protegee of Mr. Erich Pommer, so . . . and, with Mr. Pommer, Thea von Harbou was an authority. In any case, whatever intervention there was, I was authorized to consider it as an intervention on principle and to make the film in conformity with my own scenario.

CAHIERS: Do you have any remarks about the actors?

DREYER: As principal actor in the role of Zoret, I took a Danish film director: Benjamin Christensen, the director of *Sorcery Through the Ages*. In the role of Michael, there was young Walter Slezak, whom you must know for his American films. It was also the debut for cameraman, Rudolf Mate, and our first meeting. Before that, he had done only one short. In fact, Mate did not work on the whole film. Karl Freund was the cameraman who actually was supposed to do the film but he was obliged to leave, as he had other work to do. That is when it was proposed that Mate do the last takes (which consisted principally of interiors. I was very satisfied with him and took him for my following film: *Joan of Arc*).

CAHIERS: Between *The Stigmatized Ones* and *Michael*, there was *Once Upon a Time* . . .

DREYER: Ah yes! . . . But it's a complete loss. A complete failure. I was not given what I was promised. I was left in the most complete confusion concerning the actors, the places and the shooting time. I worked with a crew of actors from the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen who were free for only one month, in the summer. It was therefore necessary for me to organize myself as much as possible but, at the last moment, I learned that the studios would not be free for the necessary time. Therefore I had to do it in haste, with neither any support nor any organization.

As a film it is a loss. There are things one misses in life. And it is necessary at times to miss them. Many detours must be made, to the right and to the left, in order to finally discover the true path. And it is straight ahead.

CAHIERS: This film is a failure? I am not entirely in agreement with you,

let's go on to *The Master of the House*, about which you have already said a few words, when you were talking about adaptation. Now can you talk to us a bit about making this film?

DREYER: We were absolutely set on shooting this film with real décors, in a real apartment. We found one, a workman's apartment that corresponds exactly to what we desired. Unfortunately the work would have been too difficult for the crew, so we built an exact copy of that apartment at the studio. This permitted a great deal of verisimilitude.

After this film, I made *The Fiancée of Glomdal*, in Sweden. It was a little folk tale. I have nothing special to say about it. Then came *Joan of Arc*, which I have already talked about, then *Vampyr*. *Vampyr* is an original subject that my friend Christian Jul drew from our imagination, starting from several pre-existing elements. What attracted me to begin with, in this subject, was an image I had: something in black and white. But that was not yet defined as a style, and this style was what Mate and I sought to find.

Generally, you find the definitive style for a film at the end of a few days. Here, we found it right away. We started to shoot the film — starting with the beginning — and, at one of the first screenings of rushes, noticed that one of the takes was grey. We asked ourselves, why, until we became aware of the fact that it came from a false light that had been projected on the lens.

The producer of the film, Rudolf Mate and I thought about that take, in relation to the style we were looking for. Finally, we said that all we had to do was to repeat, on purpose, every day, the little accident that had happened. Henceforth, for each take, we directed a false light on the lens, by projecting it through a veil, which sent the light back to the camera.

After that we had to look for an ending: our first idea was to have the old doctor disappear in the earth, swallowed up by quicksand. But we couldn't utilize that idea, as it was too dangerous for the actor. Therefore we had to find something else. One day, on the way back to Paris after a day of shooting, all the while talking about what we might do, we passed a little house that looked as if it were full of white flames. As we were unoccupied, not yet having found anything, we went into the little house and, once inside, understood that it was a little factory where they worked at reclaiming plaster. The whole interior was white, all the objects were bathed in a white dust and the workmen, too, were all white. Everything partook of that extraordinary white atmosphere. This was utilized by us as a point of departure for another stylistic element of the film.

The grey photography, the white light: this became, definitely, the tonality of the film. For, out of each of these

styles we made a third style: that of the film itself.

CAHIERS: In order to realize this style, a great suppleness was required of the cameraman. In general, do you collaborate with your cameramen?

DREYER: I have always had the good luck to find someone who loves to work and knows how to, and who does not refuse to collaborate, or to open himself to certain research. I also believe that I am very easy. When someone knows how to work.

CAHIERS: Now, let's talk about your documentaries.

DREYER: Oh! They're little things . . .

CAHIERS: When you say about these films, "They're little things," not having seen them, I am disarmed and cannot contradict you as, perhaps, I should . . . Therefore, let's go on to another film: *Tva Manniskor* (*Two Beings*).

DREYER: That doesn't exist.

CAHIERS: But I've seen it. I am thus in the position of having a point of view. It exists.

DREYER: You know, for this film, I was placed in a precarious situation. It was in 1944. I was told that perhaps I was in danger, because of the Germans. Therefore I left for Stockholm with *Day of Wrath*, for the official reason of selling the film. Then I stayed in Stockholm and wanted to make this little film. Unfortunately, the producer decided to choose the actors himself. He wanted a great career. Well, the actors in question represented the exact opposite of what I would have wanted. And, for me, the actors are extremely important. Thus, I wanted the woman to be a bit theatrical, a little hysterical, and, for the actor for the part of the savant, I wanted a man with blue eyes, naive but completely honest, who was interested in nothing but his work. Well, they gave me an actress who was the personification of a little bourgeoisie and, for the man, instead of a blue-eyed idealist, I was given an intriguing demoniac with brown eyes . . .

CAHIERS: Don't you think that this film also has a certain relationship to *Gertrud*?

DREYER: Oh no! There is absolutely no comparison. And it is a film that was doomed from the start, completely.

CAHIERS: Here now is a list of some of your shorts: *De Gamle*, *Shakespeare and Kroneborg*, *Ille attraperent le bac*, *Storstrom Bridge*, *Reconstruction of Ronne and Nexos*, *Thorvaldsen*, *The Rural Church* . . . Have you something to mention about their subject?

DREYER: *De Gamle* (*The Old Man*) is a film about social changes in favor of old people. *Ille attraperent le bac* is a little film about the dangers of traffic. It is one of my best shorts. There is another I like very much: *Shakespeare and Kronenborg*, a documentary on the castle where the action in "Hamlet" takes place. I also made another documentary on this castle, more purely his-

torical and archeological, on the remains of the old castle of Kroneborg, of which there still exists some ruins.

Storstrom Bridge is a documentary on the three kilometer long (1.8639 miles) bridge that links the two Danish islands. *Thorvaldsen* is a documentary on the work of the Danish sculptor, a contemporary of Canova. As for *Reconstruction of Ronne and Nexos*, this is



Gertrud, Nina Pens Rode.

a document of the reconstruction of two towns, on the island of Bornholm, that were bombarded by the Russians . . .

CAHIERS: If we add *The Rural Church* and your other film on *Kroneborg*, we note that your shorts are, above all, based on architecture, old or modern . . .

DREYER: They're little things.

CAHIERS: Among all the films on

which you collaborated, as scenarist or editor, before becoming a director, there must be some that owe a lot to you, which are, to some extent, by you?

DREYER: There were many films, made from scenarios I wrote, alone or in collaboration, or from ideas I suggested, but these are films I do not recognize. All that is my period of apprenticeship, including *L'Argent*, after

Zola, whose scenario I did. But I collaborated more on *Hotel Paradise* (whose subject must have been re-used later): that is somewhat mine. You see, all that was apprenticeship, school. For one must learn and sometimes that takes a long time. Then, you have to make a few mistakes. I told you this a little while ago: You must make detours before discovering the true path.





La Ilusion Viaja En Tranvia (On A Vole Un Tram!)

The Angel And The Beast

(Luis Buñuel's Mexican Sketches)

By Jean-André Fieschi

The five Mexican films of Luis Buñuel, until now unreleased in France: *Gran Casino* (*Grand Casino*), 1947, *El Gran Calavera* (*Le Grand Noceur*), 1949, *Don Quinton el amargao* (*Don Quinton lamer*), 1951, *La Ilusion viaja en tranvia* (*On a volé un tram!*), 1953, *El Rio y la muerte* (*Le Rio de la mort*), 1954, that an intelligent distributor lets us discover today, are preceded by an unflattering reputation as careless pot boilers — a reputation, to tell the truth, partly maintained by Buñuel himself, who had always refused to make any statement about them but: "That was a diversion, filmed in two weeks . . ." or else "In it there is a rather interesting reel."

No doubt these little films are far from ranking with the central works of the auteur. They are equally far from being those bottoms-of-the-drawer that the hasty Marcabru, hammer-head of French criticism, stupidly reproaches Studio 43 for having exhibited at the risk, mind you, of disturbing the minds of the readers of *Arts*. The same Marcabru chokes with admiration before *Distant Drums*, which is not the best film of Walsh, either; but the inconsistencies of criticism for once would not feed a discussion that, devoted to the most serene of all cinéastes, would have us serene, in homage.

So let us establish from the start of the game that these Buñuel diversions have a freshness of invention, a frankness of gaze, a clarity of expression, a quality of enchantment, that deter us from satisfying ourselves with only their surface or transient virtues, and invite us rather to consider them as sketches or recurrences "in a minor key" of many of the more austere beauties that flower in *El*, *Nazarin*, or *The Exterminating Angel*.

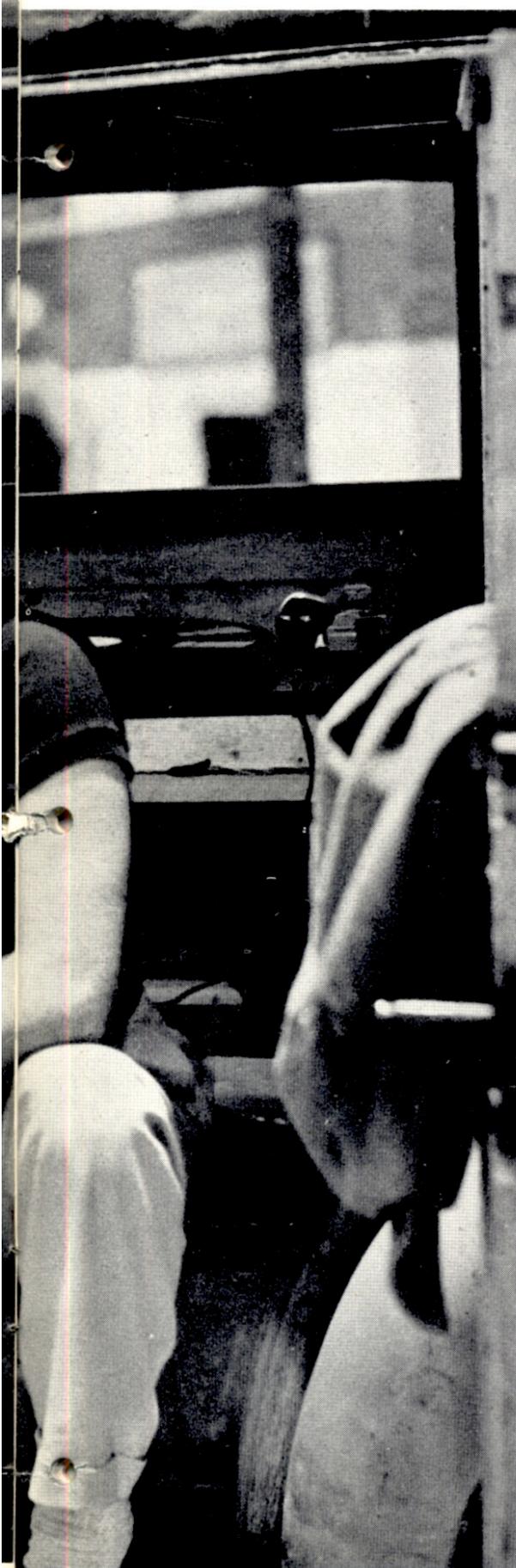
The fundamental modesty of the discourse, the implicit recognition of thematic restrictions, do not all affect the fixations of some images, the reiteration of obsessive motifs, especially the attachment to some basic characters: the irascible Don Quinton foretells by more than one trait the more disquieting eccentricities of the Francisco of *El*; the tragi-comic coming-and-going of *La ilusion viaja en tranvia* is like the distant echo of the crucial theme of clausturation that will culminate in *The Exterminating Angel*; the Lilia Prado of the *Ilusion* is the little sister, scarcely

less perverse, of Suzanna and of the cajoler of *Subida el cielo*, etc. To be sure it is easy, with Buñuel more than with others, to compile a catalogue of continuities and of landmarks. That this catalogue could begin with these "minor" films is enough to show that they belong to a common poetic stem, to an identical shaping imagination. But where the masterpieces proudly show forth their plenitude, the little works let one surprise, at the very moment when the artist gives himself up to an apparently easier verve, if not the secrets of fabrication — there are none with Buñuel, whose art, at the antipodes of that of Hitchcock, ignores or rejects the mechanisms of fascination—at least the first images, still crude, badly decanted, of this familiar mulling, elsewhere buried under a series of misleading degrees or under a profusion of false tracks. They allow a rich proximity of information and surprises. They recall, opportunely, some truths that perfection at times likes to conceal under an impenetrable formal ordering. One knows, and that from as far back as *L'Age d'Or* and *Land Without Bread*, what relations, at once methodical, ironic, and suspect, Buñuel maintains with the severe art of the moralist — for which people praise him on the left, people blame him on the right, with the same assiduity (not to speak of the sempiternal attempts at annexation that, free work and of a free man, the work obviously refuses, even when it appears conciliatory or more accessible: *Los Olvidados*).

Of course it is a question of a moralist less grossly Manichean than the reading of some critique, and among the best intentioned in the world, would let one believe, but in the end of a man concerned all the same to ask and to ask again without respite some primordial questions, for want of bringing to them always a conveniently practicable solution. The morality of Buñuel is as radically different from traditional morality (from traditional moralities) as is linguistics from grammar—as the following quotation means to make explicit: "Scientific is the opposite of prescriptive. In the case of linguistics, it is particularly important to insist on the scientific, and not prescriptive, character of the study: the object of this science being a human activity, the temptation is great to quit the realm of impartial



El Gran Calavera (Le Grand Noceur).



observation to recommend a certain behavior, to record no longer what people actually say, but to decree what ought to be said. The difficulty that there is in disengaging scientific linguistics from normative grammar recalls the difficulty that there is in disengaging from ethics a true science of customs." (André Martinet, *Eléments de linguistique générale*.)

Jacques Rivette has very precisely delimited the moral frame of this science of customs (see also the exegeses, more widespread because more striking, of Buñuel-entomologist):

"To what moral do the films of Buñuel return us? It is obvious that none of his films emerges with a morality of acceptance or of resignation . . . His aim is very precisely to show the difficulty of this enterprise without prejudging its necessity. He leaves no doubt, of course, that this society ought to be denounced; but one must not for all that underestimate ruse as stupidity; therefore one must pay close attention to the way in which it is denounced; the one who runs the most risks is the one who denounces, who should take it upon himself to denounce; if he does not take care, there are nine chances out of ten that he will as a matter of fact fall into one of the traps of that society."

That is to repeat that, to the practice of a comfortable but precarious didacticism, Buñuel prefers that of suggestion, of appeal to judgment. A free *cinéaste* requires in the first place, free spectators, or those who will try to become free. Now, *El Río y la muerte* which precedes the very subtle *Ensayo de un crimen*. (*The Criminal Life of Archibald de la Cruz*), 1955, offers us that rarity—a true lesson in morality, humorous but explicit, humanly localizable and geographically delimited: the film is addressed to Mexicans (and by extension, maybe, to Latins), for whom *machismo*, that sense of honor, that pride of the male as touchy as it is futile, conditions existence; this dangerous failing is at the origin of inter-familial hecatombs that degenerate into perpetual vendettas, bloody heritages from generation to generation, to the most elementary contempt of human life. If the rather crude mechanics of the scenario, based on the repetition of effects, seemed to forbid too great a subtlety of treatment, at least one sees in it how Buñuel for once put up with the didactic necessities of a district discourse, immediately intelligible to the Mexican popular audience, almost solely concerned by this apologue with its frankly preachy conclusion. Some measure of perspective obviously tempers the schematicism of the fable and the rather bargain-priced picturesqueness of its illustration, but *El Río y la muerte*, especially, proves by its absurdity the kind of constraint felt by Buñuel towards summary demonstrations: it manifestly

repels him to furnish proofs and to give lessons when the merest indications would be enough to free the reflection of the spectator. To show is the great strength of the *cinéaste*, and to demonstrate, he knows, adds nothing. The hero of *El Río y la muerte* is thus a "whole" character, a doctor who, not content with healing bodies, undertakes to care also for the souls (I admit that the word is out of place here) of his insensible and murderous compatriots, at the risk of seeming in their eyes a coward and a degenerate. But is it chance if the flashback that occupies three quarters of the film, and which tells in minute detail the genealogy of the murders, to end in the obligation, moreover declined by the doctor, to kill in his turn, makes its impression to the detriment of the character and of his saving mission? The film is of more value for its recension, almost ethnographic, of local customs (festivals, burials, card games), for its painting of characters, for its documentary respect for places, than for making tortuously explicit the adage "It is evil to kill one's neighbor without reasons." One knows to what tests and conflicts Buñuel ordinarily subjects his "exemplary" characters. When Nazarin accepts the pineapple at the sound of the drums of Calanda, when Viridiana initiates herself into the subtleties of three-handed belote, the least one can say is that the idea these martyrs were forming for themselves of saintliness or of justice has developed somewhat to the detriment of gospel truths. One day (in the first, remarkable transmission of the television series *Cinéastes de notre temps*) Buñuel compared the doubt that installs itself in them then to someone who might go to sleep in his bed with a lighted cigarette. The cigarette may simply go out; then again it may set fire to the sheets, or to the whole household. *Nazarin* and *Viridiana* end, obviously, on the image of the lighted cigarette, before it goes out or before it sets fire to the house. If Buñuel filmed the fire, it would become rhetoric, that which his art, from *Un chien andalou* to *Simon du désert*, with a rare felicity forbids itself. It is in this sense that *El Río y la muerte* plays the exception. The struggle that the film relates is the least ambiguous, the least dangerous, of all his work, and consequently the least arresting, even if for once success seems to crown it. But Buñuel himself will take care to criticize and to correct his too simple character, a year later, by another doctor-character, the latter prey to more doubtful and meritorious combats: Doctor Valerio in *Cela s'appelle l'aurore* (1955).

As it is, *El Río y la muerte* has the merit of putting the accent on one of the constants of the style of Buñuel, by failing to keep the established rule that guides the other films. So one can say that there it was a matter of his only obligatory film, in the measure in



Don Quintin El Amargo (Don Quintin L'Amer).



which the things shown in it depend on an intention to edify foreign to the usual scruples of the *auteur*. The general considerations one can draw from it verge on those that impress one at a viewing of another noted *oeuvre de circonstance*, *This Land is Mine*, of Jean Renoir. In both cases the limits of the spirit of demonstration, even applied to noble causes, lead to works in which, from the first to the last image of the film, people more artificially, from two *cinéastes* who everywhere else ignore and refuse the too-transient enticements of artifice. Heavy with explicit meaning, *El Rio y la muerte* is as well, and indeed thereby, the only slight film of Buñuel. On the contrary, apart from any requirement but purely narrative, it is precisely in the manner of showing that the more homogeneous success of *Cu a volé un tram!*, a year before *El Rio*, lies.

A short prologue, recited in that neutral monotonous slightly emphatic voice that habitually speaks the commentary of tourist documentaries (voice on which Buñuel, in *Terre sans pain*, has conferred an uncommon efficacy, at once denunciatory and giving distance), informs us that what is involved is a chronicle of the working life of a great city, Mexico. The characters and the story seem chosen by a will of the freest, but one that in fact brings a return to a possible generalization of the subject—which quickly lets emerge a major theme of Buñuel: the extraordinary, irreplaceable nature of the humblest life, the marvelous that is hidden under the apparent banality of the everyday, the inexhaustible richness of the monotony of the days. Not the *tranche de vie*, slice of life, dear to neo-realism, with which this film maintains a superficial relationship, but a constant attention brought to bear on common events, that a sudden intrusion of the improbable diverts from a simple account of naturalistic facts. Here Buñuel is openly enjoying himself, and invites us to share his urban loitering; he yields to the call of digressions, borrows the secondary roads of the story the better to find again from them the first necessity, accumulates the most unexpected notations on a milieu, a character, a décor, abandons his actors to a craftily elicited naturalness, to a particularly flavorsome supervised histrionics, in a kind of anecdotal choreography guided by irony, lightness, and a never contradicted exactness of tone. The itinerary of his heroes crosses a number of parallel itineraries, meets many a marginal action that the *cinéaste* does not exploit but contents himself with indicating, as if to give more weight and more existence to the capricious design that he has chosen to perfect: preoccupied with escaping the penalties that lie in wait for them, the thoughtless abductors of the tram grant only a distracted, somnambulistic attention to a film being shot or to grain smugglers.

The essential, for them, is to wipe out the last trace of their unintentional crime; and so they will be able to believe they dreamed their adventure when, miraculously, at dawn of the second day everything has returned to order. In the last shots, the city plunges them back into anonymity; Buñuel, for the space of a moment, has made them present to us forever.

Moreover, *La Ilusion viaja en tranvia* is not at all a minor film. The vein exploited here is the same as in *Subida al cielo* (1951) in which the surprising geometry of the journeys, the countless obstacles that oppose the intention, nevertheless simple, of the protagonists (to go to the city to get a legal paper and to bring it back to the pueblo in *Subida*, to take the tram back to its garage in *La Ilusion*) condition in like manner a hazardous aesthetic of wandering, of meeting, of fantasy. Of the five films, this is the most inventive, the most comic, the most serious as well, the one in which a constant felicity of expression ceaselessly distracts the characters of this simple regionalist short story to lead them to the end of a chaotic tale at the caprice of a ballad rhythm, nonchalant without clumsiness, graceful without mannerism. Buñuel, in passing, makes fun of his own eccentricities, amuses himself at parodying himself, notably in the scene in which, in the course of a popular festival, irresistible amateur actors give a burlesque version of the Original Sin, under the august eye of an old man with a white beard (God), who looks sternly upon their irreverent frolics from a flower-decked swing. The pretext, very ingenious, of the forced journey in the tram makes possible a detailed description, precise, unusual, of Mexico City and of its suburbs, as well as a very diverting gallery of portraits in which, from the butcher to the bigoted old woman, from the aristocrat on a binge to the American tourist, an entire society files past in cross section. The established order, the power of money, "alienation," are divided as needs be, but scratched more than cleft in two, for here Buñuel is staking more on the smile and the good humor of a lively chronicle than on the virtues of an ordered indictment. And the treatment of the story is so relaxed, so good-tempered, that the character of the old police spy, who would be odious or contemptible in any other context, seems more the harmless traitor of melodrama or the spoil-sport than licensed scum fooled by a mercenary society (which he is). That is to say, to what point the visible purpose of caricature acts contrary to all schematisation, to all oversimplification; in *La Ilusion viaja en tranvia*, as with the Kazan of *America America*, as in the two *Journal d'une femme de chambre* (*Diary of a chambermaid*), each person has his reasons even is no one is right, each person is first examined in his motivations before being judged by his actions.

Even in comedy—which most lends itself to the task, indeed to sheer spite (cf. Hawks), — the cinema of Buñuel ignores contempt for people. If the film admits of a lesson all the same, it is a very limpid lesson that only a *cinéaste* can give, from the very nature of his art; and rather than a lesson, it is a re-

quirement, to see better, consequently to understand better, in order to live better. In short, a method of understanding, at once efficacious and lucid, so discreetly it offers itself.

To learn to live better is the subject of *El Gran Calavera* as well, and one of the favorite subjects of Buñuel, un-

fortunately thwarted a little here by a canvas of coarser articulations; the characters in it are marionettes acted upon by too obvious a purpose of derision for real existence. Yet a constant off-handedness preserves them from the spirit of the serious, and the mannerisms of the actors are accentuated only



Gran Casino (Grand Casino).

in order better to avoid—in contrast to *El Rio y la muerte*—the traps of edification. But when everything has been taken into account, one cannot reproach Buñuel for substituting *guignol* for bad *théâtre bourgeois*: it matters to him to show that both genres obey the same rules, the same enlargement of strokes,

the same trickery. And he manifestly does not dislike establishing his findings by the indirect means of a story this time a little debased, since the very conventionality of the subject lets him introduce the contradictory details, the parasitical elements, that undermine it, destroy it. This is an idea of the gag specific to Buñuel that it would be fitting to analyze systematically to discover one of the very first truly comic *auteurs* of the cinema. In the works called serious, the gag occurs as the telescoping of two competitiveness, unassimilable realities. (*L'Age d'Or*, *Simon du Désert* teem with these encounters in which logic is upset). In these little films that one must see in the same joyous absence of constraints that has watched over their making, the gag has as its function that of opening the breach to an infinity of possibilities by which Buñuel imposes his personality on all that he films, even with the old remains of a camera and as if inadvertently.

