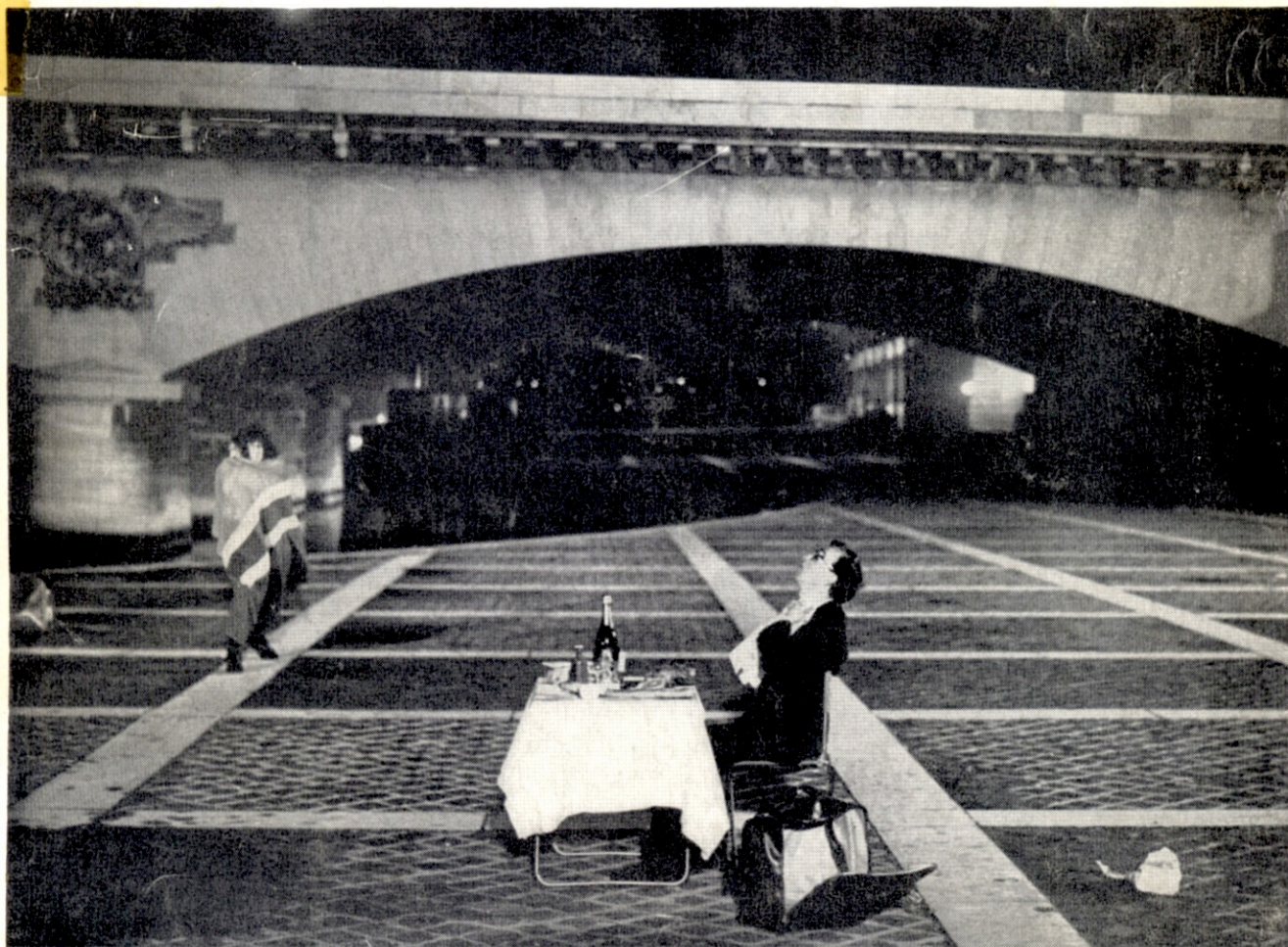


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Luciano Visconti
Busby Berkeley
Alfred Hitchcock



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Clive Donner: *What's New Pussycat?*, Peter Sellers, Woody Allen.

Number 2

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LE CONSEIL DES DIX (Council of ten)

COTATIONS (Ratings)

● Inutile de se déranger (No use bothering)

★★ à voir absolument (see absolutely)

★ à voir à la rigueur (see if necessary)

★★★ chef-d'oeuvre (masterpiece)

	Michel Aubriant (Candide)	Robert Benayoun (Positif)	Jacques Bontemps (Cahiers)	Jean-Louis Bory (Arts)	Albert Cervoni (France Nouvelle)	Jean Collet (Telarama)	Michel Cournot (Le Nouvel Observateur)	Michel Delahaye (Cahiers)	Jean-Andre Fieschi (Cahiers)	George Sadoul (Les Lettres françaises)
Vaghe stelle de l'Orsa... (Sandra) (Luchino Visconti)	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	★★
L'As de pique (Black Peter) (Milos Forman)	★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
The Big Night (Joseph Losey)	★★	★	★★	★★	★★★	★★	★	★★	★★	★★
Viva Maria (Louis Malle)	★★	★★★	●	★	★★★	●	★	●	●	★★
Don Quichotte (Grigori Kozintsev)	★★	★★	●	★★★	●	●	●	★	●	★★
Un jour un chat (Vojtech Jasný)	●	★		★	★★	★	●	●	●	★★★
Nothing But the Best (Clive Donner)	★	★★	★		★★	●	●	●	★	
Cat Ballou (Eliot Silverstein)	★	★	●		★★	●	●	★	●	★
Les Fêtes galantes (René Clair)	★	●	●	★	★	●	●	★★	●	★★
Terreur sur la savane (Yves Allégret)					★		★		●	
Operation Tonnerre (Thunderball) (Terence Young)	★	★★	●	★	★	●	●	●	●	★
Les Tribulations d'un "Chinois" (Ph. de Broca)	★	★	●	★	★	★	●	●	●	★
Nick Carter et le Trèfle rouge (J.-P. Savignac)	●		●	●	★★				●	●
Dis-moi qui tuer (Etienne Périer)	●	★			●				●	
Représailles en Arizona (Arizona Raiders) (William Witney)		●	●		★		●			
Fantômas se déchaîne (André Hunebelle)	●		●	●			●	●	●	★
La Crypte du Vampire (Camillo Mastrocino)		●					●			
L'Île du désir (Jovan Vivanovic)	●		●							
Don Camillo en Russie (Luigi Comencini)		●	●						●	●

ADIEU BUSTER

1896-1966