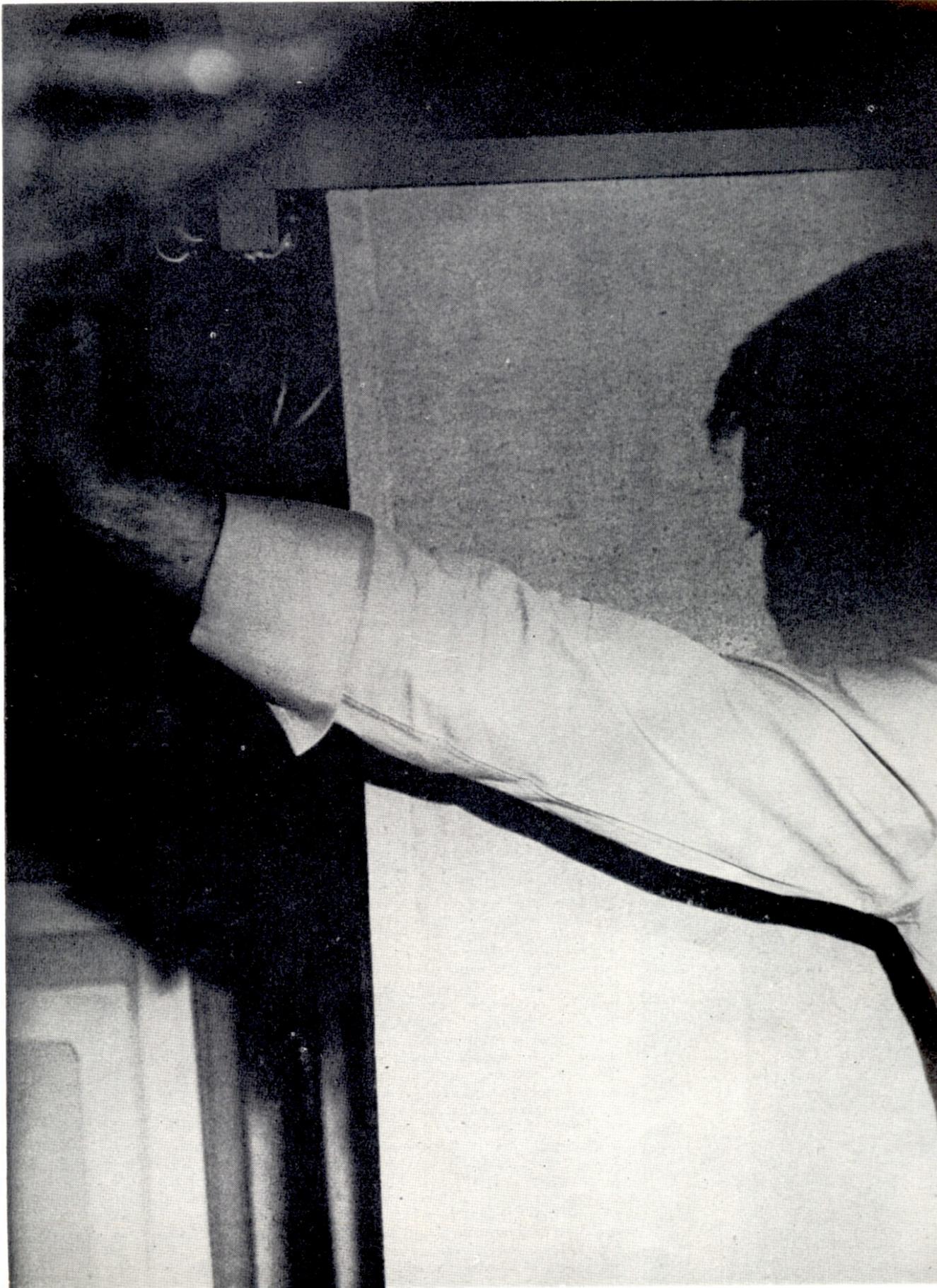
The improbable interweaving of mistaken identities of *El Gran Calavera*, the obscure wanderings of the almost Victorian plot of *Don Quintin l'amer*, hide an aggregation of gags whose arrangement and mechanism defy all possible reconciliation with dramatic systems other than that of Buñuel himself. For example, the scene called "of the olive" of *Don Quintin* (practically irrecountable, since everything in it is played on mimicry, distances, physical tension, and the fact that the spectator is one twist ahead of the protagonists) ridicules in itself alone many a noble confrontation of westerns, although that is not its aim. It is here that the necessity of those bewildering second-rate Mexicans (Fernando Soto, Fernando Soler)—who, almost alone in the world with some Egyptian actors, move through the scenes in a kind of free zone of play in which no one could say whether they are execrable or sublime, ridiculous or grandiose, conscious or irresponsible, directed or not—takes on all its meaning; it remains that when Fernando Soler says, gloomily, in a gloomy scene, "Don Quintin is a pain in the neck. When he goes to the barber he wants to keep his hat on his head," it is squarely impossible not to burst out laughing. For, even, when every element manipulated by Buñuel, taken one by one, in itself is questionable—the scenario, the dialogue, the actors—the whole asserts a kind of irrefutable cohesion that makes criticism of details inoperative and empty. One understands how in the perspective of Buñuel there could be no bad actors; it is enough to think of *Abismos de pasión* (*Les Hauts de Hurlevent*, *Wuthering Heights*, 1953) in which all that could seem monstrous faults of direction, of *canalisation*, orientation of the spectators, as Delehayé would say, is in fact to be put to the account of the passion and fury of the actors, passion

and fury that are too much for them and literally disfigure them. On this level still Buñuel is preserved by the multiple degrees that he knows how to maintain, from the social to the poetic, from established fact to metaphor, degrees which secure and crystallize a particularly original form of realism, a realism that explicitly intends to reject nothing of all that constitutes reality for a man—that is to say, at once the mental world (dreams, phantasms, hallucinations, imagination), and the "objective" world, the world of objects. The work is born precisely at the intersection of these two competing worlds, from their encounter, from their clash, or from their fusion. It is in this respect only that the films of which we have spoken mark a retrogression from the other works: while *L'Age d'Or* or *Nazarin*, *Viridiana* or *Simon du désert* contain in themselves the totality of the world of Buñuel, each time integrated as a whole, with its countless riches, in a differently defined story, *El Gran Calavera*, *Don Quintin el amargao*, *La Ilusion viaja en tranvia*, *El Rio y la muerte* and *Gran Casino*, in spite of their enchantments and their respective strong points, are only scattered bits, fragments, meteorites, of this great universe. And, very curiously, all these works end on an agreement, on the reconciliation, at least provisional, of the world and of the characters envisaged; the debauchee (*le Grand Noceur*) stops drinking and finds again a united home, Don Quintin recovers his daughter and renounces misanthropy, the old tram returns to its barn, families torn in the past are reconciled at the edge of the river of Death. They are the only films of Buñuel of which one can say that at the last shot they are truly brought to a conclusion, while at the last shot the others are truly beginning (*Nazarin*, *Viridiana*, *Simon du désert*), either begin again on another mode, more insidious, that of reiteration, or in the manner of the rings of an endless spiral (*El*, *L'Ange exterminateur*, *Le Journal d'une femme de chambre*.) So the surmounted trials of *Don Quintin* or of *El Gran Calavera* are surmounted only because they are false trials, simulacra of trials, make-believe plots of melodrama or of comedy, "diversions."

But one must love these inspired diversions, hasty, muddles, out of pocket, under pain of ignoring a large share of giddiness that the masterpieces contain. Buñuel here gives us his Mexican sketches, in which his genius takes some mischievous pleasure at hiding its true nature under clothes borrowed, though very elegantly worn. In *El Rio y la muerte*, he even plays the fool a little, and God alone know what commotion to stir. Yet even then an angel watches over this fool-beast (*bête*), terrible, ready to strike lightning, while eternal sheep turn, bleating, towards eternal churches.

—Jean-André FIESCHI





Jerry Lewis.

America's Uncle

Interview with

Jerry Lewis

by Axel Madsen

Interviewed at his office, December 30, 1965. Present Lewis, Axel Madsen, Jim Flood (Lewis publicity chief).

MADSEN — Let's sort of start in the middle of things. In the last issue of *Cabiers du Cinema*, there was a re-appraisal of attitudes. The auteur theory is now ten years old and we're taking another critical look. The latest thing is the whole thing split in two. You can be modern in two ways: with fancy camera work a la Lester, *The Knack* and such —

LEWIS — Dick Lester?

MADSEN — Yes. Others say modernity is when you do not see the camera; the awareness of the camera is cheaply modern, and not being aware of it is better.

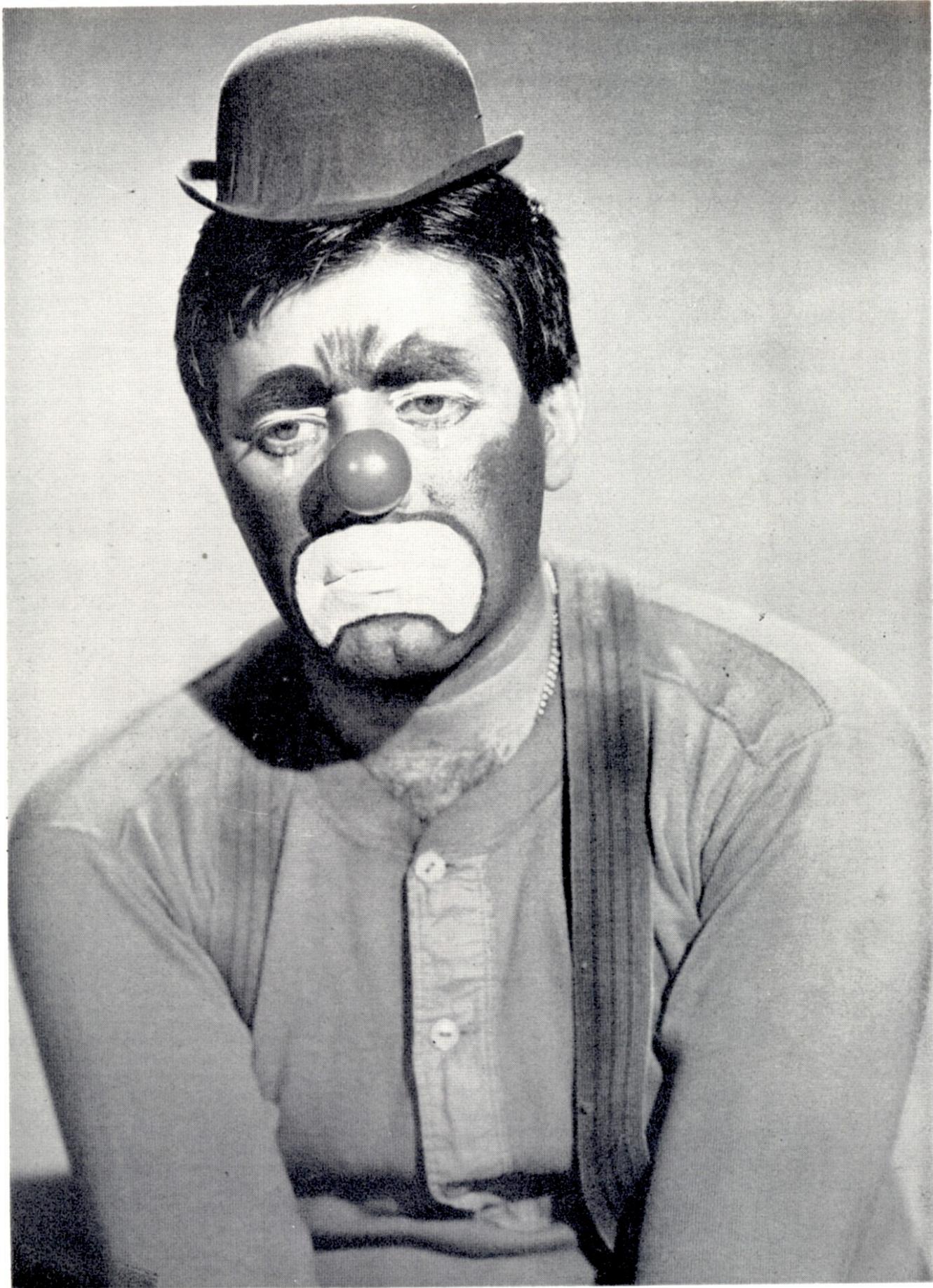
LEWIS — Oh, I agree. You're starting off with a statement of fact, Axel.

MADSEN — And yourself today, a few years after your first directing assignment, where do you feel you are in your own evolution?

LEWIS — In the embryo. I think it's quite early yet. I think I've picked up some information along the way since the first film, but I would honestly have to say that it's in the embryo stage. To be the director you want to be takes an awful lot of time, not just in preparing the production but in examining what you've done with the production. I think the function of the true director, new or old, is the beginning of the turning of the first page to the end of the last cut. I'm going to my cutting room in a little while. And I must run this through the moviola myself. I can't have my cutters do it. I have to do it because I know when I want to hit the brake. I know the frame. But in terms of my own evolution I think potential is there. And the European reaction to what I've done has protected me tremendously. It's helped me to keep wanting to go forward in this field. If I'd listened to American thinking, I'd have quit everything, not just directing, but everything. I'd have gotten a nice job at the Royal Shoestore and kept my mouth shut.

MADSEN — But isn't American criticism now evolving also?

LEWIS — I'm told they're starting to come around, but they're a little upset because the French had to show them the way. I had an interview with Hollis Alpert. I thought that he was with the New York Times, but apparently he's with the Saturday Review of Literature.



Jerry Lewis as Everett in *The Family Jewels*.

FLOOD — He freelances.*

LEWIS — And he's writing a piece on me for *The New York Times* and he said quote: "I'm a little offended that the French discovered you first." And I said: "But they pay a little more attention than you do; they examine a little more. I think the foreign critics see what I'm trying to do."

MADSEN: Also the barrier between commercial and artistic films was broken years ago, meaning that an old Raoul Walsh western could be as good as a new Orson Welles eastern. Neither is commercial success the criterion; that's not where cinema is.

LEWIS — Right. But they don't think so here. It's a pretty sad state. There was a film made years ago at Paramount called *The Heiress* with Ralph Richardson and Olivia de Havilland, a most magnificent film, true cinema. They couldn't get the negative back. They couldn't get a quarter back, Montgomery Clift, Olivia de Havilland, Ralph Richardson, directed by George Stevens, I believe, (incorrect: William Wyler—ed.) The bomb of all time because no one looked at it for what it was. And it's pretty frustrating. And I'm offended for the filmmaker and anytime I hear of a film like, as you said, you were disappointed by *Doctor Zhivago*, and justifiably so. But it bothers me. I want everybody to like everything that's made. I think it's important. It's like when I play the Sands at Vegas or on a concert tour. I want the best acts I can get before I go on because they put the audience in a marvelous frame of mind. You can't be anything but good, or better than you are by following these kinds of good people. And you know who these acts are. The same thing with films. I like films to play in theatres that have lots of people in them because my film may be the coming attraction. And I don't want to be a coming attraction to an empty theater. But it's what in the industry they call "academic simplicity."

MADSEN — There seems to be a desire on your part to rediscover the spirit of slapstick.

LEWIS — You never lose it. It's not by design. I don't think I've said to myself one day: "Oh let's bring the pies back." It goes deeper than that if you're basically a rowdy clown. There's nothing I like better than to fall on my rump, in a pratfall — not careerwise.

MADSEN — Was *The Bellboy* experimental for you?

LEWIS — Yes. It would never have been experimental or even anything else if you had met as much resistance as I did. If everybody had told me to go ahead I've have probably abandoned it. As it turned out, it was a way of telling them to go to hell.

MADSEN — Did the transition from

* Mr. Alpert is indeed with the *Saturday Review* in addition to his "freelancing."

black-and-white to color in *The Ladies' Man* pose any problem for you?

LEWIS — Yes.

MADSEN — How is it to work with Wallace Kelley?

LEWIS — Marvelous. He's been with me ever since. I think I'm the only director in Hollywood who has his own exclusive cinematographer 52 weeks a year because I wouldn't like to lose a man who knows more about color than anybody in the business. His father was responsible for three-strip technicolor, spent five years in color research and when he passed away, he said: "If I only had 50 years I could learn about half of what there is to know about color." Now color is a trick. It can fool you and I think color deals with the taste buds. Why do I like the color of this opposed to the color of that? I don't know. I just like color. Even bad color.

MADSEN — Have you used color dramatically?

LEWIS — Yes. The idea that you can't use color dramatically is a lot of crap. Life is color. There's nothing more dramatic than a man on the freeway who has been run over and the blood oozing out of his body is color. You can't get more dramatic than when the priest is giving him the last rites. So anybody saying you can't be dramatic in color I say: go watch the birth of a baby or death of a man.

FLOOD — Maybe it's too realistic.

LEWIS — They'll never steer away from realism. The thing that stunned Hollis Alpert was when I asked him: have you ever seen a black and white movie? He said of course. I said no you haven't seen a black and white movie; you've only seen gray-and-gray movies. You can have a black and white sequence, but it must be shot in color. Oh for heaven's sake he said, and here's a man who have been writing about movies for 30 years. The same thing happened to me the first time.

MADSEN — There seems to have been an attempt by you to direct actors and props as if direction were a form of choreography.

LEWIS — I don't know whether you mean it to be, but it's a helluva compliment because what you're saying is that apparently my staging is flowing. But I'm not consciously choreographing people. It's by instinct, not design. A French critic asked me if I was aware that I had a Swan Lake feeling in the sequence in *The Patsy* where I had animation, actors and constant rotation and I'd love to say of course isn't it marvelous that you saw what I had in mind? The trouble is I didn't know what I was doing, and I can't honestly say that I planned to make it look like choreography.

MADSEN — And your theme of the character excluded from society?

LEWIS — That I know. The character excluded from society is most

everybody, most plain people. Not people like Benjamin Fairless, Bernard Baruch, U Thant, but plain working people, and we've got 170 million of them, with ten million like Senator Dirksen and people like that. But most people understand society not having time for them. And the premise of good comedy is the man in trouble. Now you can't have a man in trouble unless he has made his own bed, instigated the situation that has turned around to intimidate him. So he must be the source of the trouble, its creator. He must decide for himself what to do. He must start out to do the right thing, but mess it up. That's comedy. Essentially it's a case of the comic character trying to run away from a problem and running right into a bigger one.

MADSEN — In *The Ladies' Man* the musical sequence seemed very important. Was it?

LEWIS — Yes. You cannot sustain a character in trouble without giving the audience some relief. You have to allow him to get out of trouble to give the audience breathing room so they can be reintroduced to him. A character in trouble steadily for two hours is just too much of a strain on the audience. A musical number breaks up the dramatic monotony with a bit of fantasy. Then you start all over again.

MADSEN — That gets you more and more into screenwriting.

LEWIS — Exactly. The only trouble with my doing my own screenwriting is that I get so involved with the character I play that the perspective gets distorted and I begin to send out messages which have nothing to do with what I started out to create. It's very tricky because I love every frame of what I do, and no matter what people think of it, a piece of my heart is in it.

MADSEN — *The Errand Boy* seems the most melancholy picture you ever made, one in which dreams, nostalgia for childhood played a large part. Was this conscious?

LEWIS — Conscious?

MADSEN — This being more poetic than the other pictures.

LEWIS — Yes, after it was made. I don't think I've ever been able to set out consciously to make a serious point, except possibly once when I decided to send a message. I wrote eight pages of dialogue to end the picture with the kind of message Sam Goldwyn used to say we should let Western Union send. I wrote the message, but I didn't dare shoot it, and that was that.

MADSEN — We think *The Nutty Professor* is your most perfect film so far. How did you come to make this film?

LEWIS — I can tell you the truth and I can tell you the lie. Now which do you want?

MADSEN — Both.

LEWIS — The truth is that I had written the story synopsis ten years before, but I was afraid of the subject.

I was too young to go near it. You might say I lacked maturity. If I have matured at all since then it is because I now realize that everyone is two people. Over the years I had acquired a great deal of information about the two sides of people. I looked and examined everybody. I've been telling only the truth so far. The lie is really guilt by omission. I can't spell out for you exactly what made me go and make it because I would be just as bad as the newspaperman who reveals his sources of information, and I would be doing damage unjustly to one or two people who gave me most of my information. But I loved the film because I thought it was everybody's story, only done in a glamorous Hollywood fashion.

MADSEN — It was also the film where you first tried to come out of your own character.

LEWIS — I never want to do it again. It was very hard. It was the most difficult period of my wife's life and I never knew that I could be that dedicated to what I was doing, to take it so deeply, to take it home with me. It was a real Jekyll-Hyde situation at home as well as on the set. When I played the scientist everything was O.K., but when I played the other character, things would get a lot chillier at home. And to this day, Axel, my children have not seen the film. It's the only film my wife will not permit them to see. And I said to her: Don't you want to see my transformation, my best performance? And she said: No, the transformation doesn't mean anything. It's just monstrous. I don't want them to see Buddy Love. And this kind of shook me up and I said you're telling me I did a very good job. And she said: You did a marvelous job playing the worst human being I've ever seen in my life.

MADSEN — How do you like cartoons and comic strips?

LEWIS — I hate them. I haven't looked at a comic strip in years.

MADSEN — This could turn into a non-stop conversation, but where do you think you're going now?

LEWIS — I hope up, and respectfully I hope you and all the people who have something to say, to give, are going up too.

FLOOD — You can't create in committee.

LEWIS — No.

MADSEN — You've been "up" before. I was thinking of your next, the way out space. You were there before.

LEWIS — "Way Way Out." Funny script.

MADSEN — You were there before with *Visit From a Small Planet*.

LEWIS — I had nothing to do with that property. I had to do it. It wasn't a bad picture for the audience we made it for. And this one is strictly a commercial proposition, but it's a good script. I don't know that I would consider it as something I might pour my life's blood into, but it pays me a lot of money, it's good for the career and

it's a good counterbalance to what I've just done and that's what it is. But don't quote me because it sounds kind of negative. O.K. You can quote me because that's what it is. All I have to do is show up and play it. And I need to have a break between my "personal" productions.

MADSEN — That's interesting. And you think you'd always take that kind of "break."

LEWIS — I have to because it's physically and mentally impossible to put 11 months into a baby and do it more than once a year. So I make two pictures in a year, one for me and one for them.

FLOOD — In 1965 you did *Family Jewels* for the first five months.

LEWIS — And while I was making *Boeing Boeing*, I was cutting *Family Jewels*.

FLOOD — And then into this one. (*Three On a Couch*).

Second meeting January 19, 1966 at his Columbia studio office. Present Lewis, Axel Madsen and Jim Flood (Lewis publicity chief).

MADSEN: And *Three on a Couch*?

LEWIS: You know I hate to mention something because it appears to be expedient. It's like someone saying: "Would you please do our television show and you can mention your forthcoming movie." You know? How low can you get? Many times I forget to plug my own product. Well, the same thing here. If you're really interested in *Three On a Couch* because it's the current project, fine.

MADSEN—Yes. I meant in relation to the rest of your work?

LEWIS—In that case, fine. I think it relates to the growth area in that it is a departure. I repeat. I haven't seen *Boeing Boeing* which was a departure, but this is a further departure into what I call the land of the adult. It doesn't negate the regular audience. It takes them with the product, I think.

MADSEN—With you.

LEWIS—Because the kids that were nine when I was 19 are 29 now. (Pause, laughs). That's right. I'll be forty in March. They are adults with families, and their fan relationship with me, if I can help that grow and go on with that, is marvellous. I don't know if I told you about the mother and the daughter? The mother saw me at the Paramount in New York when I was 19 and she decided that she was an agnostic and I was God. But I really mean an agnostic and when she saw me, she said, "Yes, there's a God, it's him!" It was that kind of hero worship. And it's staggering because you can't say to somebody: "Hey, you're not supposed to think like that!" Well, I got this (a photo of Cary Grant) yesterday. So I can't argue. I asked him to please sign it. I wanted it for my desk. I have that kind of admiration for the man. Well, I'm a movie star and I ask: "Why the

hell can't someone like that have hero worship?" Okay. So she was twelve when this happened. Now for the next ten years till she was 22, her mornings, noons and nights were spent with me. She was married at 23. No, wait a minute! This child who saw me at the Paramount when she was 12 had a mother, who was an avid comedy fan. When the girl was 27, she had a three-year-old daughter. Now, the mother, the child and this three-year-old grandchild were Jerry Lewis crazy. The three of them came backstage when I was playing at the Fox in San Francisco—a couple of years ago—all in a period of 20 years. Three generations. Now that's pretty scary. The baby got the biggest kick out of seeing me. The other had matured somewhat in their hero worship. It was a lovely moment for me. Now that's an example. If I had stuck to the same comedy concepts for the past two years, I would have lost two of those three people. I would have had the three-year-old probably, but the 27-year-old mother and the 45-year-old mother would have had nothing really to have grown with. I don't know if that's easy to explain and yet it is a very beautiful thing. One night I sat with Patti and we figured this out. If I perform through to 60, I'd get the fourth generation in that family. If I had the Chevalier years, I could play into the fifth, sixth generation. That's marvelous isn't it. (Laughs). Though you have to have started very young to make it.

MADSEN—There is also an evolution in your comedy. The gags are cut leaner and cleaner and sharper.

LEWIS—You have to. The audience has progressed. The comic also, although he may not want to. A comic gets very lethargic and complacent with what he knows is sure-fire "ha-ha." The comic, I believe, has to reevaluate, re-vamp his whole concept, due to the speed of the world and the growth in the information center which is now the tube (TV). Our information is so much greater now so that the normal lazy comedian that, years ago, would work with one act for 45 years, can't function today. The growth is too great even in the young people that we consider idiots with their long hair and their stupid clothes, and "out" and "in" groups. They are very aware and they are delighted in putting you on and checking and finding you not quite as efficient, thinking-wise.

MADSEN—It's great—the desire to stay alive and the teenagers are very bright, and so on. Let's not kid our selves.

LEWIS—You have to face facts. The world is getting smarter and you better go with it. And I try to stay on top of everything. It's very hard because I'm not equipped to stay on top of every thing, but I want to know what's going on. I watch the Ford Foundation (or TV) in the morning. I'm up very early in the morning. I'm up at 4:30 when

I'm directing and nothing's on TV, but at 5:30 I catch the Ford Foundation and I don't really know what they are talking about, but I want to know. I've got the Encyclopedia Britannica five feet from the television set and I'm always looking up things, but even after I look them up, I still don't know what they are talking about.

MADSEN—In *Way Way Out* do you want to make any comic comment on an era of gadgets?

LEWIS—If I had control of the material I would. I don't want to see the spending of \$700 billion in the space program when I know the poverty and diseases that could be helped with that kind of money. The space program has become a contest rather than a contribution to humanity and I've never been able to look upon it in any other way than as a relay race. But I think the script is funny and I think that in it,

there is a pretty good comment, like: We're playing in 1999 and one Senator says to another: "You can't rush things. We are not going to get this integration down South overnight!" It's funny and yet it's very sad, because in 1999, it's just what the dialogue is going to be.

MADSEN—Would you like to direct a film without acting in it?

LEWIS—That's the next. A Woody Allen picture.

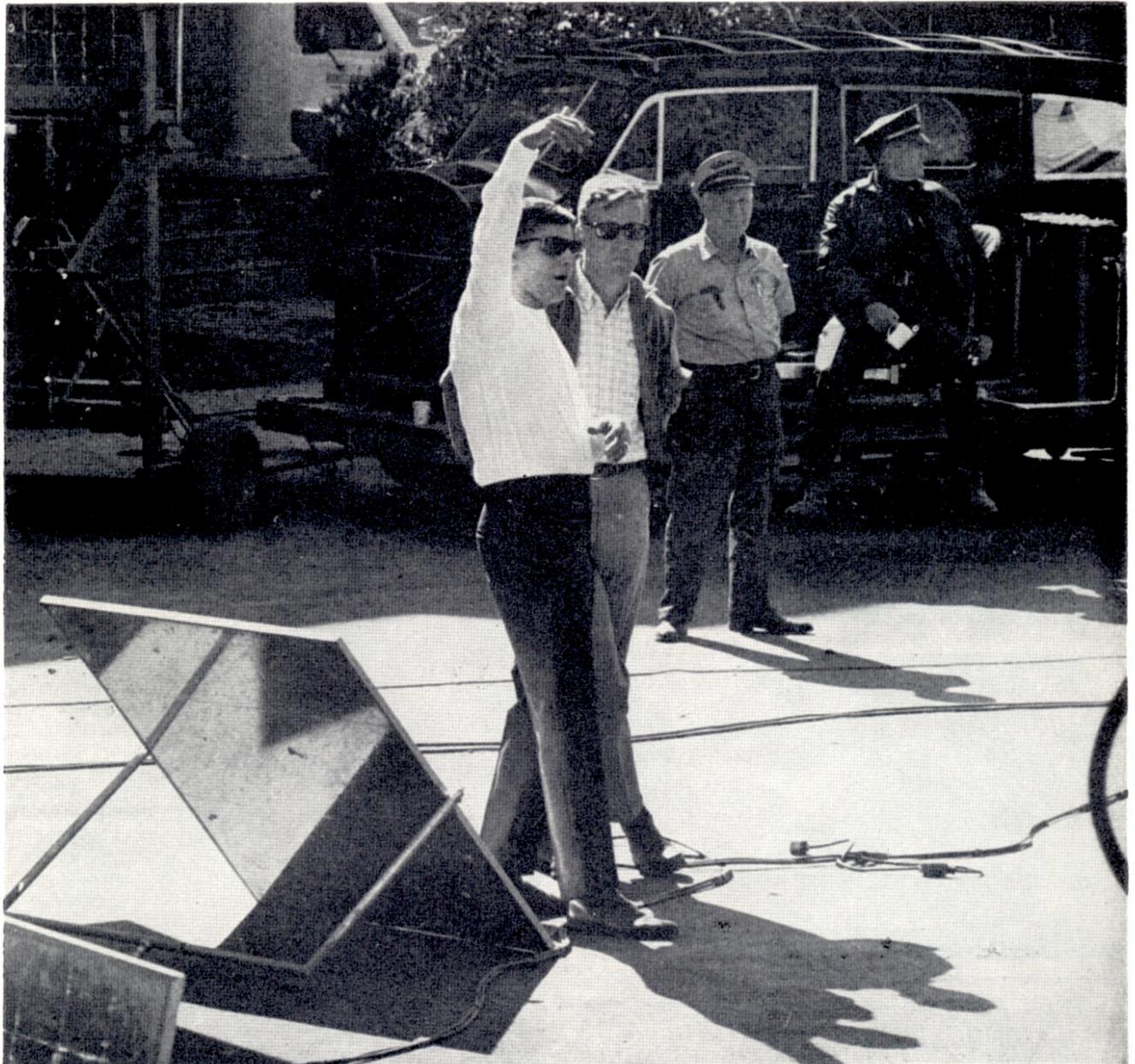
MADSEN—I hear it's a very funny script.

LEWIS—It's hysterical. The character Allen plays is insane. If I can just capture it on the screen. His name is Salmon Winkelman. And when he's asked why he says because his mother gave birth to him in the canned goods department of the supermarket. He lives in an apartment off Times Square in New York that's full of smoke. It's

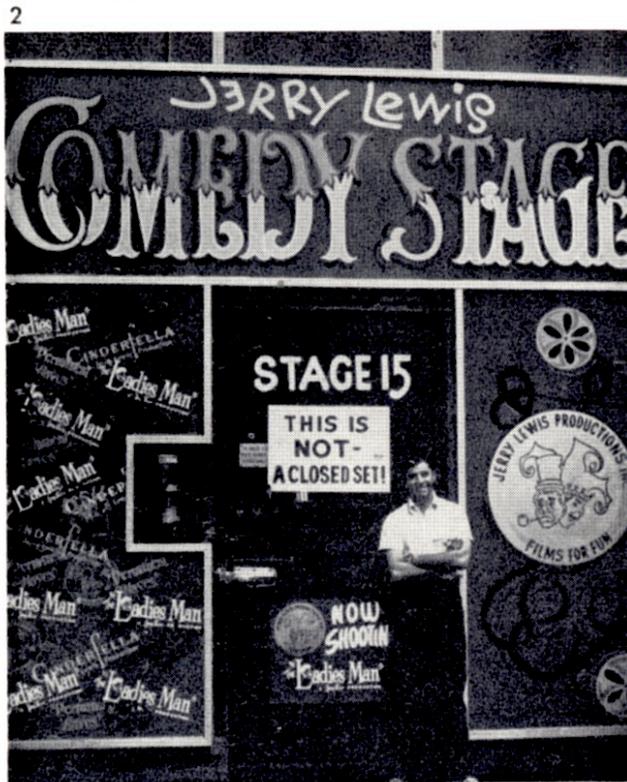
full of smoke because it's just adjacent to the Camel's sign with the smoke. I mean that's pretty wild comedy. He writes marvelously, and for me to get my teeth into it and concentrate strictly on design . . . you can imagine.

MADSEN — Have you seen *What's New Pussycat?*

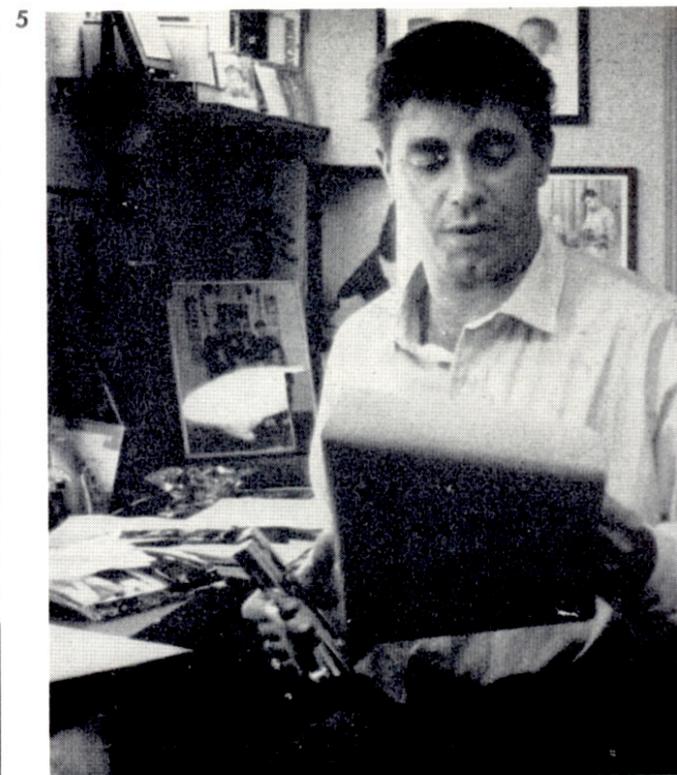
LEWIS—No. And after what he told me, I certainly don't want to see it. They took his script and they just pulled it apart. There were nine directors, 12 helpers and he was very heartbroken. Therefore he will not be directed by just anyone then. And you know where he decided I was the best director for him? In Paris. After seeing *The Nutty Professor*. You want to hear a funny line? My wife told me she thought Woody Allen and I would be wonderful together. Because, she said, he looks like how you feel.



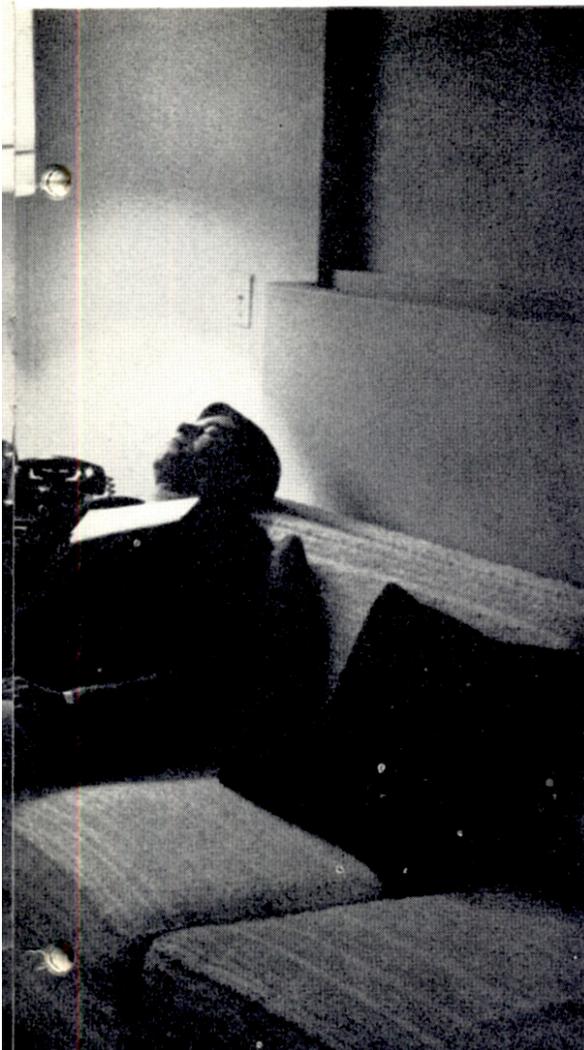
Jerry Lewis and Bill Richmond during the making of *Three On A Couch*.



Jerry Lewis at home, and with his family: 1. in his sound studio; 2. in front of the entrance to his studio; 3. with baby Joe; 4. with his wife, Patti; 5. with his oldest son, Gary.

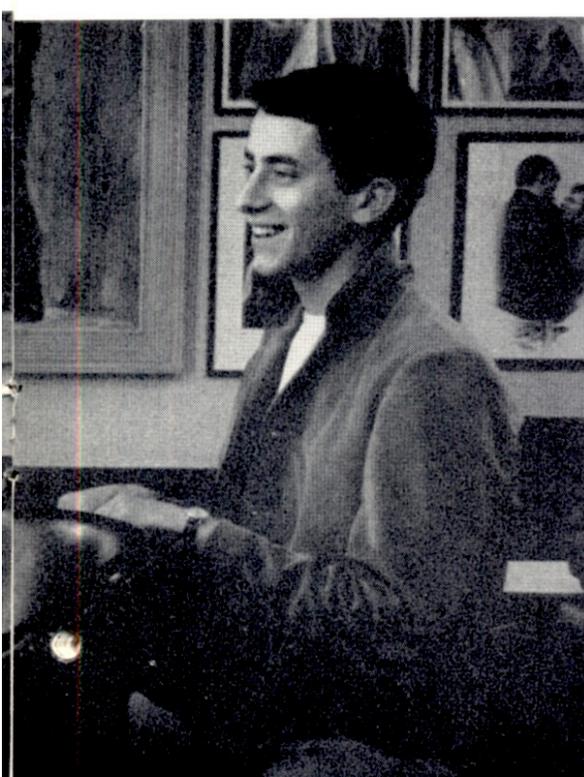


A Nothing on a Ground of Soft Music



In *The Family Jewels* there is a scene in which one sees a man take off once and for all the costume that has made his living, deny its tinsel, denounce its servitudes. It concerns, of course, Uncle Everett, the clown, who has not forgotten that a public entertainer is no more a man than a mask is a face. No doubt, Lewis secretly delighted in making him *a priori* so near, antipathetical and even odious. But is he really so far from him? Very simply, Everett is less engaged in his creation than is Lewis; he is less involved with his double.

The more things go along, the more Lewis moves away from his character. With *The Family Jewels*, it is indeed a question of his present situation, of his chances for survival. Yet a few years and this character becomes, with aging, impossible and derisory. Between now and then it is absolutely necessary to become oneself again, to take one's distance *vis-à-vis* the mask. In *The Patsy*, Lewis, sure of his "happy ending," makes the circuit of what has been necessary for him to do, in order himself to deserve himself. It was a film turned towards the past. The future was to be the concern of *The Family Jewels*.



One slides towards a new world. Strangely, it is a question of *our* world, futile and familiar at the same time. Lewis takes risks there, still a little maladroit and awkward, asking himself whether life there is possible. *The Family Jewels* is the return of Lewis to the land of men, no longer in front of them but among them. It is a serious film, because never has the actor been so little sure of himself, so intimidated: he has just refused artifice, makeup, magic; he is going to appear as he is and for what he is; he is going to run the risk of not being recognized . . . For Willard is an entirely normal man, who slightly resembles everyone, and even Jerry Lewis . . .

These are difficult beginnings, on tip-toe; all the bridges have not yet been cut. In places the mask resists and imposes some of its old tricks (the sequence of the service station). But those are quotations, references to a universe that it is necessary to go beyond, conceded to an audience that one must not treat too roughly. Half-way between the old and the new, Lewis, who owes himself as much to himself as to his myth, must change skin without changing audience.

The Family Jewels will be the place

of this metamorphosis. Since there are two Lewises in competition, there will be two films as well, two audiences. And first the "adult" audience — in search of caricatures — will be satisfied by six ineffable uncles, who are six Lewises, therefore six bravura pieces. Empty castoff clothes destined for an audience that awaits them. For the real film is played elsewhere, far from grimaces and distortions, between the real Lewis (Willard) and the real audience (Donna). It is the real film that is the more beautiful as well, the newer, the more moving. The more that what Donna and her chauffeur say and do is banal and insignificant, the more serious the film is; the fewer things happen in it, the richer it is. And one begins to think about the masterpiece Lewis (and he alone) might make by filming henceforth nothing, or almost, on a ground of soft music . . . The greatest simplicity, ultimate discovery, invisible to all, can reach only a child. By inventing the character of Donna, Lewis does nothing but confirm what he has always said: children alone understand him, because, for them, little preoccupied with second degrees, he does not play at being, he *is*. If Donna is the ideal audience, it is that she does not think that to cheat, to play act, is possible. Which makes of *The Family Jewels*, too, a very simple parable (and especially defense plea). One proposes to the audience different versions of one same man, and one asks it to choose, reminding it that this choice, decisive, carries along all the future . . . But one has underestimated the audience in presenting to it only monsters, full of good will, certainly, but too preoccupied with themselves to think really about this very audience. It makes no mistake about that, and chooses the only man who does not wear a mask and who, for that very reason, was out of competition. Scandal in the milieu of spectacle; but they will be defeated.

The masks give way, the fact triumphs at last in broad daylight. Yet one little detail: Willard wins his audience only on condition of denying himself, at least one minute (but that minute is essential), the putting on the makeup of a clown. That is the curse from which he is not yet wholly safe. To win entirely his audiences, it is necessary all the same, a little, to play the fool, more by necessity than by vocation. This little detail does not shake Willard: tomorrow belongs to him . . . Serge DANÉY

1



The Family Jewels: 1. Jerry Lewis in the role of Julius; 2. as Willard.

2



3



4



Little Divagation

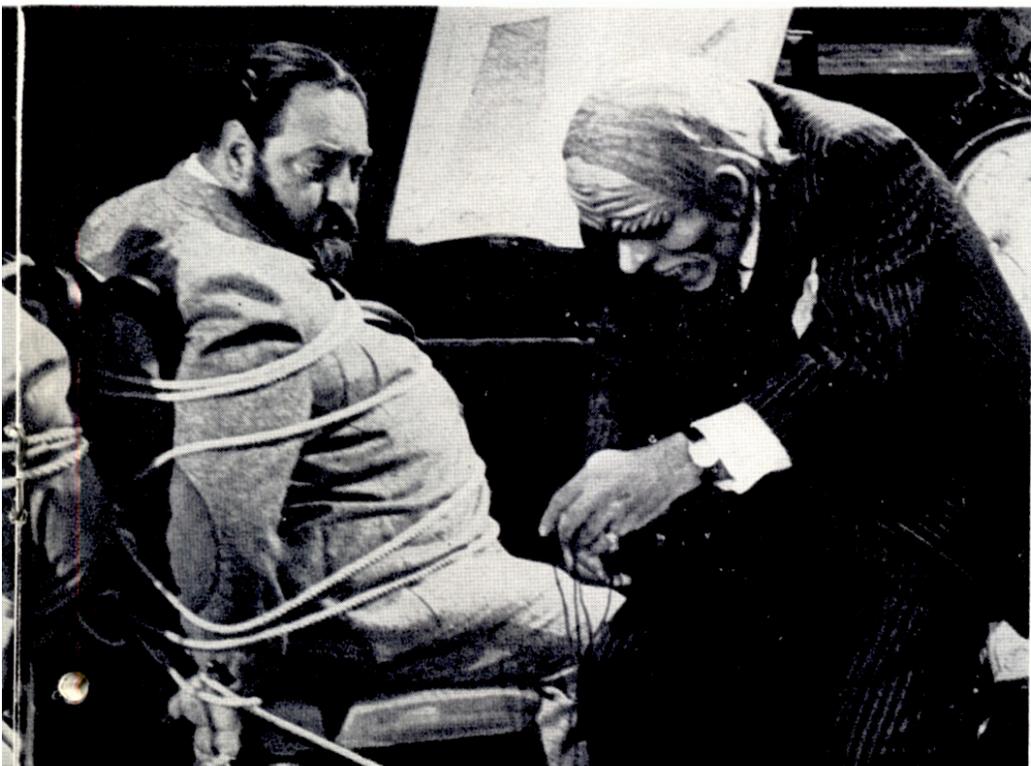
To master a delirium that until then accepted no shores, to accede to the delights of conscious creation, such is the ambition of Lewis. And how better to attain this total control of the work than by enclosing that work between the one who brings it forth and the one who receives it, in making himself judge and litigant, spectator and creator, at the same time? To pretend that Willard is a sexual obsessive, doubled with a cunning swindler, who attempts to possess himself of the flesh as well as the inheritance of Donna would be to say little, the sadism of Lewis being otherwise refined, because purely intellectual. Willard is the chauffeur of the little girl, and the choice of this qualification in the ladder of the household is no chance event; he guides her and reveals to her the world, or rather a "density of reality" carefully chosen, that refers only to itself, practising thus with an admirable dexterity the rape of conscience. As Sartre writes (reflecting probably on the work of Lewis): "Our objective essence implies the existence of the other, and, reciprocally, it is the freedom of the other that bases our essence. If we could interiorize the system, we would be ground of ourselves." It is indeed under the sign of the quest for this cinema "in itself" that would no longer necessitate the presence of "the other" in order to exist, that the entire film is set. For Willard disguises himself and plays the six characters; he "does cinema" for Donna, in this way staging an entire spectacle, whose mechanism is given us to see. Whence the cruciality of the masks that Donna, in her naiveté, believes she makes fall, while behind them still is Lewis, who pulls the strings. It is a matter of arriving at the essence of the cinema by his debauchery. And, like Donna, confronted with this faked world that leaves us only a semblance of freedom, we are domesticated by Lewis. One sees how the film lays itself open to ambiguity only the better to re-absorb it, and rarely a work, under appearances so multiple, was of so univocal a reading.

When Donna chooses Willard as uncle, it is the triumph of Lewis, who has tamed the spectator, clasped the buckle of creation, and who, sole master abroad his ship, henceforth will be able to guide it as he pleases. And no doubt after the decision of Donna, when Willard takes her by the hand, he draws her towards some unclean bacchanale, in the course of which he will rid himself definitively of this witness whose existence is from then on without object.

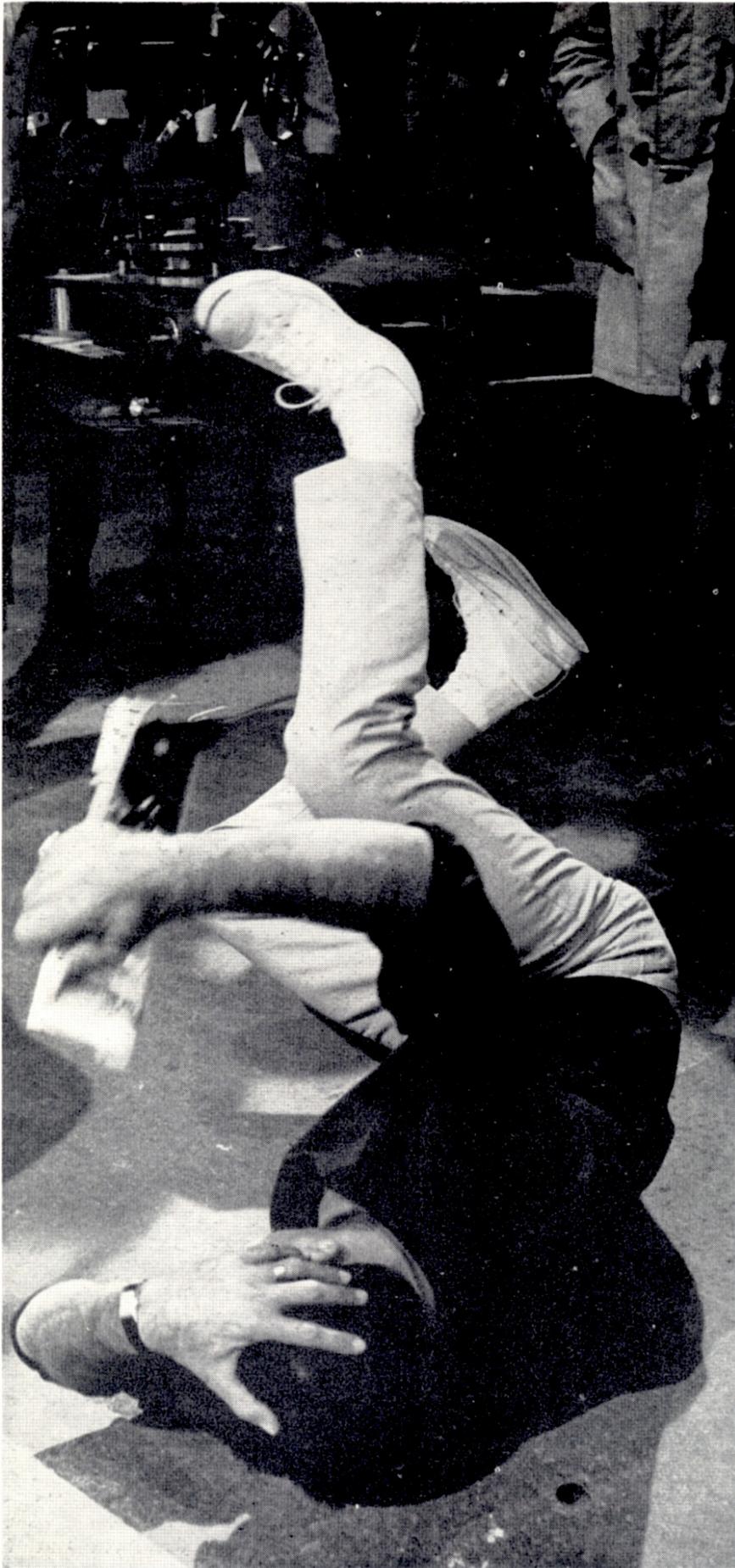
Sylvain GODET



The Family Jewels: 3. Jerry Lewis in the role of Eddie the pilot.



The Family Jewels: 4. Jerry Lewis (with Sebastian Cabot) in the role of Skylock the detective.



Cheeks On Fire

In the world of Lewis as in that of Cocteau, everything ends in becoming confused. One takes the good genii for soulless puppets, and subtle effacement for singular acrobatics. It is not possible to cling to this or that figure, for the design appears swollen beyond measure, only the better to lend itself to bursting, in some unforeseeable metamorphosis. One might believe the entire work animated with a frantic agitation precipitating characters and setting along the current of a vertiginous fall. Such is not the case. Each catastrophe, each movement, finds itself unprime, reduced to the petty dimension of a slight trembling. One passes beside cataclysms without glancing; memories of war, or rape of a child, are rendered by a formula or a gesture in the magic derision, in their illusory apparatus. No doubt because the events, without motivation, are not so much presented as simulated. And this simulacrum that grounds the cinema of Lewis (as that of Cocteau) ends in acquiring a disquieting power. It does not satisfy itself with perverting things, but with effecting emotional veerings. Instead of disappearing, the elements under stress of these incessant disturbances meet and reunite. On an unstable and splintered background, entangling graces and gesticulations, shapes, with simplicity and linear clarity, a nostalgic tale in which a little girl seeks desperately the face of a guide. And the tenderness becomes more persistent as more grave that it crops out in the midst of noises and of grotesque tearings, one dream wished, in the heart of other dreams maleficent and suffered. All the story organizes itself about efforts and fumbblings that the subtle and solitary voice of the coveted dream brings about in order to triumph over monsters and nightmares. By good fortune, all the phantasms are only arsenal, encumbrances, vain adornments. And one does nothing but await the miracle that will make of a set mask a gangster with heart of gold, of a uniform of clown or of chauffeur a paternal protector.

Lewis reminds us unceasingly that everything is lost, as in that other story of disorder in which Guillaume mimes things in order to make them happen in which it was enough to play dead to die really. At the end of the film Jerry takes the appearance of uncle, and everyone is deceived, beginning with him. Except perhaps the little girl taken by the hand and drawn along toward the dreamed life. By putting pink and blue in the midst of cries, in the end indeed tears come. André TECHIN



Four instances of Jerry Lewis being "broken up" by gags while working on a film.



Three On A Couch, Jerry Lewis, Gila Golan

Indifference And Terror

At first it is reflective thinking on laughter. There is the one who loves children (the awkward chauffeur, kind, a little ridiculous), and the one who does not love them (the clown uncle, egoist, cynic, who has placed his savings in Switzerland, who abandons the circus and American citizenship). Put the two characters on the two sides of a mirror, taking care to do away with the mirror, and you obtain the film in epitome. In the end, the chauffeur puts on the face of the clown-uncle, he takes the same cynical attitude, he takes the hand of the gamin, who, alone among us, does not let herself be taken in the game and lets her hand be taken because she has recognized the chauffeur. Conclusion: real clowns are a sad lot. Not straw scarecrows, no, not dirty rascals. What harm is there in making people laugh? The same that there is in making them shudder.

When one asks Hitchcock why he makes horror films, he replies: "Because they are comic." (The converse is true.) He takes the example of the ghost train in fairs. People pay to be afraid. Good example. They laugh at the same time that they cry. Laughter and terror. Old as the world. But Lewis cannot prevent himself from showing his game, from turning the mirror around on the spectator. The *bonnes femmes* in the airplane look at a film. The plane pitches in the storm. On the screen (of the plane) the characters fall, the table slides. The *bonnes femmes* laugh very hard. Their own situation reported on a screen becomes unreal, laughable. Someone tells me that this sequence is not very well filmed. The movements of the airplane and the wobblings of the world on the screen are badly fitted to each other visually. Precisely, how would Jerry Lewis be able to destroy illusion using the means of illusion? The association of the movements of the airplane and the movements inside the airplane is merely an association of ideas. Better to wipe out the connections, the *découpage* resembles that of a comic strip. ("In a comic strip," Labarthe told me, "there are no connections, and when there are it is bad.") Example, the beginning of the film. Try to remember the moment when Jerry Lewis shows the truants to be counted out as they look for the baseball. You have retained only flashes, a series of fixed images. Visions. Jerry Lewis appears over the fence. A distorted gesticulation. Moments stopped, and tied together only by reading. Everything happens in our heads, because everything happens in his head.

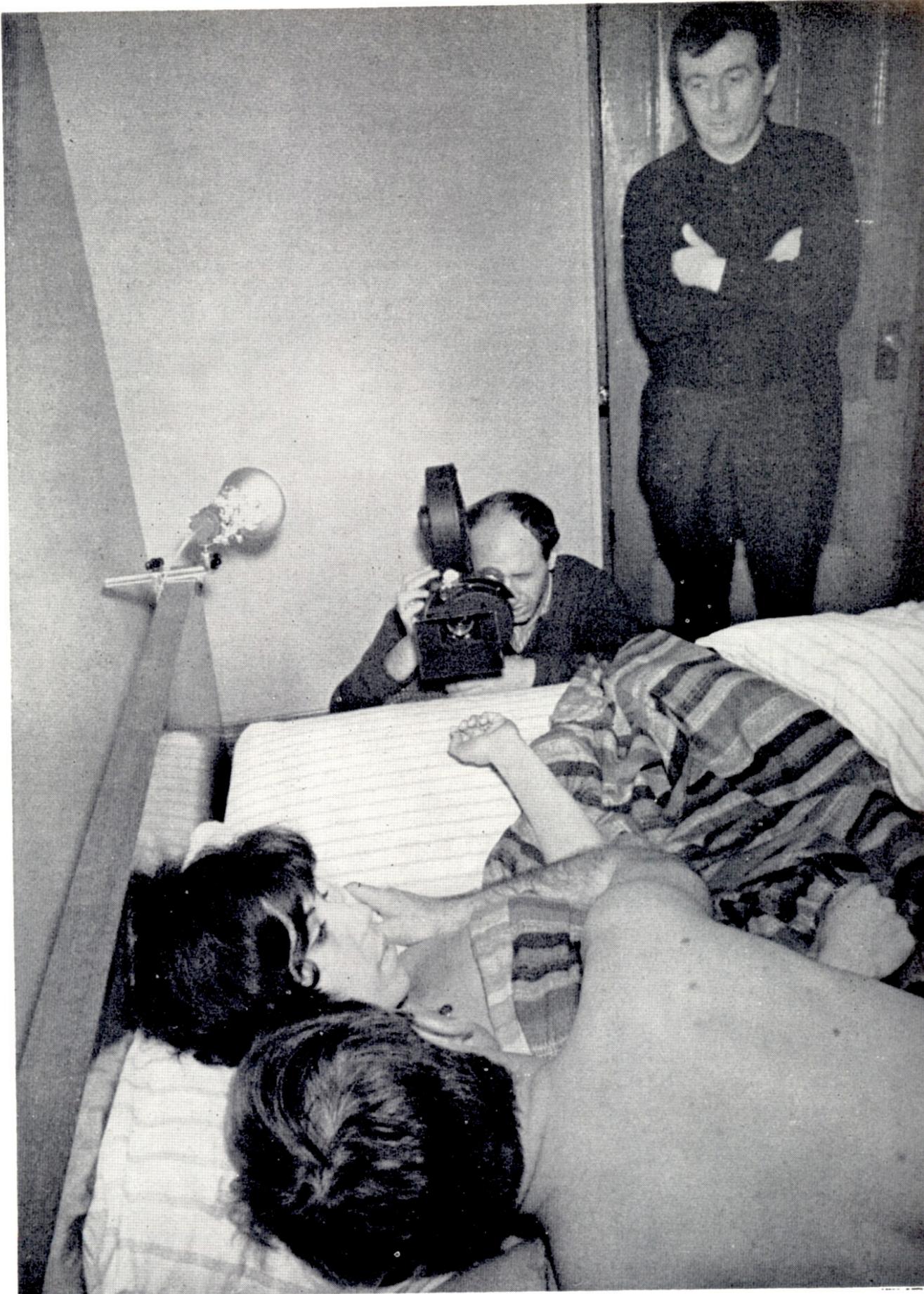
The gag itself no longer comes from mental mechanics. It is the end of automatic laughter, as it is of automatic

emotion. Such a shot of *Bande à part*, in which two men stretch themselves above at the right and at the left of the screen, is at once terrible and indifferent. Jerry Lewis turns about the gag as he turns in the film about his automobile; as the aviator uncle turns about his airplane, as Belmondo and Karina in *Pierrot le Fou* pass beside the incomprehensible corpse. *The Family Jewels* marks the apogee of the delayed action gag. After the lightning extermination of the gangsters, we see Jerry Lewis, very calm, button one by one all the buttons of his livery. He wastes an infinite time. It is of a black impudence, a length as deliberate, introduced in a burlesque comedy! The editor must have suffered. And then, abruptly, tersely, sight of the gangsters lined up on the ground. Again Lewis delays on shots of traffic, entirely needless, but which have all the fascination of the nothing, of dreaming without object, which have the dulled accent of our contemporary disquiet. In his excellent article, Cournot found the word that fits, the word *souci*, care, stronger, more real, than the word *angoisse*, anxiety, as the word *rien*, nothing, is stronger, more real, than the word *néant*, nothingness. "Between *chagrin* and *neant*, I choose *chagrin*." Why does this quotation from Faulkner in *A bout de souffle* come back to my mind?

Yes, it is indeed a question of indifference. Lewis plays indifferently seven characters. The six uncles show themselves indifferent to the fate of their niece. Each one pursues his mania. The chauffeur does not see the knives that are flung at him. We forget them as quickly as he, with the trapdoor from which they appear, and we remember merely the choked rumblings of the maladroit assassin. Of indifference and terror. The uncles are fantasies. They are rather failed as characters, aborted, let us say. They belong to the family of Frankenstein. They demand to be born, painfully, they force themselves to exist. The old sea-wolf calls up words that do not come. The aviator laughs and cries with a monotonous stridency. The photographer flounders in the field of his own camera. What to say still of the gangster? One must see him exude violence in big drops. The gamin looks at them. Her look is attentive, thoughtful. Some find her made of marshmallow, irritating. Others find her enchanting. Few have seen that she escapes all the categories, all the ideas that one makes for oneself of childhood, according to what one loves or does not. She represents for Jerry Lewis a quality of attention, exact, clear, measured. Between indifference and terror, attention remains for us.

Claude-Jean PHILIPPE





Michele Rossignol, Michel Brault and Arthur Lamothe during the shooting of *Poussiere Sur La Ville*.

A Cinema of Dispossession

"I came through the country of nowhere." Louis Aragon (*Le labyrinthe bleu et blanc*.) On how many hecatombs still or what forced sleeps or what exemplary bursts of brilliance will the blue and white *fleur-de-lysé québécois* fly?

This flag, provincial, and the word *québécois* are of an impropriety that makes significant the true life drama: there is a Province of Québec, a part of Canada, the latter a confederate state of ten provinces that is itself part of the British Commonwealth. There are six million *Québécois* today suddenly aware of their abnormal condition as French Canadians. Does a single other collectivity in the world live in such a state of dispossession?

Of French culture but in a North American environment, enjoying an ap-

parently elevated standard of living, but condemned to a permanent inferiority in relation to English-speaking Canadians, and their natural resources controlled by American capital; enjoying egalitarian rights constitutionally, but in fact exploited and powerless to rise to the key posts in any domain whatever, victims of a real bastardy imposed from abroad, the French Canadians are discovering that there is no other outcome to this existentially false rapport but in a global claim for their self-determination. For that reason they are launching an insurrection at all levels, against which are aligned the established powers, federal (Ottawa) provincial (Québec) and "parallel" (institutions, public services, high finance, individuals with privileges until then well established, but the first to be

aimed at now, and so on).

There is this fundamental alienation, an obstacle to all self-realization, that will continue as long as the French Canadian cannot become integrally the *Québécois* that he wishes himself to be that he has a genetic need to be. It is inconceivable to think of the French Canadian *nouveau cinéma* other than conditional on this state of dispossession and of the present attempt to free oneself from it in reality. Since indeed an existent cinema proceeds from the possible human condition and the lived-in reality, the praxis in which it arises, from which it extracts itself before bearing witness to it. And there exists this French Canadian cinema, new in a large measure because of the present context thus observed, these *auteurs* of French Canadian films . . . P.S.

10 Questions To 5 Canadian Film Makers

The purpose of these questions is to shed some light on the reasons that presently hinder the artistic and economic development of Canadian cinema, particularly French Canadian. We would like to approach the problem both as a domestic or Canadian one and as one having international implications. In a region like Québec, where, it is said reality continues to regurgitate, how to explain the forced silence of the pioneers of the young French Canadian cinema?

1 In what concrete terms, positive or negative, is the North American hold on the Canadian movie market expressed at present?

The role of American distributing companies and chains of theatres? Is it possible to obtain American money to finance films purely French Canadian?

2 Is there a possible market for these films? What is the average budget of such films? It is necessary to think in strictly Canadian terms, or else to think of exporting them?

3 Canada, through the O.N.F., was a short while in the *avant garde* of *cinéma direct*. Is this technique definitively condemned by economy? If people continue to make films, in what measure can you count on the support of television?

4 You all generally criticize the O.N.F. with which you nevertheless keep contact. Could you say more precisely what role you would like to see the O.N.F. play in the development of the cinema you want to create? Cannot one address to you the criticism that people put in its time to those of Hollywood who were groaning at the impossibility of being independent? That is to say: you want the resources of the Americans and absolute creative freedom. Are the two reconcilable?

5 As French Canadians, do you think that your problems are different from those of English Canadians? Similarities, differences.

Where, in your opinion, does the formal and thematic originality of your French Canadian cinema lie, if there is any originality? Do you think that contemporary political and social activity plays a dominant part in it?

6 What of contacts with Europe? Because you speak French, but Canadian French, are you not out of rapport with European spectators and others well acquainted with French cinema?

Ought you to sacrifice your French Canadian originality to French universality "made in Paris," ought you to seek international co-production, in

which your ethnic character will be dissolved, or, on the contrary, do you want to develop further its specific French Canadian quality?

7 Will you say that the French *Nouvelle Vague*, Truffaut, Godard, Resnais, has influenced you?

Do you believe Franco-Canadian cooperation with equal participation is possible? On what basis?

8 Do you regard with optimism, or with pessimism, the failure of your French Canadian cinema; which, after *Pour la suite du monde*, *A tout prendre* (*Take it All*), *Le Chat dans le sac*, looked rich with promises?

9 To the extent that you are filming, or are going to film, or hope to film, go into details about the genre of film on which you work, its budget, where you find money, if you have a guarantee of distribution?

10 To conclude, do you think that the problems you have to face have a relationship with those of the young Brazilians, or the young Hungarians, with all those who are trying to break the present Anglo-Franco-Italo-Germano-American joint dominion?



Michel Brault

Born June 25, 1928 in Montreal. Secondary studies: Collège Stanilas, Montreal, Collège Saint-Jean. Studies in philology: University of Montreal.

1950 *stagiaire* (probationer) at the O.N.F. for three months.

1950-1956 professional photographer; cameraman at Studio 7—Series for T.V.: *Petites Méditations* (39 programs). 1956 Entry into the O.N.F. as cameraman.

1956-1959 cameraman for about 20 films, among which: *Les Mains nettes*, of Claude Jutra, *Bientôt Noël*, of Terence McCartney Filgate, *Au bout de ma rue*, of Louis-Georges Carrier, *Félix Leclerc troubadour*, of Claude Jutra, *Nor-métal*, of Gilles Groulx, *Télesphère Légaré*, of Claude Fournier, *La Canne à pêche*, of Fernand Dansereau, *Urgence au Maroc*, of Terence McCartney Filgate, *Festival in Porto-Rico*, of Roman Kroitor.

1958 *Les Raquetteurs*, joint direction with Gilles Groulx.

1960 *Chronique d'un été*, cameraman for Jean Rouch. *Lo Punition*, cameraman for Jean Rouch. *La Lutte*, joint direction.

1962 *Les Enfants du silence*, direction, *Les Inconnus de la terre*, of Mario Ruspoli, cameraman, *Regards sur la folie*, of Mario Ruspoli, cameraman, *La Fête prisonnière*, of Mario Ruspoli, cameraman, *Quebec U.S.A.*, director.

Seul ou avec d'autres, technical and artistic adviser, cameraman. *A tout prendre*, (*Take It All*), of Claude Jutra, cameraman.

1963 *Pour la suite du monde*, joint director, cameraman.

1964 *Le Temps perdu*, direction, *La Fleur de l'âge*, direction of the Canadian sketch.

1965 *Poussières sur la ville*, of Arthur

Lamothe, director of takes.

1966 *Entre la mer et l'eau douce*, with Geneviève Bujold, Claude Gauthier and Paul Gauthier. Scenario of Denys Arcand, Michel Brault, Marcel Dubé and Gérald Godin, from an original idea of Michel Brault (Coopératio production).

1. I leave the answer to others who are better informed.

2. Yes, the world and soon the moon are possible markets. Non-subsidized films have had until now budgets of about one hundred or one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and I believe that they are amortizable in Canada; if indeed they were sold! The problem not being one of material or technique but of crashing the market, local and international. The *cinéaste* is forced to peddle his films himself, even at the O.N.F., where those responsible for distribution are of the greatest incompetence and where the authorities are timid with respect to film distribution.

3. Yes, but especially by those responsible; explanation to number 4. At present, and this is not catering it is TV alone which saturates itself with *cinéma direct*. Still it is necessary to force its hand.



Entre La Mer Et L'Eau Douce, Claude Gauthier, Geneviève Bujold.

4. I do not want to criticize the O.N.F., having left it, and particularly feeling myself a responsible member less of a Canadian cinema than of a universal cinema, even with my roots in Québec.

But I permit myself to deplore the failure of the O.N.F. without citing reasons. This organization was intended to be one of the rare cinema *ateliers* in the world in which cinema would have been able to develop in entire freedom apart from commercial considerations. It was enough to continue, to maintain the climate.

Now that the O.N.F. wants to be-

come "commercial," several *cinéastes* are compelled to become "commercial," but they would just as soon become so outside of the O.N.F. It is the stage that we are entering now, aware of having spent years at the O.N.F., being envied by all the *cinéastes* of the world who have always sought to have generous technical means at their disposal.

The O.N.F. can still take part in the cinema that is being made, but it must recover its past generosity. As to the last part of your question, you are right but no one can do anything about it.

5. Facing the American monster, the economic problems are the same. The differences are expressed in the fact that we are French in America, a hair in the soup, the rat of the lion, and so on.

6. I do not understand very well. For me, the "made in Paris" is not invulnerable; the essential is that there be voices that seek to make themselves heard.

7. Yes, if you add Rouch, and you accept that the *nouvelle vague* begins with Vigo.

Second part: Of course! But I do not know on what bases; one must improve them.

8. With optimism, otherwise all I would do is ski . . . otherwise I would try to become very rich in order to produce films. One cannot give reasons for optimism.

9. No guarantee of distribution. The operative system of investment of talent and talent, plus 20 per cent of the money furnished by individuals like Jacques Cartier, want to take their chance. It is a full-length film of the genre one will be able to state explicitly when it is born. Apart from that I must do many other things to support my living.

10. Yes.



Gilles Groulx

Born in Montreal, August 30, 1931. Employed at the National Film Office as director, editor and cameraman, since 1958.

1955-56 at Radio Canada, Department of New Films: editor.

1956-57 Series of TV profiles.

1958-59 Panoramique editor (O.N.F.).

1959-60 at Niagara Films. TV series "CFRCK": editor. At National Film Office.

1958 *Les Raquetteurs*: direction-editing, with Michel Brault.

1959 *Normétal*: direction-editing.

1960 *La France sur un caillou*: direction-editing, with Claude Fournier.

1961 *Golden Gloves*: direction-editing and photography.

1961 *Le Vieil Age*: editing, a film of Jacques Giraldeau.

1961 *Le 5 septembre à Saint-Henri*: photography, O.N.F. film by several hands.

1962 *Voir Miami*: direction-editing.

1962 At the University of Montreal: *Seul ou avec d'autres*: editing, a film of Déis Heroux.

1964 At the National Film Office: *Un jeu si simple*: auteur-director-editor.

1964 *Le Chat dans le sac*: auteur-director-editor.

1966 *Québec sans parenthèses*, a film (20 to 30 minutes) commissioned for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Quebec by the Provincial Film Office from the producers *Cinéastes associés*: Groulx auteur-director-editor with Luca and Gérald Godin.

1. The hold of American capital on Canada is such that it controls our national life at all levels (domestic politics included). Understand well that if the United States has a foot in Vietnam, it has its hands here. If something suc-

ceeds in making itself known, it is that the enterprise appears so fragile that "big business" does not deign to care about it. The cinema does not escape; where films are concerned, we are forced to project them in the colleges and other gatherings of cinephiles. Save in rare exceptions where the O.N.F. exerts pressure. American monopolies have other interests than to free those who might well stand themselves up some day demanding that justice be done. What the laws of the United States prohibit in their own country, the monopolies practice in ours; we are of the North American Market. These producer-distributors, who control the movie circuits with (of course) American films, repatriate to their own country all the profits realized, without any restriction. This is called "The Canadian Cooperation Project" according to an understanding maintained between the government of Canada and the MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America). The law has no objection, and the Canadian government no cares. Documents of international productions are signed for a cinema which does not exist. (With France an agreement since October 11, 1965). No law, no regulation which permits the Canadian cinema to exist normally. Without cinematographic legislation, Canadian cinema is smoke without fire.

2. As for thinking *canadien* (in the meaning Quebec), that is brought about without our consent. Each one according to his terms. So that, in thinking about the exportability of our films, it is no less necessary to start from the surrounding reality, and, just as the camera registers what it sees, thought should be what is really lived somewhere. "It will be beautiful if it is human." Besides you know as well as I that the laws of export result, not because the films are or are not authentic witnesses, but because they represent financial agreements, more or less disputed, between allied countries. For my part, I think that all films are exportable, the exportability of the films depending on the interest that one people brings to another.

3. What one can consider now as being *cinéma direct*, was at the start only an experiment aimed at doing away with the weight of the "documentary" that the O.N.F. tradition caused to weigh on us. We counted on the enthusiasm and mobility of a little crew; we wanted to go quickly. We tried to keep the initiative of the work at every stage by systematically confusing the tracks, by improvising our premeditations. That interested our producers; it was something new, and it cost less in "outside expenses"; they paid out less on the costs in salaries of a reduced crew. If, in the course of research, in some cases we marked time in our cutting rooms (they let us experi-

ment freely) our films no less remained an appreciable saving over the current production of the O.N.F. Today, of course, that research facilitates for us a technique that adapts itself to the conditions that are made for us. As for the amortization that television occasionally grants, that represents only a delayed assistance that could be decisive for the production of films not so much by the contribution in money as by the unforeseeable end of the transaction.

4. If we more or less keep contact with the O.N.F., it is out of mere instinct for self-preservation. (The *Office National du Film* taking the place of the C.N.C.F. but without power of control). We would seek in vain to turn our backs on the sole system of the country that has at its disposal all the money for cinema, and the only one that can attest our existence as *cinéastes*. Canadian cinema being in the hands of civil servants, we would like it to be there with less equivocation. When I left O.N.F., matters were going thus: entire freedom in technical operations but modesty, parsimony and calculation as to subjects of films. The arbitrariness of a supervised freedom authorized the least cumbersome decisions for the administration and left the



Le Chat Dans Le Sac.

cinéaste free to play with his film as much as he wished. It was a time when the *auteurs* of films joined to elaborate a program that was then submitted to the approval of the authorities; often it was taken into account in decisions. But very quickly these effervescences overflowed the constitutional funnel in which the O.N.F. finds itself. Then, someone decided that it must be set in a little order—which led to the abandonment of our participation. Today, the new prescriptions not being formulated, the public office gives itself up to improvisation and its decisions cannot be appealed. The fact is that it has become impossible for the O.N.F. to

reconcile its political interests and at the same time to assume its role as a producer treating the liberties of the new cinema with respect. In order for cinema and O.N.F. to become reconcilable again, it would be necessary at the very least to institute an amendment to its constitution, so that a committee would be set up that would have the powers to grant, for want of subsidies, technical assistance in apparatus, laboratory and studio even at the O.N.F. That investment by the state would serve as surety with banks or producers by amortizing the risks of losses, and would exert pressures on the American distributor monopolies. One does not ask millions, but the power to contract loans. But there it is, in order for one to be able to repay them, the government will have to do something in the matter of distribution. It is that that it does not want to do!

5. In America, everything that stirs in the South disturbs the North. Example: when the leaders of the American financial market import into their own country the profits of their Canadian branches or increase the rates of interest (for 1966) north of the 45th parallel, inflation threatens. In this sense, Canadians and *Canadiens* drift on a common constitutional illusion. The resemblance stops at this common lot. "In Canada, French Canadians are absent from command posts because they lack competence" (known refrain), some being more Canadians than others by the play of majorities. When the bourgeoisie assumes the guidance of the democracy, it does not want to have it spoiled by the ignorant. Now in this system of one single nation, the outsider learns these things quickly. At five to one, the French speaking minority (85 per cent in Québec) is that for a long time. After one hundred years of dispossession, by a just reversal, those of Québec are therefore prepared to give up their Canadian citizenship to become Québécois. (In short). By a mere process of identification, Canada goes on assimilating itself to the neighboring "Great Society," and soon the two Anglo-Saxon communities will form only one single counting house. (Besides, a survey has revealed that 71 per cent were in agreement.) Before becoming only a social class like the Blacks and the Puerto Ricans of America, the French-speaking six million are awakening to the primordial awareness of unity. The formation of popular and of labor union movements (among others) brings the Québécois to the brink of action. But all are not in agreement, and the arrival of truncheons and other anti-riot conveyances recommends solid convictions, the Right not intending to make a present to those whom it calls "the extremists."

This ambiguous, often contradictory, daily life that we live here, impatiently in my opinion, might well provide the thematic elements for (Québécois)

French Canadian cinema. It establishes too, a certain number of difference between *Canadiens* and Canadians. *Habit-ués* of old provincial servitudes, scorning the language and people of the conquered, Canadian conservatism meets again where it has always wanted to be (where racism leads), far from this overturning of social interests: that happens in Québec. Today, among those who believe in a democracy, *Ad mare usque ad mare*, few are found who are of good faith, legality alone not having been able to assure it. It required solidarity, that the interests of two cultures which are not converging could not make. It is a fact that Canada comes under the influence of the American metropolis and the *cinéastes* of the English language who go to work here often remain there. Further South, money is not lacking and immigration is not complicated. Sometimes that leaves a dreamer behind.

As for the formal originality of our cinema, that must result from the conception and not from the subjects, since it was made at the O.N.F., according to the "Programming" dear to the English crews. They were trying to establish a State cinema, the opposite of a national cinema, by establishing general subjects to which the conception was subordinated and where often it found no place. That caused tugs of war and restricted us too often to formal research only,—which did not always rise from an original statement.

In the end, that is to say that "the themes of *québécois* cinema" filter through our way of conceiving our collective life and our will to make individual gestures in our everyday life that leads to the practice of a free cinema to the level of our common resistance. No doubt that is the business of every *cinéaste*.

6. Our contacts with Europe, you know, were rare. Somewhere in Europe no doubt someone had decided that everything that was of America must be American or consequently more or less English. Europe does not like the singular chance event. Here, we were silent, living an enigma without prestige. Tenants, of the French culture by language but administered by the Anglo-Saxon, we sought supports elsewhere. Which we did not find. Had it not been that they sought to deny all culture to a people that they believed a social minority stirred only by mystic crises (rebellion of 1937-8, F.L.Q., clerical ascendancy, etc.) and unemployment, we would have disappeared. Modest ambitions require belief in order not to despair. Now, today, our cinema does not escape the fate appointed for our existential values. It results from this culture, today "silent" and "invisible," like every culture that is denied. Dependence being a fact, the idea of liberation becomes seasonable. Cinema being an expression of culture, we think that it will be an instrument of that

idea.

7. The *Nouvelle Vague*, Godard Truffaut, Resnais, Rivette and the others, created a great effervescence and a new audience, young, "which did not like the French cinema," and which then, saw that it was a matter of then as well. They were no longer excluded since "that was really as it is in life"; the films brought new ideas of cinema. For us, that cinema proclaimed a new tongue; one could begin no longer to think of "cinematographic language." One began to perceive the invisible, what the other cinema had soon succeeded in hiding, the ordinary movement of people and of things. The *Nouvelle Vague* put an end to caricature we could live our daily life and continue to love this cinema. Simplicity did not deny audacity; it confirmed the individualistic vocation of the cinema. We had at our disposal proofs "of our own eyes"; films could embody something other than enigmas or reconstructions, images arriving from the min gave signs of a new truth. The influence existed.

A Franco-Canadian cooperation certainly possible. On what basis? I do not know. On all bases, beginning with the first, to know what brings us together; for us, that is easy, but for you . . . We are the "invisible," the grain of solitude.

On the other hand, if this question refers to co-production, the recent agreements made between France and Canada, a document of fifteen articles, do fine well enough for us, the legal right to do a thing impossible to do in actuality. We can do nothing better than to continue, entirely without resource (outside of O.N.F.), sporadically, in a most clandestine conditions, artisans in spite of the sarcasm of unbelievably co-productions with the foreigner (the Italians, Pinoteau, Major, etc.) and a little *québécois* productions "in the wind."

8. With fatalism. Fatalistically, we will try to surmount the difficulties fatalistically, people will try to choke the affair. It will be fatalistically a question of the cinema.

9. At present I am shooting a "documentary" film that results from an investment by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Québec. Future uncertain.

10. In the very measure in which I have seen few films of the new Hungarian and Brazilian cinema, I presume that they will have seen few of ours. We have then this in common, that our films do not arrive there. In the measure in which that is not attributable to chance, it might well be that that because it is new, and that, being new it finds itself ruled by an older order. Or else would they too have a State cinema in place of a national cinema? Coterie and all?





Claude Jutra

Born March 11, 1930 in Montreal. Classical studies at the Collège Stanislaus de la Metropole. Medical studies, doctor of medicine. Theater studies at the school of the T.N.M. Television: *auteur* and animator of the series *Images en boîte*, on the history of cinema. In television, he was as well to receive the Frigon Pribe as *auteur* of the best original television dramatic work *L'Ecolo de la peur*.

1949 *Mouvement perpétuel*;

1955 *Pierrot des bois*;

1956 *Jeunesses musicales* (O.N.F.);

1957 *Il était une chaise* (in collaboration with Norman McLaren);

1958 *Les Mains nettes* (on a scenario of Fernand Dansereau);

1959 *Félix Leclerc, troubadour* (series *Proflis*);

1959 *Fred Barry* (series *Profiles* — a half hour — television — in black and white);

1960 *Niger 60*: (filmed in Africa — a half hour, in black and white).

1961 *La Lutte* (documentary in collaboration with Michel Brault, Marcel Carrière, Claude Fournier, etc.); Journal of filming in Africa, *En courant derrière Rouch*, published in *Cahiers du Cinéma*.

1961 *Anna la bonne*, from Jean Cocteau, with Marianne Oswald. Producer: Francois Truffaut.

Television series *Cinéma Canadien*, *auteur* and animator.

1962 *Québec U.S.A.* (in collaboration with Michel Brault);

1962 *Les Enfants du silence* (in collaboration with Michel Brault) a television half hour;

1962 *Petit discours de la méthode* (scenarist, a film of Pierre Patry);

1963 *A tout prendre* (*Take It All*), full length film;

1965-66 *Comment savoir*, a documen-

tary on new methods of education (O.N.F.);

1965-66 *Rouli-roulant*, short film (O.N.F.).

1. As everywhere in the western world, we have cause for complaint with the American hold on our industry; here more than elsewhere, for the hold that it has on distribution is shameful and illegal. But like all the *cinéastes* of the western world, we dream of "American successes." As much for money as for prestige. We know, too, that America, while she takes with one hand, gives with the other. Some producers from there are turning towards us and seem to want to "talk business." But nothing has been put in concrete form as yet. Waiting, we grit our teeth.

2. Our cinema will not be able to exist, if it does not emerge on the foreign market. For the moment, the average budget of our films is such that an American distributor could amortize each of them by a mere sale to television.

3. *Cinéma direct* is evidence only of the supplying of techniques and the liberation of language. It is not an end in itself. Nor is it either a genre apart, that must seek refuge in television. Television can welcome all the cinematographic genre and all the cinematographic genres should be able to use this or that resource.

The mastery of this technique meant for us the opportunity to bring ourselves to the attention of foreign criticism. That is a good thing accomplished. It remains for us to use it to say significant things.

4. I do not believe I have ever made a serious criticism of the Film Office. That organization seems to me always to have had a precise intuition of the responsibilities that had devolved on it, and to have played its role in an honorable fashion. *Pour la suite . . . La Chat dans le sac, Manicouagan . . . , Léopold Z . . .* were all produced by the Office. That is a truth difficult to refute.

Those who accuse it of paternalism, reproach it besides for not giving them all they want, admitting thus, in a flagrant manner, their filial dependence. It is all the easier for me to say that, because I have never been one of the personnel of the Office, and because I do not depend on it in any way. When I undertook my first full length film, I financed it personally (with a partner), covering myself with debts. Others have done as I, or better than I. These isolated efforts have certainly contributed to demonstrating that the French Canadian full-length film is possible, therefore necessary.

At present I am preparing my second full-length film, a musical comedy in color. Ennio Flaiano will be co-scenarist, and I hope to persuade Michel LeGrand to compose its music. This film

will be produced by the Office and by Radio Canada.

5. To be English Canadian is no joy. They are either American, or British. If ever they acquire some prestige, they go either to London, or to New York or Hollywood. Those who remain spend their time trying to clarify their identity.

We enjoy a great privilege, that of cultural identity. We are French-speaking in a North American context. When we formulate claims, they are precise and strong. They are effective. For the moment, they are the wave bearing all our aspirations.

6. These privileges have their other side. Our French is not that of Paris and every day we bump against this obstacle to communication. Never mind that! I believe only in forms in a state of evolution. Some day we will surmount this inferiority complex, and our tongue will chatter freely. We will make ourselves heard, if only as bad instrumentalists. An illegible and inaudible tongue becomes classical when it serves a great thought. As Faulkner is translated, our books and our films will be translated, maybe, not from the French, but from the *Québécois* or from the *Laurentien . . .* And it will be from the French all the same. And it will interest even the Parisians.



A Tout Prendre, Johanne Harelle.

7. Creative activity reaches its apogee at the age of about thirty. Truffaut and Godard demonstrated that in the cinema, that was not only true, but verifiable. Everyone is grateful to them for it. We as well. As to the possibility of a Franco-Canadian cooperation on an equal basis, that is in the hands of the bigwigs and of the manipulators of money, I hope so.

8. For the moment, I am preparing my next long film. So I will be optimistic until it is finished. Among us, it is like that that one lives. Not from day to day, but from film to film.

9. See above.

10. It is not easy to work at cinema, wherever one may be. As to the joint dominion, as one says: "If you can't beat 'em, lick 'em." One tries.



Arthur Lamotte

Born December 7, 1928 in Saint-Mont (Gers), emigrant to Canada in 1953, becomes Canadian citizen in 1960. Beyond work of agricultural laborer, of lumberman, of taxi driver and of building painter, collaborates on several radio broadcasts, variety as well as international politics; then is entrusted with the research for *Premier plan* and *L'événement*, for television, pilot transmissions of Radio Canada (major reportage, interviews with personalities, current political events through the world), for which he sometimes does the treatment. He does research projects (immigration to Montreal, ecology of a quarter of Montreal, etc.) in the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Montreal (1954-57). He participates in a study of the cinema industry for the Council of Economic Orientation of Quebec (1963), which was to serve as basis for the law of assistance that the government of Québec was to submit to Parliament. He is one of the founders and staff members of the cinematographic review *Images* (1954-55), founding member of the First International Film Festival of Montreal, and for four years responsible for the publicity of that Festival. He gives courses on cinema at the *Collège Sainte-Marie* (1960-61) and at the *École Normale secondaire* of the University of Montreal (1961).

He is one of the four members of the *Conseil de direction* of the *Cinéma-thèque canadienne*.

Cinéaste four years at the O.N.F., and today independent. Works on the research and on the scenario for the film *Manger* (Louis Portugais and Gilles Carle), works on the research and on the scenario and writing of the commentary for the film *Dimanche d'Amér-*

ique (Gilles Carle), in 1961.

1962 *Les Bûcherone de la Manouane*, direction, editing, commentary. An O.N.F. production (30 minutes, black and white).

1963 *De Montréal à la Manicouagan*, direction, editing. An O.N.F. production (30 minutes, black and white).

1964 *La Neige a fondu sur la Manicouagan*, scenario, direction, editing. With Monique Miller, Jean Doyon, Gilles Vigneault, Margot Campbell. An O.N.F. production (60 minutes, black and white).

1965 *Saskatchewan*, scenario, direction. An O.N.F. production (15 minutes, color)—a reportage on the harvests in the Canadian West (montage).

1965-66 *Poussière sur la ville*, scenario, adapted from a novel by André Langevin, direction, editing. With Michèle Rossignol, Guy Sanche, Henri Norbert, Victor Désy. Music by Gilles Vigneault. A production of the *Société Générale du Cinéma* (Lamothe and two associates) and *Coopératio* (Pierre Patry, majority share-holder) (full-length film, black and white).

1. a) Yes, there is a hold of the United States on the Canadian cinematographic market. As there is besides a hold of the United States economy on Canada in iron, in asbestos, in paper, in petroleum, in the automobile industry, and so on. It is not a matter of American perversity, but indeed of a chronic weakness of Canada in every negotiation with the United States. Canada believes it can buy American good will by a politics of gifts, when a certain intransigence would be politically and economically profitable.

So this politics allows Hollywood producers to utilize in Canada monopolistic structures that are forbidden them in the United States.

b) For Québec, the big distribution chain (in Montreal, 68 per cent of the box office receipts) is controlled by Paramount.

Paramount International Films, Inc., New York, belongs, with the other "major" American producers, to the Motion Picture Producers Association of America (M.P.P.A.A.). The M.P.P.A.A., upheld by the State Department, organizes the collaboration of the American "majors" for the international distribution of films. Thus, in Canada, it is by a monopolistic structure established by Paramount that the other "majors" dispose of their products or of "foreign" films bought for the North American market. For another country, the agent of distribution will be Columbia, M.G.M., etc.

In this monopolistic structure, demand does not play the role that it is supposed to fill in a system called competitive. The essential factor in programming will not be the maximum return for the American cinema. This logic can lead the exhibitors to show an

American film to a half-empty theatre, rather than a Japanese, French or Canadian film to a full theatre. Another of the secondary effects of this structure for exhibition: access to the American film, for the first run at least, is prohibited to independent exhibitors. Thus once more the play of supply and demand is falsified, and, for the audience that frequents only independent theatres, access to the major works of the American cinema is difficult.

c) Neither is it possible to obtain French money. In theory, yes, in fact no. I tried for *Poussière sur la ville* without success. Even an important minister of the Québec cabinet under took some representations for my film which had no result. And why would you expect them to invest in the Canadian cinema? No law compels them to. Out of interest? But their first and normal interest is the maximum return for American films, and here no barriers oppose the entry of American films. As "public relations" in Canada. But the O.N.F. attends to that for them. It has just provided them, for their only first run theatre in Montreal, in which they can show films in French, *La Vie heureuse de Léopold Z.* The O.N.F. underwrote its production, and financed in very large part, the marketing and the publicity for this film. Why would the United Amusement-Famous Players group refuse this gift of the state? Why would be the higher bid that would allow a normal entrepreneur to have his film distributed by United Amusement-Famous Players? Moreover, an economist could explain to you that because of the phenomenon of a relatively inelastic demand for a product, the Canadian film in competition, the State, a dubious use of public funds, has just narrowed the market of the normal producer.

What would be necessary is a *cadre* which would make economically and politically profitable for foreign countries the investment of a part of the local revenues in the production of Canadian films.

There has been for two years, in the files of the Council of Economic Orientation of Québec, a report of five volumes on the situation of the film industry in Québec. This report recommends among other things: "1. Abrogation of the *loi des vues animées* and adoption of a *loi générale du Cinéma* to regulate the production, the distribution, the classification and the exploitation of films.

2. Adoption of a political policy aiming to further the production of full length films in Québec by: direct subsidies; loans to the production; a system for the exploitation.

3. Application of the proceeds of taxes collected in the sector of the cinema industry (in particular the proceeds of the amusement tax) to set on its feet and to maintain an industry for the production of full-length films—follow

ing the example of the principal countries of Europe that have endowed themselves with a national cinema industry.

4. Political policy of assistance to organizations for cinematographic education, and establishment of new organizations necessary for the development of cinematographic culture.

5. Establishment of a *Direction Générale du Cinéma* (or *Centre cinématographique du Québec*) which will group the existing organizations (*Office du film du Québec, Bureau de censure du cinéma*), to which will be added the new departments necessary for the administration of the different sectors of the cinematographic industry: production, distribution, exploitation. This center will be entrusted with administering the law for assistance of the quota system and furthering the diffusion of the *québécois* film abroad . . . This *loi-cadre* for the cinema is drawn up. It got stuck, they say, on the desk of the prime minister.

If one holds to the letter of the British North America Act, which until now has taken the place of the Canadian constitution, cinema, a cultural activity, depends on provincial jurisdiction, therefore, in the present case, on the government of Québec. Already, an indirect tax called "amusement," regulation of theatres, censorship, everything that concerns cinema, except production, is regulated by provincial laws. At present, if one refers to the last Speech from the Throne delivered before the federal Parliament, one was to have, soon, coming from Ottawa, a law for assistance to cinematographic production. This invasion by the federal government of the *québécois* domain is imputable only to the indifference, to the inaction of the government of Québec. A government which, however, ceaselessly claims its constitutional prerogatives, and proclaims itself the defender of French culture in North America. But the Québec and the Montreal authorities do not hesitate to invest almost twenty million dollars in a theatre for concert and for opera, arts which, because of the social stratification in Quebec, are destined for an economically privileged class which includes relatively few French Canadians. As for the French Canadian population which has access to culture especially through the cinema, the ministry of cultural affairs of Québec seems to satisfy itself with programming by Paramount-United Amusement-Famous Players.

So long as the *loi-cadre* on cinema is not presented to the *Parlément de Québec*, a law which will further the production of films, the mere existence of a ministry of cultural affairs will constitute an indecency. When the minister of cultural affairs of Québec grants 45,000 dollars to the International Film Festival of Montreal, no one denies the importance and opportuneness of this support. But this assistance to the Festi-

val, so long as the present circumstances are not changed, serves only to illustrate the role of Québec as eternal and exclusive consumer of foreign culture and perpetuates the alienation of the local *cinéastes*. On the economic level, French Canadian participation in the international cinema has always been only in one direction.

In the work *The Stages of Economic Growth* of W. W. Rostow, one notes that Canada, like Australia or New Zealand, has reversed the customary sequence of economic development which goes from *décollage* (take-off) to mass consumption. That is particularly true in the domain of Canadian cinema, where the substructure for consumption is one of the best organized in the world, while there exists only the embryo of a substructure for normal production of films.

Canada has taken no protective measure for its cinematographic production, so that the Canadian producer cannot claim to compete with a product which emerges on the local market at dumping prices, for this product has already been amortized in great part on the market of origin, a market itself often protected and subsidized. Thus in Canada, the normal producer is the most disadvantaged in the world; English and French films do not even have to support the costs of post-synchronization.

2. There are not enough films produced, and the production of these films remains too heterogeneous, for the term "average budget" to have any meaning. First the films produced by the State at the O.N.F.: *Le Festin des morts*: \$300,000; *Yul 871*: \$165,000; *La vie heureuse de Léopold Z*: \$90,000; *Le Neige a fondu sur la Manicouagan*: \$65,000.

These films receive from the federal



La Neige A Fondu Sur Le Manicouagan, Monique Miller.

State a subsidy of 100 per cent of the cost of production.

Then the films produced by entrepreneurs outside O.N.F., in particular those produced by *Coopératio, Inc.*: *Troublefete*: \$125,000; *Cain*, \$135,000; *La Corde au cou*: \$135,000; *Poussière sur la ville*: \$170,00; *Délivrez-nous du mal*, \$110,000. *Entre la mer et l'eau douce*, \$145,000.

These films have received no aid from the State. Their budget is met in major part by laboratory supplies and by salaries invested.

There exists here a significant, latent demand for the *canadien* film. This demand varies, of course, as everywhere, according to the category of the work. For a *yé-yé* film, the latent demand is maybe ten times higher than for a work of introspection. Yet it must be possible for this film to be put on the market properly.

But the French language Canadian market is limited, at once by the size of the population (5 million), and by the fact that it is already saturated by the English-language film.

Therefore, except for a phenomenon, a film of 100,000 dollars cannot be amortized in the local market, hence the necessity for co-production or at least for foreign outlets.

3. I do not believe that the problem puts itself in these terms. There are two sorts of circumstances which would determine, for me, the choice of *cinéma direct*: a) the lack of financial means; b) some sorts of reportage.

I would never consider color or cinemascopé as constraints.

As to the support of television, Radio Canada, State television, pays 4,000 dollars for a half-hour reportage produced by a normal Canadian entrepreneur; dollars if this reportage is made by O. N.F., whoever the *auteur* be in the two cases. The private producer must realize his profits on the price of 4,000 dollars, while O.N.F. can, without fear, spend 25,000 dollars to produce this half hour. O.N.F. receives six million dollars each year from the Federal government. Radio-Canada gave 60,000 dollars for the production by O.N.F. of *Festin des morts*; 30,000 for *Pour la suite du monde*. Radio-Canada paid 16,000 dollars to show *La Neige a fondu sur la Manicouagan* on television. If I had been able to have 10,000 dollars from Radio Canada for the television rights to *Poussière sur la ville*, normal and independent production which did not cost taxpayers a sou, I would be happy. That may seem crazy, but it is like that. Do not look for economic rationality in the behavior of institutions, find another.

4. Last summer, as "free lance," I filmed for the O.N.F., a 15 minute documentary, 35mm and color, on the harvest in Saskatchewan. The material conditions of work at O.N.F., in that instance were excellent. Comfortable budget, freedom of creation. I consider



Michel Brault (in duffel coat) during the shooting of Arthur Lamothe's *Poussière Sur La Ville*.

O.N.F. as a potential employer to whom I offer my services. But I think that O.N.F. should dedicate itself to scientific cinema, educational cinema, anthropological cinema, and the like. As well as to experimental cinema. O.N.F. should be the great school, the great center for apprenticeship and for experimentation of Canadian *cinéastes*, rather than dedicating so large a part of its money, of its administrative organization, to the fictional film. When I see O.N.F. spend twenty thousand dollars of public funds for a full-length fictional film, I believe that there is someone, somewhere who benefits, by the public funds, from an improper privilege, whatever administrative criteria people will propose to justify this expenditure.

I believe that these two hundred thousand dollars would be better utilized for the collectivity, if, by a system of subsidies, they allowed the making of four new full-length films in independent enterprises. For with fifty thousand dollars of direct subsidy, an independent producer is sure to be able to produce a film of at least a hundred thousand dollars.

I do not know what can have made you believe that we desired "American standing and absolute freedom of creation." Can it be that you have generalized some special case?

Claude Jutra expressed our awareness of this problem when he said: "It is impossible to have the freedom of a wild colt in a cage, even if gold." The material conditions of life to which the *cinéastes* who have become independent subject themselves prove that some constraints, some challenges, do not enervate them.

5. English speaking *cinéastes*, whether they be at the O.N.F. or outside the

O.N.F., have the same economic challenges to take up as French speaking *cinéastes*. Maybe these challenges, at the start, are greater, for I believe that the latent demand that exists for the French Canadian film does not exist for the English Canadian film. Yet if they succeed in breaking some obstacles, they have the advantage over us of having for their films an enormous potential market in North America.

As for our originality, if it exists, it does not lie in ethnicity, but in the geographical, social and political factors contingent. As does the originality of French Canadian poets and painters.

6. All great works are universal. They are as well particular to a region and to a period.

If by regionalism one means the pursuit of particularism as an end in itself, one falls into preciousness. This form of art has never attained universality. On the contrary, it is in going thoroughly into the specifically human as it manifests itself here in Québec, and not in lingering over the problems posed by linguistic singularities, that one will have chances to attain the universal.

7. If there is something that has influenced me in what you call the *Nouvelle Vague*, it is the audacity to make films with very limited means. Yes, I wish for a Franco-Canadian co-production. On an egalitarian basis. On an egalitarian basis, I said indeed, for, as a certain head of state would say, "There are fools who take us for children's marbles." *L'Homme de Rio* is no more Brazilian than a film shot in Canada by a French *cinéaste* would be *canadien*, even with the aid of dollars and of indigenous technicians.

Yes, on egalitarian basis, that is to say that, good year as bad year, in

the framework of Franco-Canadian co-productions, Canadian *cinéastes* make as many films as French *cinéastes*.

Yes, on an egalitarian basis, that is to say that, if, in the co-production, as a general rule, the films shot in Canada will be shot by Canadian *cinéastes*, as films shot in France will be by French *cinéastes*.

No, if co-production means the supplying by Canada of dollars, of work crews, and of foreign landscapes, to French producers and *cinéastes*, when they wish to come to shoot in Canada some exotic or historical joke, while local *cinéastes*, and not the least, hold the devil by the tail. Not for long will the indigenes make donkeys of themselves.

For I have seen, in the name of Franco-Canadian co-production, eighty thousand beautiful dollars finance *Le Coup de grace*, on which as personnel only the still photographer, one technician, and two actors were Canadian (the technician and one of the actors lived in Paris). For I read in Canadian newspapers that Claude de Givray and Jacques Pinoteau intend to come here to shoot films with the aid of the O.N.F. while Michel Brault, Pierre Patry, Gilles Groulx or I have as aid from this same organization only the sympathy of our friends who work there.

8. Yes, I am optimistic. For neither Brault nor Groulx nor Patry nor I who left a regular position at the O.N.F., more than a year ago, have died of hunger. Yes, I am optimistic, when I discover the vitality of the work crew that we succeed in forming outside the O.N.F.

Yes, I am optimistic, for I hope that the law of assistance that the federal Parliament will probably vote will give our films a slightly more comfortable financial position.

9. I am completing filming (January 1966) of *Poussière sur la ville*, a cinematographic adaptation of a Canadian novel, film in black and white, shot in a mining town a hundred miles from Montreal. Budget: 170,000 dollars. Co-production between my company S.G.C. Ltée and Coopératio Inc. of Pierre Patry (majority producer). Ready money: 5,000 dollars, supplied by S.G.C., that is to say by private investors; 10,000 dollars supplied by France-Film. No possibility of bank loans. No assistance from the State. Only the actors have received part of their salaries (seventy-six dollars a day). All the other salaries, all the rental of equipment, all the costs for film and for laboratory, will be credited on the expected revenue and will be paid on the *pro rata* of the revenues. Distribution: in Canada—France—Film (two theatres in Montreal; six provincial); in France, Pathé Cinéma. Between the shooting and the editing I went to make a reportage in the Canadian West for the O.N.F.

10. You yourselves judge.



Jean-Pierre Lefebvre

Born August 17, 1941. Studies in literature not completed. Stay of a year in Europe, then French teacher for two years. Staff member on the independent cinema review *Objectif* since 1961. Has published some short stories* in commercial magazines and a collection of poems: *Le Temps que dure l'Avenir* (three other collections finished to be published soon).

1964 *L'Homomane* (16 mm, 24 minutes.)

1965 *Le Révolutionnaire* (16 mm, 74 minutes).

1966 *Il ne faut pas mourir pour ça* (35 mm) and *Mon œil* (16 mm).

At present unemployed.

1. & 2. The Canadian branches of almost all of the big American companies of distribution, of exploitation, and of production, dispose of their merchandise here in the same way as the U.S.A. However, in the Province of Québec, they must meet with the competition of French branches, like that of *Odéon*, for example. There are, of course, several Canadian — French and English — companies of distribution and exploitation, but the great majority must pass through the American or the French network; the others, those who own independent theatres, particularly in Montreal, are very little interested in Canadian films, poorly paying. The dilemma is that a global experiment has never been tried, to determine the real financial return from these films, and that, if they are poorly paying, that is because no governmental law (federal or provincial) regulates Canadian distribution and exploitation. Against the Americans and the French who have money, theatres, and their own organization, we have only sentimental weapons; as for Canadian companies properly so called, they are interested in Canadian films only in so far as establish themselves as commercial as foreign films (that is why

a film like *Le Chat dans le sac* has not yet been shown in a single theatre in Canada). Thus one can understand the slight interest that there is for American, French, and even Canadian companies, in investing in a possible Canadian production, unless the Canadian participation be marginal at the level of the direction and of the acting, and be profitable (for the foreigners) at the financial level (the Franco-Canadian co-production *Le Coup de grace* is a perfect example of that).

Yet I persist in believing that before thinking of export (but it is true that one can consider the other provinces of Canada as export countries, given the cultural and linguistic barriers between them and the Province of Québec), I persist in believing that we should break into the *québécois* market, even the Canadian market. For, it is spiritually that our cinema is difficult to export; it could not, for the moment, make an impression as do the Hungarian, Polish or Czech cinema, because it is not yet representative enough of what we are.

3. No doubt there will still be room, at the O.N.F. or elsewhere, for other experiments in *cinéma-vérité*. In my opinion, it is not economy that has slowed these experiments, it is the *cinéastes* themselves, for whom *cinéma-vérité* was a work tool and an instrument for the exploration of French-Canadian reality. Perrault, Brault, Jutra and Groulx were the first to want to integrate these experiments with others more global.

4. Personally, I have never had contact with the O.N.F., which I should like to see play the role that it itself attributed to itself in its constitutional charter. By continuing to produce full-length films without any precise basis of financial return, the O.N.F. does not make flagrant to the eyes of the government the economic problems of our

cinema, and, in a way, competes illegally with private industry, which cannot take the same risks and falls into bankruptcy immediately upon the first defeat of some scope. Yet I do not require private industry at any price; I require an adequate system of production, of distribution and of exploitation. A State cinema well organized, and whose objectives were less restricted than those of the O.N.F., would be well worth a badly organized private industry.

5. French Canadian cinema, exactly like the French Canadians themselves, is in search of its originality and of its entity: in that is its first and thematic originality. French Canada puts itself the question of its existence and of its survival, while English Canada puts itself no question.

6. Our cinema will be French Canadian or it will not be at all.

7. The French *Nouvelle Vague* has influenced us as far as it has itself been influenced by the most significant *cinéastes* of the cinema, and by extra-cinematographic currents of thoughts that touch all domains of present day art.

8. I am too much an optimist not to despair of the situation, at present and to come, of French Canadian cinema.

If I could answer question 9 precisely, I would say that Canadian cinema will survive. But in any case, it will survive—or we will become Americans.

10. I am badly informed about the real problems of the Hungarian, the Brazilian, or other cinemas, but spiritually, from the films that I have seen, those from Central Europe especially, I believe that our cinema is very close to theirs, be it only to the extent that we seek, as they, to rid ourselves of the oppression that prevents us from being ourselves and from being able to express ourselves.



La Révolutionnaire, Louise Rosselet, Louis St.-Pierre.

The Expression of Quebecois Man

To investigate the meaning of the problems of our cinema is to know that our restlessness is not presumed artistic but social, and defined for us as access to expression of the man of this place. That was the meaning for me of those ten questions put by *Cabiers*. If what is obvious to me is obscure to you, there is no reason to be surprised. It is that, starting from an unknown (*québécois* man), there are three questions at the point of arrival, society, cinema, art, put implicitly. (To solve an equation is to find the value of the unknown that transforms the equality into an identity.) There remains the idea that one has of cinema. (And the bet of the clarity of my thought).

In my understanding of our cinema, I have not asked myself whether our obviousness were truths or illusions, with respect to some truths in itself. For me, to create in the cinema is essentially subjective and determined by the "lived." That is, too, my only way of talking about it. It could not be a question of our cinema without being as well a question of conditions that prevail in Québec. Reflection does not retire from the world even if one could not separate out the share in it of dream and of reality. For me that takes the place of conscience and of definition of the cinema. —Gilles GROULX.

Adieu Philippines

A people that sees on the screens of motion picture theatres only the dreams of others will be an alienated people, just as a people that would see there only its own dreams.

I have the impression that some people in Ottawa have understood that, while, in Québec, people seem to find ideal a cinematographic pattern on the colonial pattern. The cinema must not be a factor of spiritual dispersion, and some people, here, ought to realize that one cannot fight ethnocentrism by the deportation of souls. And one sees, looking for example at the Philippines, what becomes of a people plunged into spiritual confusion. The total enrichment of a human community, of a people, of a nation can be favored by the import of consumer goods whose price in a foreign country is lower than the local cost of production.

Yet the total enrichment of a community, its development, are harmed if, in domains as vital as the arts, the

sciences, and mathematics, one does not utilize to the maximum, even making use of protectionist measures, the factors of production that the country possesses. In these domains, the essential factor of production is the creator, the man of research, and their efficacy is a function of the freedom that these people enjoy. A country can lose nothing in buying its shoes or its oranges in a foreign country. It impoverishes itself materially, beggars itself or dies, if, spiritually, it exists only by procurement.

—Arthur LAMOTHE

The Fuse And The Bomb

For us, French Canadians, the cul-de-sac is behind, and not ahead. Yet we would like, like everyone, to have our own history, and our past, although it be shut, enclosed, often tempts us. And yet, this history, on the same grounds as our cinema of before 1958, was lived in too great an unawareness, and with too considerable a lack of the sense of

responsibilities, for us to be able really to prolong ourselves through it. Whence our present purpose, on the one hand, to destroy the myths that kept us at the level of a merely vegetative life, on the other hand, to make an about face and to take part in the adventure of the world, whatever it cost us, since we have nothing to lose. And so goes our cinema, like the rest.

The most considerable crisis, maybe, that we have to face is a crisis of *communication*, internal and external. Everything here is a question of *distance*. Of political, ideological, sociological and physical distance between the different groups of our society and, too, among the individuals who compose it. Furthermore, our perpetual hibernation brings about that a part of the year we sleep (our politicians especially) on our problems, and that, once awakened, we think only of shaking off the chill, most often on the beautiful financial, political and ideological beaches of the U.S.A.

In spite of everything, our cinema widens, decentralizes, and becomes more and more representative (but not to the point of forcing the interest of Canadians for *their* cinema, and still less that of foreigners, to whose eyes we remain a primitive people; becomes more representative, be this only of the



Jean-Pierre Lefebvre: *La Revolutionnaire*.



Barbara Ulrich, Gilles Groulx and Claude Godbout during the making of *Le Chat Dans Le Sac*.

extent of our difficulties, economic as well as creative.

Our cinema opens to *contradiction*, and to the diversity of genres (here, I do not take into account the intense quality of films made in Canada and more particularly in the Province of Quebec). We have produced full-length films of *cinéma-vérité*, as well as comedies of manners, psychological dramas, a historical film, and political films, *engagés*. These films are primarily prototypes, but several go beyond the stage of experimentation pure and simple, and all have a precise utilitarian function.

My film, *Le Révolutionnaire*, was conceived from A to Z as a utilitarian film; it addresses itself to a very precise milieu, and tries to give a *concrete* reply to arguments that many still say to be insurmountable. It was a matter, in some way, of filming a *tour de force* from the point of view of production (the film cost sixteen thousand dollars: five thousand in technical expenses, the rest in salaries, moreover all invested in shares) as well as of the creation, while sacrificing neither of these two aspects. It was a matter, if you will, of making a film with nothing of nothing, yet arousing as much interest, if not more, as a film made with a budget ten times greater. It was a matter, too, of making believe in a possible spontaneous generation, coming neither from the O.N.F. nor from Radio-Canada.

In *Le Révolutionnaire*, I attack in the first place the Canadian cinema, by trying to break completely with its traditions (that, in particular, of all-

powerful *montage*; I attack in the second place several prejudices, one insisting that, to establish a sound industry, it is absolutely necessary to make films demanded by the public (both are necessary), the other maintaining that one succeeds in making an interesting film only with the concurrence of a perfectly impeccable technique (with respect to its image, the film is as impeccable as those of the O.N.F.; with respect to its sound, however, one can rightly criticize me). *Le Révolutionnaire* was shot in 16mm, in six days, without professional actors, but with professional equipment. It was a test that I had myself take, by trying to economize on everything, but by trying besides to sacrifice nothing of the idea that I wanted to get to emerge through it, by finding very simply the form that fitted it best given the restrictions that I must face, I wanted, in sum, to make a *film*, and not to put forth a pure and simple act of bravery. It is not for me to say whether I have succeeded or not; but I can say that I have made the film that I wanted to make, and that, through the labyrinth of technical and other difficulties that arrived unexpectedly, I succeeded in assuming the entire responsibility for what I did, without having submitted to any censorship of any kind. This is not a criterion of success; but I have been able to glimpse that by making such an enterprise coherent and lucid it was possible at the very least not to feel oneself frustrated. On the other hand, given the very low cost of the production, I could face a complete failure (but this is not the

case) without that preventing me from shooting films until the end of my life. So I took a calculated risk, and it is in this sense that I say the film is *utilitarian*, for all the films made or being made at present in Quebec are risks, but, unfortunately, not all are calculated, and any glaring error can delay us some years.

Moreover, I made the film *against* the spectators here, believing, on one hand, that it is scorning them to give them the films that they call for, and wanting, on the other hand, to provoke some indignation that might serve as point of departure for calling again in question, both my film and the public reaction, and other Canadian films. *Le Révolutionnaire* was released commercially some weeks after *La Corde au cou* of Pierre Patry, and the same day as *La Vie beureuse de Léopold Z.*, two films to which it is diametrically opposite; this happy coincidence amplified the character of my film just as I could wish). If it was essential to my eyes that the film be plastically beautiful, that was in large part to make flagrant the intentional awkwardness of a little dialogue, the false tone of the players, the awkwardness of their gestures, of their attitudes and of their ideas. When from the interior of a well-heated house you look at a snowstorm, it is beautiful; if you go out, the storm remains beautiful in itself, but your feelings are changed. What I wanted to do, is to show at once that winter is beautiful and disgusting, and that our situation is the same. I wanted *Le Révolutionnaire* to be a fuse and the spectator the bomb.

—Jean-Pierre Lefebvre



Les Bucherons De La Manouane.

Love With Hopes

"Further: what is the aim of the cinema? That the real world, as offered on the screen, be, too, an idea of the world." —Jacques Rivette

"The non-existence of a *québécois* revolutionary tradition and the complexity of the situation of our country always make difficult for me my attempts at understanding our reality . . . But it is by this clash of contradictory views on reality, it is by the very contradictions of *québécois* revolutionary thought that we will progress, it is by the negation of our errors that we will encircle little by little the *québécois* reality, and it is by this deeper and deeper understanding of our country

vital needs of the French Canadian in course of *making himself Québécois*.

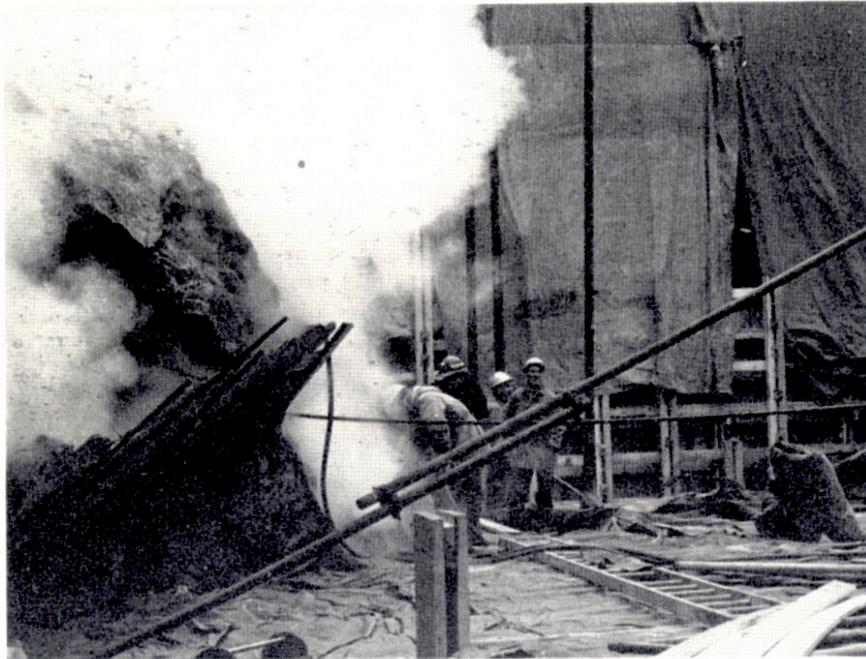
It is significant and significant that the most gifted French Canadian *cinéaste* and the one who most calls this cinema in question again film after film, Gilles Groulx, is too, the most aware of the lived French Canadian drama. (and the most torn, the most on a delirious perpetual *qui-vive*, from which it can be a question of freeing oneself only by freeing the collectivity to which one belongs, from its aberrant condition of dispossessed collectivity, since moreover there is no identification possible for a man, and a cinema, except in the process of societalization according to which the dialectical exchange capacities—needs is carried out—Gilles Groulx is one the group *parti pris* (decision made), a thought *parti pris* is constant and fundamental in the cinema of Groulx.) All the studies of markets and of grammars will scarcely suffice,

ing what it costs. To understand the problem otherwise is to understand nothing about it.

Explicit enough are the replies of the five *auteurs* of French Canadian films from whom one can reasonably expect a work coherent, if not without accidents, faithful to each *auteur*, influential, and of a sufficient universality to carry through the world an exact representation of present Quebec. And that is to say essentially that of a collectivity which stakes very precisely a development and its cessation (absorption by the United States).

To intend to elucidate this new French Canadian cinema as a function of numbers alone would lead to understanding nothing about it. It is Gilles Groulx who situates the problem at its real and crucial level: "Dependence being a fact, the idea of liberation becomes seasonable. Cinema being an expression of culture, we think that it will be an instrument of that idea."

Le Chat dans le sac, of Gilles Groulx, 1964, has not yet been shown in any theatre of Quebec—nor elsewhere. At the same moment, in the workroom: *Yul 871*, a film of Jacques Godbout, another production of the O.N.F., for which Charles Denner has been brought to Montreal. Cost of the production: 165,000 dollars. *Le Chat dans le sac*: 46,000 dollars. The major O.N.F. historical film, shown one single time on television, *Le Festin des morts*: 300,000 dollars, film that one must judge less on the level of the academic and mannered direction of Fernand Dansereau than on



Arthur Lamothe: *De Montreal A La Manicouagan*.

that we will decouple our efficacy, that our action will bite more and more into the quick of the reality of Quebec."—Jean-Marc Piôtte (*Parti pris*.)

The new French Canadian cinema elaborates itself in a doubly revolutionary perspective. There is revolution on the level of the writing, of the means of production and of the methods of direction. If there is a thematic singularizing this same cinema, it is indeed on one single level that one must see it, and recognize it unceasingly: the attempt at elucidation of the *québécois* reality,—roots again put in the light after the occupier and his collaborators, clergy, high finance, and elite, had knowingly caused them to be forgotten during more than a century of *dénaturation* of the exploited people; and the most immediately assimilable projections of a development that will satisfy the

nor the different "adjustments" of which so many intercedaries would be glad to think, so many intermediaries and functionaries and good souls. All the Commissars of Culture . . . The real problem is one of a confrontation, between new French Canadian *cinéastes* and these Commissars of Culture, by the choice of their employment and the obligations proceeding from it, agents of the dispossession inflicted on the *Québécois*, that too often the latter is the first to facilitate, an old automatism of the wily "colonized" making him "adjust" the worst (the operation *Vie heureuse de Léopold Z*). That is to say that there is a French Canadian problem, from which arises a new cinema, that "insists" on it. Whence its accusation by "the established order." And that is to say, in a capitalist system, its infernal problematics, the cinema cost-



Gilles Groulx: *Le Chat Dans Le Sac*, Barbara Ulrich.

that of the scenario and dialogues of Alec Pelletier: *images d'Epinal* according to the reports of the Jesuits, the first arrivals in *Nouvelle-France*, commissioned to reduce the Indians—and, by obvious transposition into the present, the *québécois* people suddenly informed of its right to self-determination—to a primitive and ignorant mass whose avenging impulse must be punished, whose vitality must be destroyed, whose salvation must be ensured . . .

In parallel, Radio-Canada prepares its own cinema offensive. Twenty-six full-length CBC-Toronto films are announced for English language television. So the State enterprise has reacted, and one has difficulty seeing how new independent French Canadian *cinéastes* will be able to resist the "federalist" operation baited with such capital . . .

And yet, when the sixtieth anniversary of Ouimetoscope was celebrated, what was most significant was, doubtless, that there is nothing more than Jacques Godbout and Gilles Carle at the O.N.F., that all the best young French Canadian *cinéastes* are trying to organize themselves within structures guaranteeing them at least a relative independence.

Pierre Patry, the first, and already more than two years ago (the first to the extent that the adventure *A tout prendre* of Claude Jutra is not registered in the frame of an independent production elaborated as permanent), founded "*Coopératio Inc.*" with a very young crew investing time, work and talent. Minimum site and personnel, Ariflex and Nagra; laboratories grant them significant advantages, and France-Film assures them advances or distribution facilities. It has been calculated that five years after the release of each film would be necessary to recover all the investments in shares. "*Coopératio*," hazardous by risking the support of France-Film (Télé-Métropole), for whom this is the only way to compete with the State double monopoly O.N.F. — Radio-Canada, proves itself incontestably the most necessary enterprise for an independent cinema tomorrow. But what might make 1966 the year "*Coopératio*," what would be absolutely necessary, would be the release of two films entrusted to two *cinéastes* of ability: Patry is producing the next films of Arthur Lamothe and of Michel Brault *Poussière sur la ville* and *Entre la mer et l'eau douce*. It is a matter in both cases of two films valued by their *auteurs*, on which writers at the level of the scenaria collaborated, with a professional cast . . .

Lastly, Gilles Groulx, whom his qualities as a man, his gifts, his intuition, and his knowledge of the cinema put in the very first rank of the new French Canadian *Cinéastes*, designating him correlatively besides to the powers and to the administrators in office as first victim to bring down, Gilles Groulx too

had to leave the O.N.F. and found a private company, which he did with the cameraman Bernard Gosselin and the *cinéastes* Jean Dansereau and Denys Arcand—if I were to bet on a sixth *cinéaste* of ability here, I would bet on Arcand, of whom I have unfortunately as yet seen only *Champlain*—"Les *cinéastes associés*." They have a site, they hope to obtain a minimum technical equipment, for the moment they hire themselves to whoever wishes them. When the services of one of them are sought, it is with "Les *cinéastes associés*" that the employer must sign a contract. They agreed on a maximum annual salary, that none of them will go beyond, whatever the films on which they would work, all the excess then being poured into the cashbox of "Les *cinéastes associés*."

And there it is . . . Everything was consummated in a few months . . .

was the inimitable studio without which the unprecedented starting point—*Corral, Capitale de l'or, Paul Tomkowicz, Raquetteurs* — would never have been possible, where so many could take up, on the level of technical research as well as on that of creation, an extraordinary work of ground-clearing, of grasping with the intelligence, of mastery of the cinema. But, in parallel (what observers from abroad preferred not to see, and their dithyrambs justified the ostracism for O.N.F.), this organization of incomparable potential was sinking into a bureaucracy that could not help but enter into conflict with creators wholly involved in the intensity of researches and of discoveries that pushed them always further. Then, after 1960, the historical conjuncture drove O.N.F. to a policy of self defense, as organ of the federal power, of which elements extremely favorable to *québécois* eman-

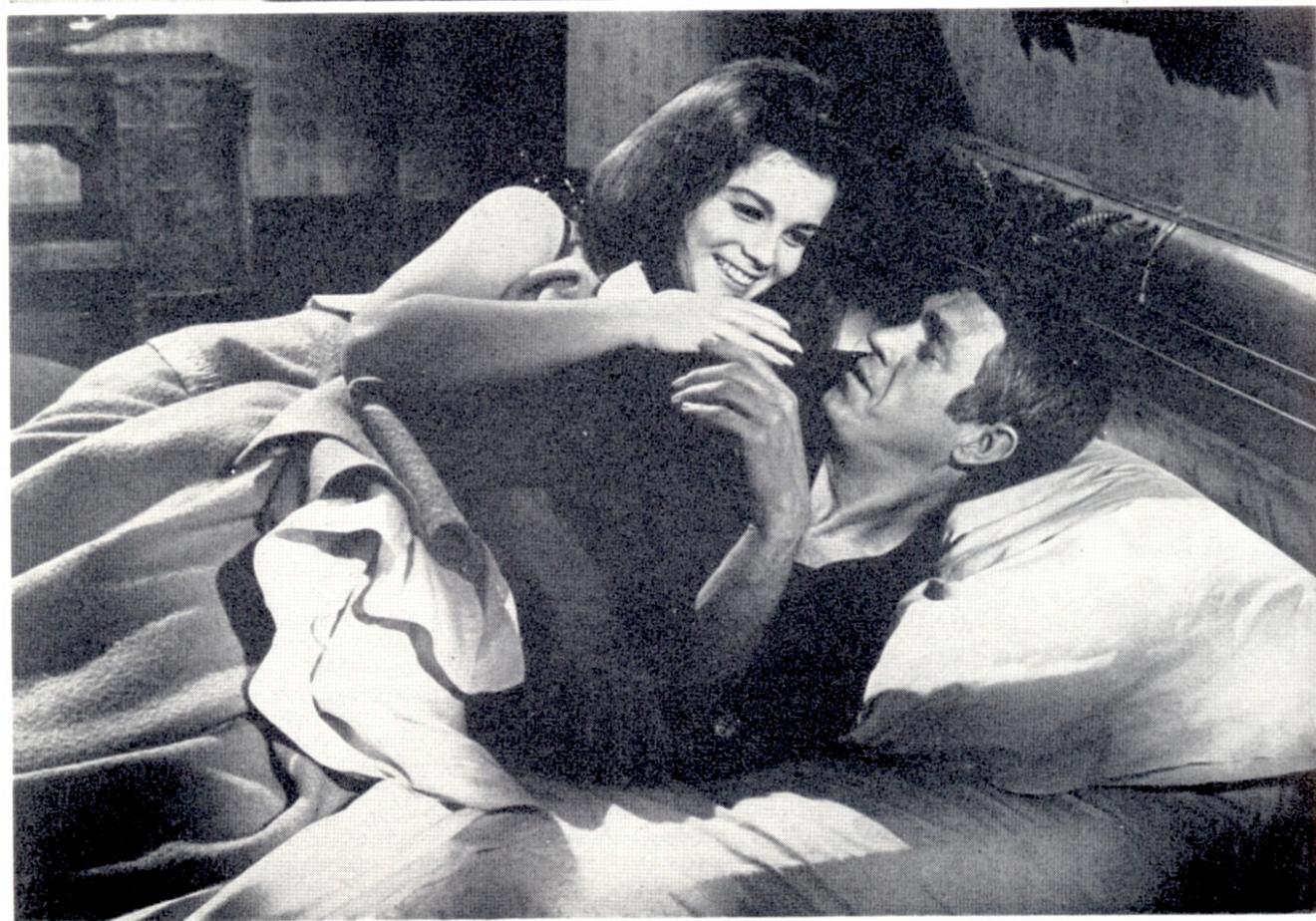
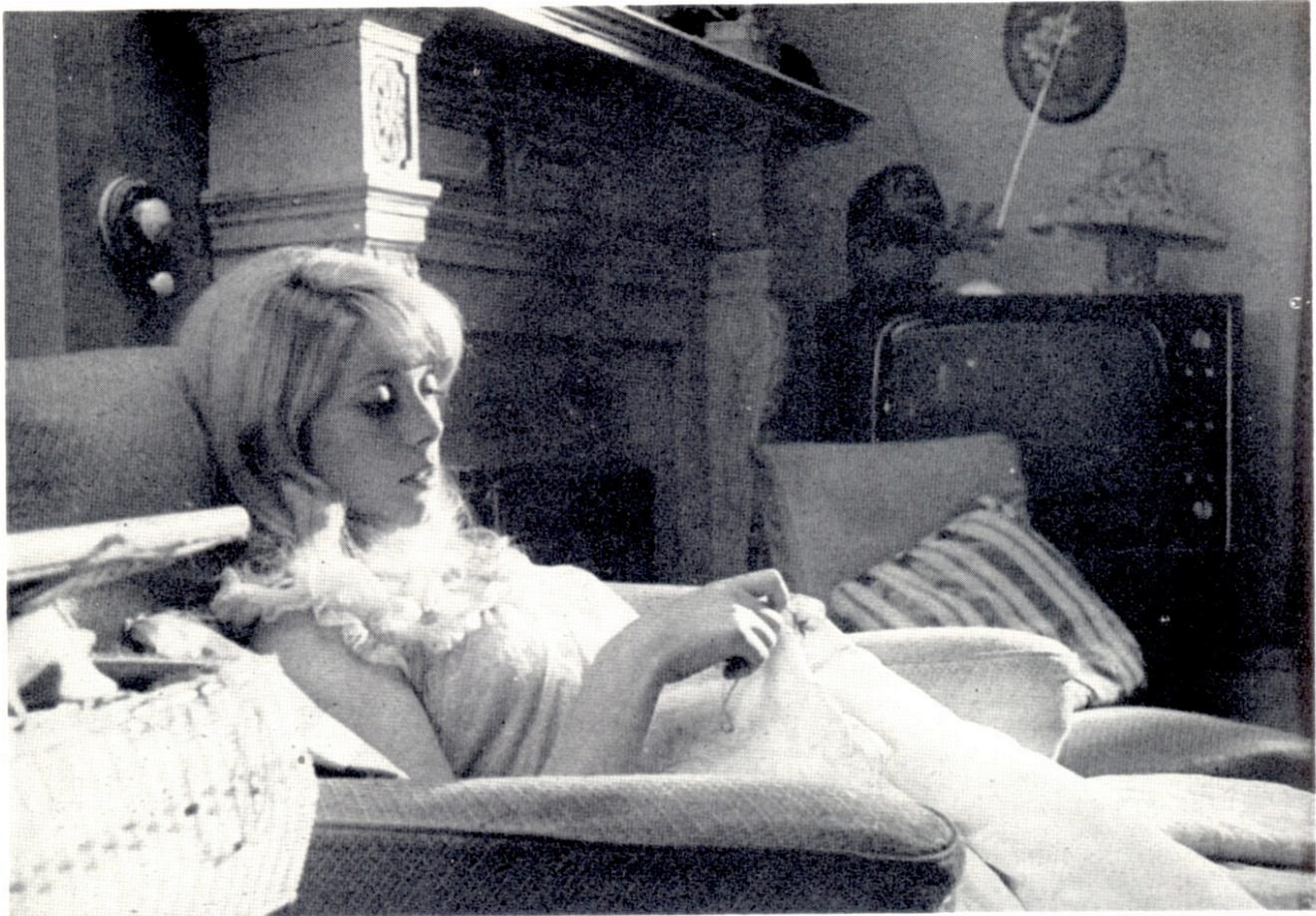


Gilles Groulx: *Le Chat Dans Le Sac*, Barbara Ulrich.

If one sets aside Claude Jutra (who has just left for Los Angeles, where he is to teach cinema four months at U.C.L.A.), individualist, very disillusioned after the experiment *A tout prendre*, and who never was an employee of the O.N.F. in the strict meaning of the word, it is obvious that the young French Canadian *cinéastes* who have something to say will try henceforth to say it by any means except the O.N.F., which will remain closely bound to the birth of this same new cinema against which it now enters itself. The O.N.F., as soon as it was set up in Montreal,

at last projected, wanted to make use, and the stiffening of its positions by the directing machinery precipitated ruptures become inevitable. It is the old story of a choice to make between the existing conventions and the risks that there are in wanting to reinvent a world at the level of man, this man in his specificity and in his real historically . . . Need I say that I have bet on Brault, Lamothe, Groulx and Lefebvre? . . . Beyond even all bets there exist necessities that singularize each, and a fidelity to himself. . .

—Patrick STRARAM





Cabiers Critiques

- A. ROMAN POLANSKI: *Repulsion*, Catherine Deneuve.
- B. NORMAN JEWISON: *The Cincinnati Kid*, Ann-Margret, Steve McQueen.
- C. SAMUEL FULLER: *The Naked Kiss*, Virginia Grey, Constance Towers.

Victim and Executioner

REPULSION (REPULSION). Film of Roman Polanski. *Scenario:* Roman Polanski, Gerald Brach. *Photography:* Gilbert Taylor. *Music:* Chico Hamilton. *Editor:* Alastair McIntyre. *Sound:* Leslie Hammond. *Cast:* Catherine Deneuve (Caroline Ledoux), Ian Hendry (Michel), John Fraser (Colin), Partick Wymark (the proprietor), Yvonne Furneaux (Hélène), Renée Houston (Miss Balch), Helen Fraser, Valeria Taylor, James Villiers, Hugh Fletcher, Mike Pratt, Monica Merlin, Imogen Graham. *Producer:* Michael Klinger — Tony Tenser — Gene Gutowski, 1964. *Distributors:* DifiFrance. *Length:* 1 hr. 41 min.

One knows the difficulties that delayed, and one moment risked definitely compromising, the release of *Repulsion* on French screens. No doubt only the reputation of Catherine Deneuve and some accident of programming allowed the film to benefit from an honorable release. This blindness of distributors and theater managers joined to an indifferent reception from the major press demonstrates the small affinity of the French public with the cinematographically unusual and the delectable beauties of fright. Only *Psycho* in this line obtained the success that it deserved; but that is another story, Hitchcock having long ago, and rightly, won the blind trust of the spectator. In first analysis, then, *Repulsion* is a work of pure terror. That is no slight failing in the eyes of an audience saturated with *Fantomas* pasteurized in an autoclave, prisoners of a rigorously aseptized moral comfort, of which the frightful *institute de beauté* (salon) where Carol works is the approximate model in a bottle. As Francois Truffaut wrote: "Fear is a noble emotion, and it can be noble to cause fear. It is noble to confess that one has been afraid and that one has taken pleasure in it. One day or another, only children will still have this nobility." He added — in connection with *The Birds* — that people did not forgive Hitchcock for having intended to terrify us, and especially for having succeeded. As paradoxical as that may appear, those are somewhat the same reproaches that were addressed to Polanski. I think of that reviewer surprised and furiously disappointed at not finding again here the naive charms of certain terror films. Scarcely did the exegete, following the fashion, succeed in simulating some pleasure in the projection of a mediocre Freddie Francis than he would himself already confronted with a work belonging to the same register, certainly, but infinitely more elaborated, and, everything taken into account, more intelligent than the average current production. From then on,

how to take his distance? how to escape the film if its proceedings did not appear at first glance? From then on there follow a quite understandable confusion and distress, which one will face by accusing *Repulsion* of being a macabre farce or a *grand guignolesque* exercise, which the film of Polanski precisely is not at any moment.

One must remark in this sense that the first part of the film, before the murder, is certainly the most agonizing and the most terrifying, because rigorously nothing happens in it that is, explicit, agonizing or terrifying. We are confronted, then, with no situation identifiable, therefore reassuring. Polanski satisfies himself with disclosing, warily, the signs to which, in a little while, he will give a meaning. Like the character of Carol, about which it

Polanski has visibly mistrusted his subject: a commissioned work that might very well scarcely have distinguished itself from an honest William Castle. It is no doubt because of this apprehension that the intelligence of the story and the will to control entirely the proposed materials mask in part the sensibility that cropped out more freely in *Le Couteau (Knife in the Water)* or *Quand les Anges tombent*. In this sense the first murder is exemplary. People tell me that the sequence miscarries, that one is aware at this moment neither of fear, nor of violence. Yet it is that way indeed because Polanski intended it. The murder was, in sum, only a hinge allowing him to rock the story. Therefore it was fitting to de-dramatize the event, to distance or of waiting. After this withdraw from it all emotional poten-



Repulsion, Catherine Deneuve.

evolves in a pendular movement, the film is still empty, charged with a potential of fright that will not be slow to manifest itself but whose physical form is impossible to anticipate. This universe of padded limpidity and of somnambulist wanderings asserts itself as the ideal vehicle for fear. It is not only the calm before the storm—which ultimately would be ascribable to the most commonly used devices — it is, in itself, the description of an authentic air-conditioned nightmare in which the most everyday forms and objects become incomprehensible media of fear. An immobile nightmare, then, which evokes without difficulty those unbearable places, strictly sound proofed, in which the slightest crumple takes an apocalyptic dimension. Of course we will give a start when Carol sees, in a flash of lightning, the reflection of a man in a mirror, but would our physical reaction be so intense if the inaction and the evident vacuity of Carol had not prepared us for everything?

tial at the same time that a blank sound track clearly marked a position action, Carol is condemned to remain in this apartment that is for her at once trap and refuge. These rooms that the large angle will distend, these ceilings losing themselves in false perspectives and later the incessant buzzing of flies express clearly the essence of a larval world, of an artificial universe where the manifestations of life are reduced to the evocation of security within the womb and to the syndromes of decomposition.

It is only on this level, that of the psychoanalytical parabola, that it is legitimate to quibble with Polanski. No that he has committed flagrant errors on the contrary. But having refused himself the recourse to lyricism, the symbols employed inevitably take the appearance of rhetorical figures. The obsession with rhythmic movements (be it that of a pendulum), the pillows that one must ceaselessly put back in place recall too precisely certain cases de

scribed by Freud in his *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. Just as the sudden fissures, and the stretched hands rising from walls become pasty, borrow too obviously from a repertoire, become classic. For a moment one fears seeing those eels emerging from the washbasin (do you know Boris Vian?) but, intelligently, only an allusion in dialogue will be made to them while the best find in this domain remains those magnificently obscene sprouted potatoes that fascinate and repel at the same time like newly landed medusas. The character of Carol herself shares in this disturbing duality. Contrary to what has been written, Carol is not indifferent to matters of sex. Let us dot the i's: it is the question of a nymphomaniac, but she alone knows, in dream, how love is made to her. Her hallucinations are populated with rapes that, by their obsessional character, are entirely opposed to the normal sexuality of her sister. When she hears the couple in the neighboring bedroom, the groans and plaints, which indicate with an astonishing realism the different phases of orgasm, they are to her so many undecipherable calls coming from an unknown world. Let us wager that equally surprised were the inevitable snickerers for whom this admirable sound track took the character of an authentic discovery. For this pleasure that he is capable of giving — of inflicting?—Carol detests man. When his approach becomes too clearly sexualized (the advances of the landlord) she does not satisfy herself with smashing his skull or with drowning him in a bathtub (deleted scene), she uses a razor whose function of emasculation is implied, thus illustrating some lines attributed to Mandiargues on the good use of British teapots and the ideal man-trunk of British wives. For beyond the film of terror and of sexual message, there is once more in the work of Polanski the portrait of a woman. Portrait without complaisance in which no one is spared, to begin with those formidable coquettes on the rebound, fanatics of the lift and of the peeling, who give love the savor of synthetic fibers. Only Carol benefits at moments by a real sympathy or a flash of pity following the fright. No doubt, in the last shots, she is reconciled to herself. No doubt, too, it is too late, and Polanski consents at last — as if that had no more importance — to reveal the face of Carol as a child. That extraordinary look — the only one not to fix the lens of the photographer — which rejoins in time that other look that opened the film.

Then alone, once the buckle has been buckled, once the drama has been played, we discover the real Carol, who is, too, that heroine accursed whose portrait was known in advance to us: "I am the wound and the knife! / I am the slap and the cheek! / I am the members and the wheel / And the victim and the executioner!"

Michel CAEN

Double Kiss

THE NAKED KISS (POLICE SPECIALE). American film of SAMUEL FULLER. *Scenario*: Samuel Fuller. *Photography*: Stanley Cortez. *Music*: Paul Dunlap. *Decor*: Eugène Lourie. *Editor*: Jerome Thoms. *Cast*: Constance Towers (Kelly), Anthony Eisley (Griff), Michael Dante (Grant), Virginia Grey (Candy), Patsy Kelly (Blanche), Betty Bronson (Mme Joséphine), Marie Devereux (Dusty), Karen Conrad, Linda Francis, Barbara Perry, Walter Mathews, Betty Robinson, Christopher Barry, George Spell, Neyle Morrow, Monte Mansfield, Fletcher Fist, Gerald Milton, Gerald Michenaud, Breena Howard, Sally Mills, Edy Williams, Bill Sampson. *Producers*: Leon Frankees — Samuel Fuller — Allied Artists, 1964. *Distributor*: Athos Films. *Length*: 1 hr. 29 min.

Leaving aside many things that surely will be said by others, I will limit myself to setting forth that this film is first true, that it is built on exaggerations of life. But instead of fabricating them, as in *Shock Corridor* (where they were admirably fabricated), Fuller has contented himself with selecting them. The recreation (of an exaggeration to the measure of the choice) is made afterwards. *How?* The process is necessarily mysterious, but I believe that one can say that it is enough for an idea, whatever it is, to cross the mind of a Fuller to find itself already carried to a second state — not to say a third. No doubt it is always a little that way in creation. Let us say that it is more obvious here than elsewhere. As to the choice, it is made, starting from that extremely fecund principle that consists in following the woman. Principle that guided the cuter work of Mizoguchi, of Bergman, the last work of Givray (*L'Amour à la chaîne, Dérive*), unfinished though it was.

For, for whoever loves life, that is to say first accepts it, if only to see it in black, and at the cost, too, of resigning himself to struggle, it is the major base hypothesis (although not the only one, and set aside the case of Godard, who sometimes takes it at the start, sometimes finds it on arrival, and in any case switches back and forth on several at once), it is the major idea, to catch life, keep to the woman. She is the being who leads you to all other beings, since she makes them, or gives herself to them, and who has all the capacities in the world, of struggle as of resignation — in that, as in everything, being of extremes.

And she is the being, too, par excellence, who calls forth, or receives, in any case swallows as no one, the most enormous sample there is of all possible

blows of fate. A revealer, therefore, and catalyser of destiny, cord to follow its web, and sometimes Bickford, for it is from explosion to explosion that one goes (for I tell here the subject of *Kiss*), or ideal lightning rod to receive and canalize its bolts, electrode as well to provoke its discharges, if indeed destiny is as much what one receives as what secrets, each one being always responsible, like Nana who lifts her finger in *Vivre*, and irresponsible like her.

Well, then, in the *Kiss*, a woman marked with fatal recurrences, vowed, vowing herself, to a certain kind of negative relations with others, in short vowed to bungle her men, falls from trap to trap, between times crossing landaus that she knows she should never fill, and broken children that she tries to mend.

And we see her struck by much more impressive bolts than those under which the hero of *Shock* twisted — admirable film, that, yes, but where a series of magistral punches, magistrally calculated, were too magistrally dealt us, and with a too magistral regularity for this beautiful constancy in the quality, the number and the rhythm, not to make us at length founder in a kind of lethargy. That as to the physical aspect of the matter, and to say little of the intellect, which saw the sum of the meanings ultimately be diluted in their redundancy. In the *Kiss*, the force released is no less (maybe more) immense, but put back when it is necessary, brought out, when it is necessary, and in a manner as abrupt as unexpected, which does not mean uncontrolled, but overcontrolled, its exercise and its allotment being ruled by more secret laws. Secret to the point that this film whose line (woman or destiny) or whose grill (although the word evokes an operation of deciphering of a selective, therefore restrictive, nature)—is obvious, surprises by being so obviously obscure. I mean that everything happens as if it were without meaning, without tone, without sense. For the theme is not the prostitute, the tone is not realism, and the sense is not redemption — to mention only three of the possible. At the same time to say that it is an athermal, atonal and nonsensical film would be a little undue. So let us say then that it plays, between different levels, and within each of them, a subtle game of entry-leaving, of going-coming back, of acceptance-refusal, bizarre game but not without rules, and which one could even try to analyze if one had the time. To fly over one of the results of the process: on the one hand, the film is nothing but the story, and—transparency—the awareness of signs is dissolved in spectacle; on the other — transmutation that the film is ready at every instant to cause or to allow to be effected—it becomes spectacle of signs, and the hyper-awareness tends to opacity. Without speaking of the ambiguous play, always appropriate, to which the signs deliver

themselves, of another order of destiny.

Said otherwise and in sum: the Full-erian provocation, pattern operation-wake, based on the clash of things or ideas ordinarily incompatible (racial, political, etc. — each person can make his typography here), and which, pushed to the limit, becomes the operation-sleep of *Sbock* (hypnosis — or other catalepsy — being sometimes the form that salutary flight before inassimilable incompatibles takes — in which case all I have said *against* the film would be turned around into *for* it), is situated in the *Kiss* at the very level of the film, stretched between two forms of cinema ordinarily subjected to segregation. Then, the best, to begin, and maybe to end, is to satisfy oneself with swallowing the film, a little as the heroine receives some kiss — which baptises her — and sees in it the bizarre taste for a certain blow of fate — all meanings immediately grasped, in a totality that refers only to itself, certitude rebellious to all deciphering by analyst.

But is it not thus that it is always more or less necessary to receive cinema? Like those winetasters who practice the curious *métier* of tasting wines to differentiate and to qualify them, and that without any aid from the criteria of chemistry (of the blow), left far behind — which does not mean that the chemistry — (here the technique) — is for all that deprived of all interest, of course.

That *Naked Kiss*. And let he who is not a ghost say that he has felt nothing.

Michel DELAHAYE

The reign of archetypes

THE CINCINNATI KID (LE KID DE CINCINNATI). American film in metrocolor of NORMAN JEWISON. *Scenario*: Ring Lardner Jr. and Terry Southern, from the novel of Richard Jessup. *Photography*: Philip H. Lathrop. *Music*: Lalo Shifrin. *Song*: Dorcas Cochran, interpreted by Ray Charles. *Decor*: George W. Davis, Edward Carfagno, Henry Grace and Hugh Hunt. *Costumes*: Donfeld. *Editor*: Hal Ashby. *Sound*: Franklin Milton. *Cast*: Steve McQueen (Cincinnati Kid), Edward G. Robinson (Lancey Howard), Ann Margaret (Melba), Karl Malden (Shooter), Tuesday Weld (Christiane), Joan Blondell (Lady Fingers), Rip Torn (Slade), Jack Weston (Pig), Cab Calloway (Yeller), Jeff Corey (Hoban), Theo Marcuse (Felix), Milton Selzer (Sokal), Karl Swenson (Mr. Rudd), Emile Genest (Cajun), Ron Soble (Danny), Irene Tedrow (Mme Rudd), Midge Ware (Mme Slade), Dub Taylor. *Producers*: Martin Ransohoff — Filmways — Solar — Metro Goldwyn Mayer, 1965. *Distributor*: M.G.M. *Length*: 1 hr. 53 min.

Beside the films *mis en scène* (set on stage) that we defend, films that are the place where a look of *auteur* and of artist is exerted, everyone knows that there exist a certain number of films

more simply and prosaically *mis en place* (set in place) where the look of the *auteur* counts less than the efficiency of a certain manual skill at bringing to life the beings and places envisaged by a particular story. *The Cincinnati Kid* is of the latter.

The *critique* of such a film must take into account a crowd of details of objective information. Obviously it matters less here to know who Norman Jewison is (anonymous executant of matriarchal comedies with Doris Day) than to know the esthetics of the producer, the formidable Martin Ransohoff. *The Cincinnati Kid* was put in the workroom by Sam Peckinpah, in black and white. Ransohoff, dissatisfied, dismissed him, and Jewison took up the work again starting from zero. He was less encumbered than Peckinpah, and, less concerned with personal creation, he did better, no doubt, what one asked him to do. That said, it is not absolutely certain that the film would have been better had Peckinpah carried it through. Is it necessary, then to rejoice in the dictatorial omnipotence of a regime in which the director is a mere salaried employee, and in which "art" is considered of value only if it gives birth to consumer products conformed to the norms of the industry? Today we must admit that our misunderstanding of the Hollywood system (in spite of the warnings of Lang, Ophus, Renoir) has more than once falsified our critical judgments: some years before, at the sole seeing of a film like *The Cincinnati Kid*, we would certainly have greeted in



Samuel Fuller: *The Naked Kiss*, Anthony Eisley, Constance Towers.

Jewison the appearance of a new talent, and scrutinized the promises of an original style, where no doubt shine only the wheels perfectly ground and nicked of the most impersonal of machineries. But the failure of some hasty bets made us henceforth more prudent.

Yet, whatever its mode of fabrication, *The Cincinnati Kid* exists. With an existence merely physical to be sure, functional, spectacular, entirely subjected to the laws of a dramatic efficacy proved and a thousand times illustrated. The work is entirely enslaved to obsession with waste, to the maniac refusal of dead time, to morbid fear of psychological imprecision. In it the development of the characters and of the situations obey a mechanics without mystery, a logic without discretion. Yet, in spite of that or because of that, somewhere a spell works (at least during the unreeling of the film. The objections come to the mind only at the exit of the theater). Once more, it is by aiming at the infantile attention that every individual turns as if in spite of himself to every story well told that Hollywood wins its eternal game against "intellectual" cinema. Degraded or arbitrary as such entertainments be, our pleasure, a little confused at yielding to their snares, would be enough to justify them. They illustrate, in their naively paradoxical manner, the difficulties of a Brechtian cinema still to come. Here, everything is based on the immediate identification of the spectator with the spectacle proposed to him, as in the old popular theater. To obtain this identification, Jewison and Ransohoff prefer to general ideas the worship and the systematic seeking out of the expressive detail: the scene in which Steve McQueen takes a bath is there only to sacrifice to the private mythology of this actor, part of whose strength lies in his need to be *protected* by someone. He is thus, par excellence, the hero prisoner of his childhood, on whom the audience will take pity, if he loses; with whom it will rejoice, if he wins. In the same way, the sole gesture is enough to *signify* the character of the perverse Ann Margret; only one look at his wife, to indicate the cowardice of Karl Malden. The reign of archetypes rids the tale of all depth while conferring on it its universal authority. Thus the final game of poker, which lasts thirty-five minutes, polarizes an attention to the first degree, that the extreme schematism of the stake does not at all keep from being convincing. And the only fault of the *auteurs* results, maybe, from the mere fact of having drawn a conclusion, of having made of this game lost by McQueen the symbol of the sudden breaking of his line of fortune. It is true that the path that the film enters in its last half hour did not permit avoiding convention, that of success or failure; it is precisely at the moment when this cinema yields to the temptation of a theoretical idea that it ceases to seduce,

at the very moment when it lays claim to more noble seductions that it fails, very near the goal.

—Jean-Andre FIESCHI

From the paradox to the commonplace

QUAND LES ANGES TOMBENT
Polish short film in color of ROMAN POLANSKI. *Scenario:* Roman Polanski. *Cast:* Barbara Kwiatkowska, Jakub Goldberg, Roman Polanski. *Production:* 1959. *Distributor:* Argos Film. *Length:* 20 min.

"Where the danger is great, it is there that I exert myself."—Malherbe.

Very strange enterprise, that of Roman Polanski: shooting this short film at the age when, if he wishes to express himself — and here assuredly it is a question only of that — the young *auteur* thinks only of contributing his short experience. Very strange, for he, Polanski, chooses to approach the subject of which, in a sense, he knows nothing: old age, the flow of time, the mixed sweetness and bitterness of heaped up memories. He substitutes for the constitutive "here from which the thing is seen" of our point of view, a "there from which it will, maybe, be seen" that forbids him all recourse to the lived. Unless the relation that we maintain with memories be identically the same; unless the relation that we maintain with death, necessarily imaginary and imagined, not be a function of the greater or less nearness of the date it will fall due.

But, at the start, here everything leads one to think the contrary. Not satisfied, indeed, with the initial wager, Polanski chooses in addition the most aberrant situation (alternation of the memories and of the image of an old lady seated watching over a street urinal) and the most perilous treatment (tinted film for the present; in color, for the memories), as if his only purpose were, by choosing to treat what *a priori* fits him least, in the least adequate manner possible, to prove at the very first (and there it was a question of an end-of-studies exercise) that he is able to do everything. And when Polanski is surprised at not being recognized as mad by psychiatrists, when, however, he thinks only of cinema, and manifestly his films are beautiful, he forgets that his unreason is, maybe, nothing other than his unshakable will to film, and, more precisely, to prove at each film, that in cinema he can do *everything*.

If, from that time, it is difficult to speak at length about his films, I hold this difficulty as significant of their value. By whatever aspect one approaches *Quand les anges tombent*, *Amsterdam*, or *Repulsion*, no roughness presents itself proper to aid the commentary, unless on false tracks. Set aside a climate in which the morbid comes to relay the

pleasant, and on which it is permissible to criticize him (for my part, I hear in it a rather desperate accent), every attempt at analysis is doomed to failure, for the knowledge that we have of the later works of Polanski would belie it. So that in trying to build on a truth concerning an *auteur* who leads us from surprise to surprise, we must seek out a constant for ourselves in his very proceeding.

Now, the impulse given this creative proceeding seems to come, not from some imperious decree of the sensibility, but from the purpose, consciously taken upon oneself, of confronting the major difficulties. If the speech that goes thus to clear for itself the most torturous of paths says no word, it is that, when all has been taken into account, it has for its mission only to make understood the danger incurred by it, the rarity of its hazardous enterprise. At each moment Polanski compels us to find the work skillful before all, and when emotion might win us, the artisan hastens to make us escape it, with the purpose of bringing our attention back to the admirable mechanism that he has created. That is why what stirs one in *Quand les anges tombent* is not so much the major theme of life as derisory situation, the red around legs amputated by shrapnel, or the smile of Barbara Lass giving herself to a hussar while a river nearby flows tirelessly, it is not so much that, as the act itself by which Polanski unprimes these images of their emotional charge, as if to remove from life its sap, illusory since condemned, and, sardonic simulator, to replace it by a coloring à la Borowczyk, whose animation (as for example in *Le Sentiment récompensé* that one can see again at this time) dedicates movement only very provisionally to that which is dedicated to an irremediable immobility, to death. Mistrust then, before this little masterwork which will willingly make itself seem only a baroque effusion, approaching, with a surprising lyricism, major themes that are in fact only the farces to which the *auteur* of *Repulsion* already gives himself. But, from the striking situations from which he starts Polanski leads us to generalities, flat from not being moving. There remains at the end of the journey the route that he has had us take, and at whose caprice have appeared, disguised, in a strange and discordant fashion, the metamorphoses (and it is there that the deep baroque of Polanski lies) of what is, maybe, only an essential phantasm: a character isolated in one way or another, heading in a poisoned air towards the black hole. No doubt, Polanski racks his brains that that be situated on the level of play. No doubt, he jests. But stuffed with intentional details, the jesting becomes from film to film more significant, and the play disquiets more and more those who, as if in spite of themselves, have participated in it, have taught themselves at it.

Therefore, the vigor and impropriety with which *Quand les anges tombent* forces attention and wins adherence are no strangers to the fact that, in leading

us thus from the most artificial fantastic to what is reality itself, our relation to death, the film takes, from the paradox to the commonplace, a road that one

believed proper to thought, and that thought finds itself, not without amazement, called on to share with the loftiest of poetries. Jacques BONTEMPS

Paris Openings

10 French films

L'amour avec des si . . . film of Claude Lelouch, with Janine Magnan, Guy Mairesse, Richard Saintbris, France Noelle, Franval, Joëlle Picaud, 1963.—A galosh, a *gavroche*, street urchin, tortuous-eyed, who would believe himself the Jeanne d'Arc of French cinema, except that instead of hearing voices he sees images: they realize the most surprising portrait-in-hollow of their *auteur* that cinema could make one dream of. The end of the end of the subjective cinema: when the camera looks at itself. Lelouch, or transparency without the slightest lucidity.—J.-L. C.

Angélique et le Roy, film in scope and color of Bernard Borderie, with Michèle Mercier, Robert Hossein, Jean Rochefort, Claude Giraud, Jacques Toja, Jean Parédès, Sami Frey.—Borderie has been right to believe in the virtues of stubbornness, since the last panel of his *Angélique* triptych is the best as well; not because of the return of Peyrac, but thanks to the introduction of Sami Frey as oriental prince, digressing on the impostures of Sartrean freedom in the course of a brisk flagellation scene. There is, too, a pleasant little black Mass; but that breaks off short by fault of the imbecile sentimentality of Michèle Mercier, whom one could have believed more inured to the delights of voyeurism. But let us not ask too much. Apart from these short incursions in the direction of a perversity that acknowledges itself more frankly than in the earlier episodes, the illustration is still rather flat. By pillaging Racine and Saint-Simon, Pascal Jardin improves. So let us encourage the pursuit of this gallant serial, still a little too *Amours célèbres* and not enough *Dolmancé*, no doubt, but, it seems, all the same on the point of finding its real way. It is never too late to do right.—J.-A. F.

A nous deux Paris, film of Jean-Jacques Viéne, with Michel Subor, Olivier Despax, Claire Duhamel, Renaud Mary, Micheline Dax.—On a theme borrowed from *Colonel Chabert*, Viéne proposes to cube Balzac, mixing into the Rubempré and Rastignac affairs. That leads him below zero. Arrivism in the press and in finance today obey more subtle laws than those of the literature of the heart. Blondin and Guimard, authors of the original scenario, must know something about it.—M. M.

Les Combinards, film of Jean-Claude Roy, with Darry Cowl, Michel Serrault, Agnès Spaak, Jane Sourza, Annette Poivre, Noël Roquevert.—Around swindles staged by a matrimonial agency, turn some short sketches, linked with a confusing unconstraint. The stupidest of directors not being able to obtain such a degree of technical botching and of nullity, one guesses behind this sabotage the maleficent presence of an intellectual priding himself on cynicism. Except for acute masochism, it is useless to encourage the commercial mystifications of this *Pied Nickelé* new genre.—M. M.

Espions à l'affût, film of Max Pecas, with Jean Vinci, Jean Claudio, Anna Gael, Claudine Coster.—Pecas digresses somewhat in a story of diamond theft; which contrasts with the beautiful rigor of the scenes between the hero and the two sisters who share his heart. There the great Max finds again the hieratism that has always characterized his *mises en scène* and his monothematic inspiration.—A. J.

Galia, film of Georges Lautner, with Mireille Darc, Françoise Prévost, Venantino Venantini, François Chaumette, Jacques Riberolles. — That *Lautner* abandons stories of *barbouzes* at the moment when people are talking about them the most — that at least proves his disinterestedness. So here is a film which carries the enigmatic first name of Galia, and whose subject becomes confused with the heroine who equally carries it — an unaware little child woman. But Darc, animal in freedom, put in the cage of a para-detective scenario, no worse than another, but all the same — there is what defines the merits and limitations of the film. The merits: on one hand, the total absence of cynicism or immoralism, demystifying or not; on the other, some scenes well come to mind, well brought on, well carried forward. Limitations: the scenario-support is too constructed or not enough. Galia is too free or not free enough. In short, Lautner continues to be the *cinéaste* of a few beautiful flashes (their best harmonization up to now is no doubt that of *Tontons flingueurs*), for want, maybe, of having found the ideal scenarist-accomplice.—M. D.

Les Malabars sont au "parfum." film of Guy Lefranc, with Roger Pierre, Jean-Marc Thibault, Darry Cowl, Henri Salvador, Francis Blanche, Sophie Agacinski, Christiane Minazzoli. — To say always the same thing is not very funny, but what else to do, since people

always offer us the same film? What to think of Roger Pierre and Jean-Marc Thibault, except that they are better in the Music Hall; of Darry Cowl, who himself is not always funny; of Minazzoli, if not of an old *chanson* of Gainsbourg in which he murmurs: "There is no need to talk like a street walker." The *chanson* is called *Ce Mortel Ennuie* (*This Deadly Boredom*).—A. J.

Tant qu'on a la santé, film of Pierre Etaix, with Pierre Etaix, Alain Janey, Denise Peronne, Simone Fonder, Sabine Sun, Vera Valmont.—Nobody wants to be nasty with Etaix, who is so nice, and who can even achieve a good film on occasion. So let us say that this time the occasion has not presented itself, far from it. To the extent that *Yoyo* was *soigné* and coherent, this film is botched, muddled, gloomy and ugly. It is not for all that Mack Sennett, but, alas, what we flee the most in a certain *comique* specifically French, on a base of sinister notations, and of shabby little points against the throes of modern life — camping and so on . . . Lord, how sad is a clown who spins out his material: the announcement strip of *Yoyo* was funny because it was an announcement strip, but replaced entire here as original episode of the film, it acknowledges its weakness and its limits. The scene of satire on advertising takes up again in shameless manner a principle totally used up in *Une femme mariée* and *Pierrot le fou*, and without adding the slightest suspicion of inspiration. What use to pursue the catalog of failures of a film that is only a series of defeats? It is more charitable to arrange to meet Etaix again under better skies while making (at least) a good hundred wishes for him.—J.-A. F.

Une balle au coeur, film in color of Jean-Daniel Pollet.—See *critique* in a future issue.

La Vie de château, film of Jean-Paul Rappeneau, with Catherine Deneuve, Pierre Brasseur, Philippe Noiret, Henri Garcin, Mary Marquet, Carlos Thompson, Marc Dudicourt, Donald O'Brien, Robert Moor. — The originality of the scenario mixing little wars and great on a background of lacework, winking a very French eye towards subtleties à la Clair and accepted ideas after Marivaux, has as equal only the supreme grace of the form, yielding in ravishing highly wrought photographs the evolutions just a trifle long, of Catherine Deneuve as elegant as a fashion engraving, its misty *désabillé* on a paling tonality

the whole brought out by the ample harmonies struck by Michel Legrand. One must see it to believe it, and to believe, with that same seeing, in the unanimous award of the Delluc. The dialogues are alert and striking, changing color between the lips of the *chatelain* and the coarse mouth of the *gaillard* Brasseur. It is accompanied with just such an abundance of ideas that the first work of a true *auteur* always appears.—A. T.

15 American films

After Mein Kampf (*Sadisme S. S.*), film of Ralph Porter, 1959. — Improbable hodgepodge of newsreel strips, of stock shots, of sequences filmed in a New York style and of animated cartoons. The high points: a cartoon tending to prove that Hitler was a Jew, and amazing extracts from *Little American* (De Mille — 1917) — in them one makes out Mary Pickford in the course of the shipwreck of the *Veritania*. Let us point out to admirers of de Mille that these shots are found in the first two reels of the film.—P. B.

Andy (*Andy*), film of Richard C. Sarafian, with Norman Alden, Tamara Daykarhanova, Zvee Scooler, Mervyn Vee.—See, in French *Cabiers* 166-7, *Contingent 65 1A* (Moulet), page 62—The New York day and night of a mentally retarded 45 year old. His old parents want to shut him in an asylum. In the morning, they satisfy themselves with changing their mind and their apartment. Of a film so ugly, boring, repugnant, one can say anything. That the defense of those associated with it, pushed to dotage, pleads for goodness and for love against an inhuman society, and so on. Through this bombastic imposition, one guesses with terror the idea Americans conceive of an "intelligent" cinema, and one understands better the success in New York of *Les Dimanches de Ville-d'Avray* (*Sundays and Cybele*), which at least had the merit of pleading for pedophilia. What is most serious is that a production so stupid and retrograde passes for Vigo with the old pillars of criticism, and for the fine point of the *nouvelle vague* with the distributors. It could have been filmed, with two other films, among which was *Wild Seed*, and in so expensive a manner, only with a guarantee of distribution from the Universal firm. The failure of *Andy* ought not to stop so interesting an initiative. If a mistake has been made, it rests on the talent scouts of Universal. A film like *Andy* is not even a caricature of the *Nouvelle Vague*.—M. M.

Blindfold (*Lax Yeux bandés*), film in scope and in color of Philip Dunne, with Claudia Cardinale, Rock Hudson, Jack Warden, Guy Stockwell, Brad Dexter. — It begins as a fairly banal

detective play, to cross very rapidly the limits of the most unbridled far-fetched, with the introduction of a theme relatively new, and rich in prolongations: the world black market in gray matter. In fact, a band of gangsters works in the kidnapping of atomic scientists and puts the latter up for auction. Dunne runs out of breath following the *chassé-croisé* of the true and the false detectives, and one constantly expects that Rock Hudson, more tame than ever, will wake up abruptly in his bed, thus revealing the oniric character of his epic. In short, the film would be rather diverting if the authors had known how to lend some consistency to the improbability, which is not the case. Everything is botched, including the photography of Joseph McDonald. Let us point out, however, that, if one goes to see the film, it would be a mistake to go out before the end.—J.-A. F.

The Cincinnati Kid (*Le Kid de Cincinnati*).—See critique in this issue.

The Courtship of Eddie's Father (*Il faut marier papa*). — See critique in French *Cabiers* 176.

Dingaka (*Dingaka le sorcier*), film in color of Jamie Uys, with Stanley Baker, Juliet Prowse, Ken Gampu, Siegfried Mynhardt, John Sithebe, Paul Makgoba, Flora Motauny. — The slave trade still pays, if one must believe Joe Levine and Stanley Baker, who are on their third or fourth "African" film. We are not against insolent exoticism, and even in South Africa it should be possible to see something other than what Rogosin shows of it. But this *Dingaka* is an imposter. One expects *Tarzan*, and *Les Plaideurs* appear. Three quarters of the film unfolds at Johannesburg between the walls of a prison and of a law court, and scarcely among those marvelous backward tribes in which everyone speaks excellent English. Set aside the pleasure of seeing the "savages" learn to cross streets or use the telephone, the masterpiece of M. Uys spreads the deadly boredom that is a performance in the cinema of the unreal.—M. M.

Goldstein (*Goldstein*). — See critique in a future issue.

Savage Sam (*Sam l'intrépide*), film in color of Norman Tokar, with Brian Keith, Tony Kirk, Kevin Corcoran, Dewey Martin, 1963. — Disney production whence a great importance accorded to children and to animals. But the lack of pretension of the script and some efficacy of the *mise en scène* make the result honorable. Detail to be savored: the brat kidnapped by the Indians is as insupportable to his kidnapers as the hero of *Ransom of Red Chief* of O. Henry.—P. B.

Son of Gunfighter (*Fils d'un hors-la-loi*), film in scope and in color of Paul Landres, with Russ Tamblyn, Kieron Moore, Maria Granada, James Philbrook, Fernando Rey. That the Spanish,

Italian and German false westerns suffer from a deficiency of directors, we all agree, but let us recognize as well that it is not the activity of Paul Landres (or of piece workers of the same order) that will save these sub-products.—P. B.

Incident at Phantom Hill (*San foi ni loi*), film in color of Earl Bellamy, with Robert Fuller, Dan Duryea, Jocelyn Lane, Tom Simcox, Linden Childs, Claude Akins, Noah Berry. — Former seedling nursery of the western B series, Universal for once finds again its vocation of the past, and Earl Bellamy (former assistant of Cukor, Ray, Ophuls and Sirk) seems to walk briskly in the footprints of Boetticher and Bartlett. But yet more maybe than to Bellamy, it is to Frank Nugent, one of whose last scenarios this is, that the film owes a rigor and an efficacy rather rare at this time. The introduction of a very beautiful feminine character, Memphis (the captivating Jocelyn Lane), and a gallery of supernumeraries particularly happily come to mind make the film very agreeable to follow. As to the ideas of the script, dear to the B series, they are very unusual, therefore exciting: thus one learns how in complete desert, without water, one can clake one's thirst with stones. To mark with a white stone.—P. B.

The Naked Kiss, ex-*The Iron Kiss* (*Police spéciale*). — See, in French *Cabiers* 150-1, American Report (Fuller), p. 42; 153, *Petit Journal* (Noames), p. 55; 157, *Petit Journal* (Fuller), p. 41; and critique in this issue.

Sands of Kalabari (*Les Sables du Kalabari*), film in scope and in color of Cy Endfield, with Stanley Baker, Stuart Whitman, Susannah York, Harry Andrews. — Another South African adventure of the Joe Levine — Stanley Baker team. An airplane crashes down in the desert. In the struggle for life, each conscience (of the survivors) pursues then the death of the other. The conscience that has a gun (Stuart Whitman) is obviously at an advantage; so to it the honor of trussing up Susannah York. But this is not, in spite of appearances, a remake of the *Saga d'Anataban*. Whitman is the dirty rascal; he will be punished. Tourist pleasures of the desert: giant lizards, tortoises, scorpions, plus some carnivorous monkeys amiably directed. The script imparts to them the role of Atrides, of which they acquit themselves as well as any actor of Cacoyannis. Once more Stanley Baker assumes an incredible masochism, but he is without the whip of Losey of note, last, that it is a matter of one of those works wholly contained in its announcement strip; the development of the scenes and the duration of the plot add precisely nothing to the seeing of fifteen well chosen shots.—J.-A. F.

The Great Race (*La Grande Course autour du monde*). See, in our issue number 3, *Interview with Blake Ed-*

wards, page 20, and critique (Daney), page 26.

The Sound of Music (La Mélodie du bonheur), film in color of Todd-AO 70 mm and in color of Robert Wise, with Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, Eleanor Parker, Richard Haydn, Peggy Wood, Charmain Carr, Heather Menzies, Nicholas Hammond. — At the start the coarse camera of Wise flies over the green pasture lands of Austria as it did, a little more to the west, of Manhattan. Then one can believe, a few moments still, that *le bonheur* is in the meadow where Julie Andrews, very agreeably, frisks about. Then the convent scene introduces some grave suspicions, that what follows comes to confirm beyond our blackest anticipations: after the introduction of the unnameable Trapp family in full force, one can no longer believe anything at all, barely endure, if one has the strength, the most nauseating maelstrom of marshmallow and stupidity that has devastated the screens for a long time. Mary Poppins is far from this Salzburg without Mozart, that Blake Edwards, in *The Great Race*, at least animates with his black drawings. *Mary Poppins* and *The Great Race* are incontestably films "to see"; *The Sound of Music* would justify the addition to the council of ten a sixth evaluation: *à ne voir sous aucun prétexte* (not to see under any pretext).—J.-A. F.

The War Lord (Le Seigneur de la guerre), film in scope and in color of Franklin Schaffner, with Charlton Heston, Richard Boone, Rosemary Forsyth, Maurice Evans, Guy Stockwell. — Original scenario (although adapted from a play), well tied up, and directed, not very well but directed, by the *auteur* of the interesting (alike for the scenario) *Best Man*. It is the life of a little group of Saxon men at arms in fallow Normandy of the tenth century, struggling against a barbarian invasion started by a quarrel over a girl (snatched from her tribe by the chief of the occupants). One has so little seen in the cinema the proto-historical movements from which our Occident sprang, that one must mark the attempt simply for that. So curious children will be able to see the ancient confrontations between civilization and barbarism, between indigenous peoples and others, between paganism and Christianity (subject already evoked by the Welles of *Macbeth*, with the help of the pitchfork and of the cross); notice the care brought to some details (houses copied on the model of ancient Ireland); ponder over the pagan festival (in which they have, moreover, slightly extrapolated with respect to some masks), and over that sacred tree that was to survive for a long time in our countryside (see Jeanne d'Arc), under the name *arbre aux fées*. The origin of the *jus primæ noctis* is not badly evoked either (illustrated by a controversial theory, but what theory is not?), in short: the film

is exciting — if one is excitable. One is, of course, light years from the flamboyant exploitation that Welles made of details as beautiful and as thin as the one that I mentioned, but one must not think about that if one wishes to take some pleasure in this film. And if one wishes to, one can.—M. D.

4 English films

A King's Story (Histoire d'un roi), film in color of Harry Booth, with the Duke of Windsor. — Misfortune having chosen that the Duke of Windsor himself supervise the enterprise, the *auteurs* have carefully refused to envisage the subject from the only interesting point of view, that of politics. Extricated from its original frame, treated with geniality (when one would have hoped for at least some cynicism. . . .) History has been reduced to one of those news items that are the delight of women journalists.—P. B.

The Face of Fu Manchu (Le Masque du Fu-Manchu), film in scope and in color of Don Sharp, with Christopher Lee, Nigel Green, Joachim Fuchsberger, Karin Dor, James Robertson Justice. — From the first sequence one executes a false Fu Manchu, but is the one who immediately follows him more true? One can have doubts. The famous hero of Rohmer (Sax) gains nothing by this resurrection in which the great myths are humiliated once more by surrounding jobbery. Frightful colors and penury of ideas; the only yellow peril is that of the photography, which wearies eyesight dangerously. Besides, the specialization in the fantastic of an actor like Christopher Lee seems to me an aberration; that the monster of Frankenstein, Count Dracula and Fu Manchu have the same sinister elongated face, scarcely favors the journey to the other side of appearances. An entire scene (the fatal sleepiness of the little town) is pilfered in cold blood, in the management and disposition of effects, from *Village of the Damned* of Wolf Rilla. The personal additions of Don Sharp are confined to absolute transparency. A series is obviously announced.—J.-A. F.

The Girl Hunter (Solo pour une blonde), film in scope of Roy Rowland, with Mickey Spillane, Shirley Eaton, Lloyd Nolan, 1963. — The grand idea, no doubt the only one, rests on having Mickey Spillane incarnate Mike Hammer, the private fruit of his imagination and of his pen. With his massive silhouette, his surly and rather obtuse air, he imparts to him a surprising credibility. To such a point that, the unintelligibility of the plot assisting, one begins to try to justify the manifest incapacity of Roy Rowland by attributing to it a possible subject that would have the absurd for theme. A brawl too de-

ficent by far, and Shirley Eaton, lead us back fortunately quickly to wiser intuitions. That does not keep it from being almost touching; one must see the creation of Mickey Spillane.—J. B.

What's New, Pussycat? (Quoi de neuf, Pussycat?) — See the critique of *Mardore* in our number 2, page 75.

4 Italian films

Colorado Charlie (La Loi de l'Ouest), film in color of Robert Johnson (Roberto Mauri), with Jack Berthier, Barbara Hudson, Roberto Lorenzon, Andrew Ray, Charlie Lawrence. — A sheriff, champion of the Colt but determined no longer to kill, takes refuge, with his Quaker wife, in a little town where the carrying of firearms is prohibited. But an outlaw bent on revenge searches him out there. The within-the-law will prove his courage, but, not having been able to wait, we do not know how.—J.-P. B.

La frusta e il corpo (Le Corps et le jouet), film in color of John M. Old (Mario Bava), with Daliah Lavi, Isli Oberon, Harriet White, Dean Ardow, Alan Collins, Jacques Herlin, 1963. — The love of Kurt (Christopher Lee) and of Vcvenka (Daliah Lavi) can be fulfilled only whip in hand, flooded with wind and spray; they are simple souls. And so it is only the taste of Eva for a hideous "poetic" jumble, and an amalgam of work-out forms, that tint this pure idyll with sado-masochism and with necrophilia. From then on it can no longer address itself except to souls cinematographically perverted.—J. B.

Le Gladiateur magnifique, film in scope and in color of Alphonso Brescia, with Mark Forest—Hercules saves Velida, and then her father, the emperor Gallien, from the snares and plots of the enemy Juddo. Once more, mythology sacked and cinema spoofed.—J.-P. B.

La montagna di luce (L'Homme du Bengale), film in scope and in color by Umberto Lenzi, with Richard Harrison, Luciana Gill, Wilbert Bradley, Daniele Vargas, Andrea Scotti, Nerio Bernardi, Nazzareno Zamperla. — This genre of film suffers ordinarily from a scenario often botched; or from the actors (at present being reeducated after the period of the peplum); or from direction without ideas. This one combines all these inadequacies, but, to its credit, let us point out the absence of the tiger, which moreover would have nothing to do here.—A. J.

2 Japanese films

Ataragon, film of Shiro Honda, with Tadao Takashima, Ken Hehara. — *The Mus*, a kind of Nipponese Atlanteans former masters of the world, undertak-

reconquering their lost empire. They will fail, on account of the Ataragon, flying submarine with immense destructive capacities. There are, moreover, a dragon, clearly tired; a cruel queen in a red wig; chilling rays; and beautiful jets of steam. As to sentiments, paternal fibre is teased at great length, to avoid the worst. As to *maquettes*, it is the customary work of Honda. Sometimes the intrinsic ugliness of the photography, added to that of the things shown, lets break through one of the most undefinable fascinations, result of the attained absolute in infantile hideousness.—J.-A. F.

Onibaba (Onibaba), film in scope of Kaneto Shindo, with Nobuko Otawa, Jitsuko Yoshimura, Kei Sato, Taiji Tonoyama, Jukichi Uno.—See, in French *Cabiers* number 168, *Cannes* (Fieschi), page 68 — One can dream a long time in the hollow of the breasts of the young murderess, or laugh at the grimaces of the bandits of the night. Just as *The Island* was that sham of the poetic *Onibaba* is that sham of the grotesque that is to push excess a little too near its success. Only efficacious device ever so little: a big hole.—J.-L. C.

1 German film

Piccadilly null Ubr zwölf, (*Piccadilly, minuit 12*), film in scope of Rudolf Zehetgruber, with Helmut Wildt, Halls Lothar, Klaus Kinski. — New incursion into the London lower depth . . . But here the ugliness of the interpretation ends in giving the film a strange character of authenticity, enlivened sometimes by a musty smell of sadism (the whip with the steel head, compromise between Sade and Chase).—J.-P. B.

La Carça de la policia montada (La Charge des tuniques rouges), film in color of Raymond Torrado, with Frank Latimore, Alan Scott, 1964. In a fort besieged by the "Red beavers," the commandant, his fiancée, and her lover. For an ending, the commandant, having saved the lover — who has covered himself with glory — recovers his fiancée. Exaltation of courage and of duty passing before love. Asinine, debasing, ugly, short, francist.—J.-P. B.

1 Soviet film

Fureur, film in 70 mm and in color of N. Ilinski, with E. Mateev, Margarita Volodina. — Belongs to the films that it is preferable to see by arriving in the middle of the showing. As long as one does not know what it is about, it is bearable with a wisp of interest. Afterwards, at the start, everything is spoiled: thematically, one is in the realm of Tchouckrai.—A. J.

1 Czechoslovakian film

Lasky Jedne Playovlasky (Les Amours d'une Blonde). See, in French *Cabiers* number 171, *Venise* (Fieschi-Téchiné), page 48; number 174, *Le Sourire de Prague* (Téchiné) and *Entretien Forman*, page 62; number 176, *critique* (Collet), page 74.

These notes were drawn up by Jean-Pierre Biesse, Jacques Pontemps, Partick Brion, Jean-Louis Comolli, Michel Delahaye, Jean-André Fieschi, Albert Juross, Michel Mardore and André Téchiné.



Vincente Minnelli: *The Courtship Of Eddie's Father*, Ronny Howard, Glenn Ford.

N. Y. Openings

Inside Daisy Clover, American, film in color and scope of Robert Mulligan, with Natalie Wood, Christopher Plummer, Ruth Gordon, Roddy McDowall.

The Chase, American, film in color and scope of Arthur Penn, with Marlon Brando, Jane Fonda, Angie Dickinson, James Fox.

Father Of A Soldier, Russian, film of Rezo Chkeidze, with Serge Zakhariadze, Keta Bachorishvili, Vladimir Privaltsev.

Lord Love A Duck, American, film of George Axelrod, with Tuesday Weld, Roddy McDowall, Ruth Gordon, Lola Albright.

The Last Chapter, American, documentary of Benjamin and Lawrence Rothman, with narration by Theodore Bikel.

Promise Her Anything, American film in color of Arthur Hiller, with Leslie Caron, Warren Beatty, Hermione Gingold, Bob Cummings.

Dr. Goldfoot And The Bikini Ma-

chine, American, film in color and scope of Norman Taurog, with Vincent Price, Susan Hart, Frankie Avalon, Fred Clark.

Made In Paris, American, film in color and scope of Boris Sagal, with Ann-Margret, Chad Everett, Louis Jourdan, Edie Adams.

Impossible On Saturday, French-Israeli, film of Alex Joffe, with Robert Hirsh, Dahlia Friedland, Mischa Asherov, Teddy Bilis.

The Flight Of The Phoenix, American, film in color of Robert Aldrich, with James Stewart, Hardy Kruger, Peter Finch, Richard Attenborough.

Otello, British, film in color and scope of Stuart Burge, with Laurence Olivier, Maggie Smith, Frank Findlay, Joyce Redman.

Eroica, Polish, film of Andrzej Munk, with Edward Dziewonski, Barbara Polomska, Ignacy Machowski.

Obayo, Japanese, film in color of Yasujiro Ozu, with Kunika Miyake, Chishu Ryu, Koji Shidara.

Italiano Brava Gente, Italian, film of Giuseppe De Santis, with Arthur Kennedy, Peter Falk, Tatyana Samoilova, Raffaele Pisu.

Male Companion, French, film in color of Philippe DeBroca, with Jean-Pierre Cassel, Catherine Deneuve, Annie Girardot, Irina Demick.

Ten Little Indians, American, film in scope of George Pollock, with Hugh O'Brian, Fabian, Leo Genn, Daliah Lavi.

Mozambique, American, film in color and scope of Robert Lynn, with Steve Cochran, Hildegard Neff, Vivi Bach, Paul Hubschmid.

The Gospel According To St. Matthew, Italian, film of Pier Paolo Pasolini, with Enrique Irazoqui, Margherita Caruso, Susanna Pasolini.

Kid Rodello, American, film of Richard Carlson, with Don Murray, Janet Leigh, Broderick Crawford, Richard Carlson.

The Mermaid, Chinese, film in color and scope of Kao Li.

Devils Of Darkness, British, film in color of Lance Comfort, with William Sylvester, Hubert Noel, Tracy Reed, Carole Gray.

The Curse Of The Fly, American, film of Don Sharp, with Brian Donlevy, George Baker, Carole Gray, Michael Graham.

Rope Of Flesh, American, film of Russ Meyers, with Lorna Maitland.

Bad Girls And Evil Men, American, film of Doris Wishman, with Gigi Danelene.

The Merry Wives Of Windsor, Czechoslovakian, film in color of George Tressler, with Norman Foster, Colette Boky, Mildred Miller, Igor Gorin.

Pussycat Alley, British, film of Wolf Rilla, with Sylvia Sims, Edward Judd, June Ritchie, William Hartnell.

18 In The Sun, Italian, film in color and scope of Camillo Mastrocinque, with Catherine Spaak, Lisa Gastoni, Gianni Garko, Spiros Focas.

Editor's Eyrie

Andrew Sarris

I wrote in the first issue of *Cabiers du Cinema in English* that I would let *Cabiers* speak for itself. Quite frankly, I felt that passivity was the better part of discretion. The English-speaking world, or at least that part of it that professes a serious interest in films, was yet to be heard from, and I did not wish to anticipate responses with a premature debate on *Cabiers* policy. Now that Jerry Lewis has dumped *The Family Jewels* in our lap, the pretext has presented itself for a dialogue with the French editors and critics of the parent publication. However, if I choose at this point to take a stand against Jerry Lewis, I do so with certain preliminary qualifications. First, unlike some of our readers, I think Jerry Lewis is worth discussing. The principle involved in this instance is one of total cinema. What I hope CdCIE will contribute to the American film scene is an ever expanding vision of the cinema as far as the eye of the beholder can see. I hope also to demonstrate to English-speaking skeptics that *Cabiers* has never been as monomaniacal as its opponents have alleged. It might be noted that the first three issues of CdCIE tend to take the cinema in its totality rather than restrict themselves to that portion prescribed by the *politique*. I don't particularly like Satyajit Ray, but enough people I respect respect him to justify his inclusion. Some people would like the magazine to be more solemn; some would like it to be more silly. I hope the proper mixture of solemn-silly will produce serious, and that the common context of Busby Berkeley and Luchino Visconti will become self-evident.

Secondly, Jerry Lewis cannot be considered an exclusively Cahierist cult figure. Lewis seems to be generally popular in France, and his strongest champions are to be found on the staff of *Positif*, a publication perpetually at war with *Cabiers*. (We will not speak here of a *Positif* critic who so resembles Jerry Lewis that hero-worship verges on narcissism.) Therefore, there are many arguments cited for Jerry Lewis that are not represented in this issue of *Cabiers*. The fact remains that *Family Jewels* ended up eighth on the composite *Cabiers* ten-best list, and Lewis has been blessed with Cahierist paradoxes and rationalizations denied to merely mortal metteurs on scene like Blake Edwards and Clive Donner. Serge Daney's elaborate analysis of the Edwardian cartoon fallacy in *The Great Race* would seem to pertain more appropriately to Jerry Lewis and his mentor, Frank Tashlin. It was Tashlin, after all, who started out as a cartoonist, not Edwards, and

if anything distinguishes the Edwardian style, it is a cool, TV deadpan, verbal wit. I can think of a dozen Tashlin-Lewis gags that consist of contorting the human body into positions of linear distortion beyond muscular reality. The basic Edwards gag on the contrary denies its heroes the ability to transcend their physical limitations. Even when the Edwards characters wear animal masks, they retain their poise and sang-froid. Recall the climax of *The Pink Panther*, and compare it with the much admired (by the French) sequence in *The Patsy* where Hans Conried's hammy music teacher demolishes a room and inverts Jerry Lewis' Valentino eyebrows through the seismic acoustics of singing scales. Which of those two sequences owes more to the cartoon? The disinterested observer can make his own choice. Lest this point be misconstrued as unmotivated rationalization, let me add that I think *The Pink Panther*, *A Shot in the Dark* and *The Great Race* are funnier than all the Lewis-Tashlin movies put together, but that judgment leads to more complex considerations.

I get the impression that *Cabiers'* critics see more in Lewis than mere comedy/ha-ha, and that therefore the complaint that Lewis does not get all that many laughs is somewhat beside the point. In his admirable article in *The New York Times Sunday Magazine* on the Lewis cult in France, Hollis Alpert mentions some of the French retorts to Lewis being out of fashion in America. In addition to the usual argument about Americans being obtuse when it comes to analyzing their own art, there is the more cogent ploy about comedians and clowns being culturally underrated in their own time and place. Look at Chaplin, Keaton, Laurel & Hardy etc., the argument goes. How valid is this argument? Somewhat. Yet look at Wheeler and Woolsey and The Ritz Brothers. They look even worse in retrospect than they did at the time. However, until movies came along, clowns and comedians lacked any medium which could preserve their performances. There were legends and traditions, but no objective way of checking up on them, and there is consequently very little verifiable classical criticism on performers. Who knows for sure how good David Garrick was, or how adept Shakespeare's clowns? We of the cinema have to make up our own criteria as we go along, and our task is not made easier by the proliferation of categories. Jerry Lewis, for example, is not judged merely as a comic performer but as a comic creator. Cocteau is cited in this issue, and Moliere cannot be far behind.

Obviously an entire book could be devoted to just a few of the implications of this subject, and a book is not my intention at this time. I merely want to throw out some ideas on the subject and let these ideas suggest their own future development.

1. Jerry Lewis has become conscious, even self-conscious about his own art. The Pirandellian ending of *The Patsy* is proof enough of expanding ambitiousness. That the ending doesn't come off indicates that Lewis' aspiration now exceeds his ability.

2. There is a chasm between Lewis' verbal sophistication in nightclubs and sometimes on television and his simpering simple-mindedness on the screen. The problem of Lewis is thus similar to the problem of Danny Kaye in developing a screen character consistent with the character of a manic entertainer, a Golem no less of grotesque comic energy. It follows that Americans would be more conscious of this split in Lewis than the French would be. Similarly, the people in the front row of the Paramount spotted the moment that Danny Kaye was permanently corrupted by Royalty in the Palladium. It was that moment when Kaye reverently displayed Harry Lauder's walking stick. The wild boy from Brooklyn had gone posh, and that was the end of his frenzy and his timing. The Queen Mother had turned him into a national shrine.

3. The fact that Lewis lacks verbal wit on the screen doesn't particularly bother the French, who then patiently explain to us what we are missing in Sacha Guitry, which, in turn, is what they are missing in Preston Sturges, particularly in his *Paramount Period*.

4. It would be presumptuous of Americans to tell the French that Maurice Chevalier represents their national soul. Similarly, it is presumptuous to claim that Lewis' screen experiences represent something profound about America. If Lewis cannot make American audiences respond to his films, he is living on borrowed time appealing to the intellectual authority of the French.

5. Lewis appeals to unsophisticated audiences in the sticks and to ungentle audiences in the urban slums; he is bigger on 42nd Street, for example, than anyplace else in the city. Most urban reviewers limit even his most ambitious efforts to the most routine reviews, and the weekly and monthly reviewers barely acknowledge his existence. Little distinction is made between the films he or Tashlin directs and the potboilers turned out by Douglas and Taurog and Rich, etc. This is one argument for the

completeness of French criticism.

6. Throughout his screen career Lewis has played the innocent with themes of effeminacy and transvestism. During his partnership with Dean Martin, Lewis played the old Ginger Rogers role in a remake of *The Major and the Minor*, the old Carole Lombard role in a remake of *Nothing Sacred* and the old Betty Hutton role in a remake of *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek*. Only recently Lewis himself parodied one of the songs from *West Side Story* by beginning the first bars thus: "Maria, I know a guy named Maria." This kind of borscht-circuit hipsterism puts a different construction on the screen simpleton on which Lewis lavishes so much sentimentality with so much apparent affection. If he is not playing down to his audience, he is playing down to himself, and all for the dubious dividends

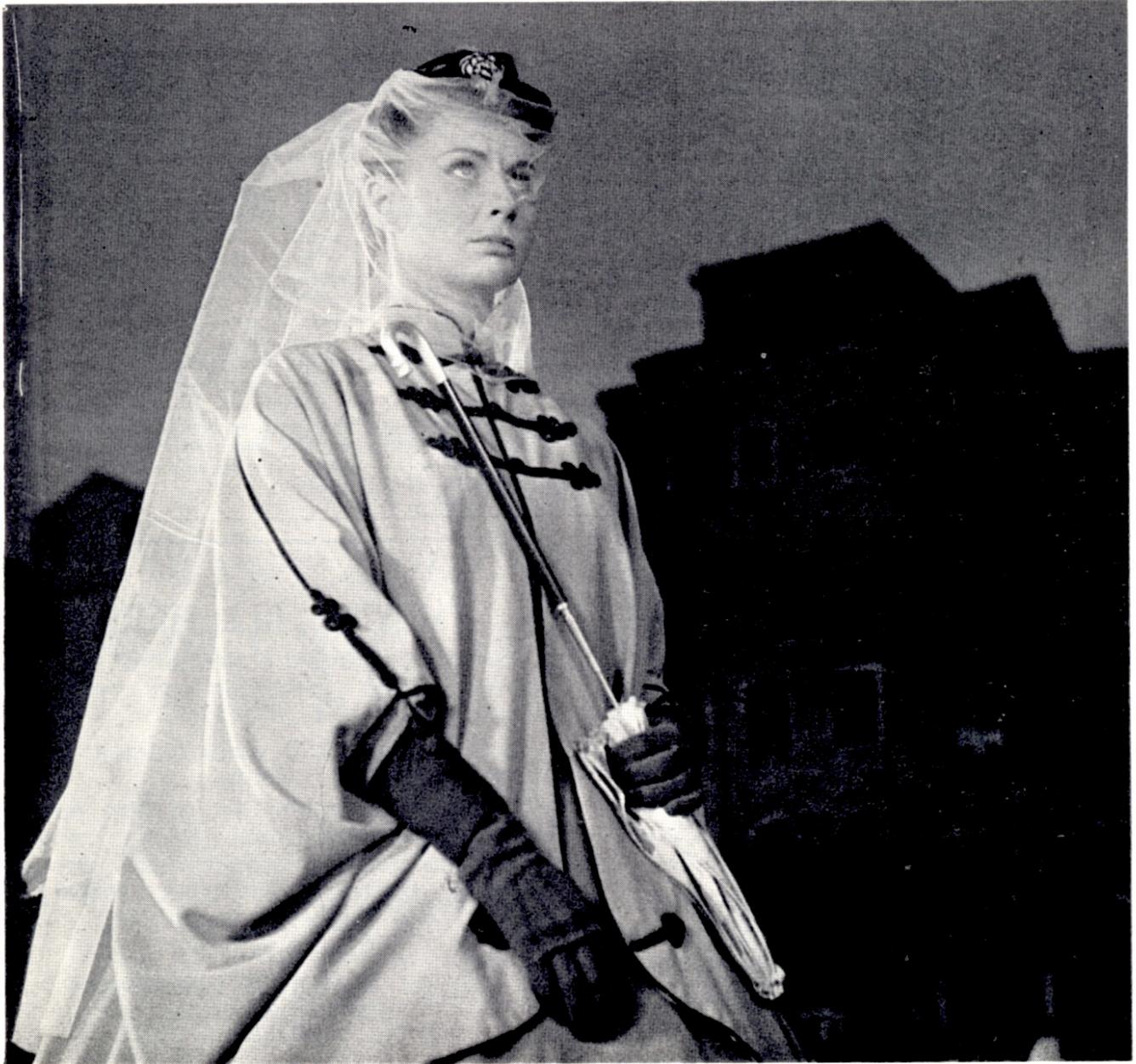
of "universality."

7. Martin and Lewis were something unique in comedy teams. Most comedy teams—The Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, even The Beatles—have a certain internal cohesion that unites them against the world outside. That is to say that members of a comedy team have more in common with each other than with anyone else. Martin and Lewis, at their best and that means not in any of their movies, had a marvelous tension between them. The great thing about them was their incomparable incompatibility, the persistent sexual hostility, the professional knowingness they shared about the cut-throat world they were in the process of conquering. I think of them as they were the night they chased Bob Hope and Bing Crosby off the stage. The atmosphere reeked with the odor

of rotting royalty being overthrown by the new Zanies, or the night they pretended to be thrown off the stage by Tony Martin and Joe Louis, and they were on top of the world. If *The Nutty Professor* is Jerry Lewis' best picture, it is largely because of the recreation of Dean Martin in the Hyde-like Buddy Love, and the subsequent rebirth of the Martin-Lewis tension. (*The Nutty Professor* was not handicapped by Victor Young's lovely melody for *The Uninvited* ("Stella by Starlight") nor by the starlit Stella Stevens the song seemed to caress.)

8. The argument about laughs is irrelevant because laughter is less decisive in this instance than love. The French critics love Jerry Lewis. Many Americans do not.

9. Lewis can be criticized for the weakness of his narrative bridges be-



A propos of nothing at all—Alida Valli in Luchino Visconti's *Senso*.

tween his big comedy sequences. *The Family Jewels* is badly acted throughout, but particularly in the setting-up scenes.

10. This brings up the question of the feature-length film as the proper vehicle for farce with continuous belly-laughs. The late James Agee commemorated the Chaplin one and two reelers in his classic essay on comedy. Rudi Blesch prefers the shorter Keaton features to the longer ones in his excellent biography of Buster. Laurel and Hardy were better in short features than long ones, and so the argument goes. Perhaps belly laughs are not enough to sustain a feature-length film. Screen farce, like screen pornography, may involve culturally embarrassing examinations of audience metabolism and endurance, examinations which may explain why modern audiences are seldom moved as emotionally as they think guiltily they ought to be by the five-act tragedies of Shakespeare. For Lewis, this may mean a renewed attention to plots, dialogue and, above all, grading.

11. When Lewis decides he has something to say, it comes out conformist, sentimental and banal. He was quite funny laughing at Hedda Hopper's hat in *The Patsy*, but then he has to go spoil it all by letting dear Hedda make a speech about the importance of being sincere in Hollywood. *Cabiers* should be as vigilant about conformism in Lewis as they are about conformism in Minnelli and Donner. The clown's speech in *The Family Jewels* might have been conceived in the mind of any smug super-patriot as a sermon on what showbiz folk owe dear old Uncle Sam. The point here is not Lewis' politics, but rather his sanctimoniousness. A John Ford can celebrate the bitter glories of established orders, but the man and the

message are one, and the style expresses the essential unity of what Ford is and what he says. Lewis' sentimentality is not only embarrassingly tinny in this admittedly sublime context. It is self-righteous as well.

12. Yet it is unfair to say that Jerry Lewis takes himself too seriously to pretend otherwise. Nor can the French be blamed for ruining him as a comedian. He had nowhere to go but up, and his post-highbrow films are clearly superior to his pre-highbrow ones. The trouble is that he has never put one brilliant comedy together from fade-in to fade-out. We can only wait and hope, but the suspicion persists that the French are confusing talent with genius.

Our thanks to Ben Hamilton of CTVD: Cinema—TV—DIGEST, a quarterly review of the serious foreign-language cinema tv press, for his kind words about *Cabiers du Cinema in English*. Yearly subscriptions (\$3.00 U. S. A. \$4.00 all other countries) can be obtained by writing to CTVD, Hampton Books, Hampton Bays, N. Y., U. S. A.

This year's Flaherty Film Seminar will be held September 3-9, 1966, at Arden House, Harriman, New York. For information on enrolling, write to Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, International Film Seminars, Inc. 1125 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, New York 10025.

I recently served as a juror at the American Film Festival, sponsored by the Educational Film Library Association, and was reminded of the vast amount of work being done in the documentary, educational and experimental fields. Among the more noteworthy winners were *Phoebe—Story of a Premarital Pregnancy* (National Film Board of Canada), *This Is Edward Steichen* (WCBS-TV), *A Valparaiso* (Chris Marker — Joris Ivens), *Ku Klux*

Klan: The Invisible Empire, and in my particular category of Film as Art, Norman McLaren's *Mosaic*. For the record, I voted for a tie between *Mosaic* (abstract) and Ricky Leacock's *The Anatomy of Cindy Fink* (human). Another instance of the problem of categories as we all strive vainly to define the exact dimensions of what we deign to call CINEMA.

I will catch up on some of the mail next issue.

(Continued from page 6)

"Directors are wonderful at doing all the business of their fantasies but not really good at constructing a plot. Or telling a story.

"The distinction between a work of mine and a film written for Hitchcock is that a Hitchcock film is a Hitchcock film and a Moore novel a Moore novel. In a conflict between the two, the Hitchcock movie obviously becomes peopled with his characters—as it should be.

"Hitchcock's big thing is this—a man walks into a room, drops a glove and walks on. He's a crook. Hitchcock will show the glove and the audience wants to warn the man: 'The glove, pick it up!'

"There're no moral sides in a thriller. People don't care about right and wrong. They don't want him to be caught.

"That's what Hitchcock is terribly cunning at. He knows that morality doesn't exist in films. People want the villain to get away."

The story of *Torn Curtain* is pretty simple: physicist Paul Newman defects to communism following a convention in Copenhagen. His fiancée, Julie Andrews, follows him to East Germany to get him back. Moore says Hitchcock thinks of it just as a story, nothing political. —A. M.

be an angel



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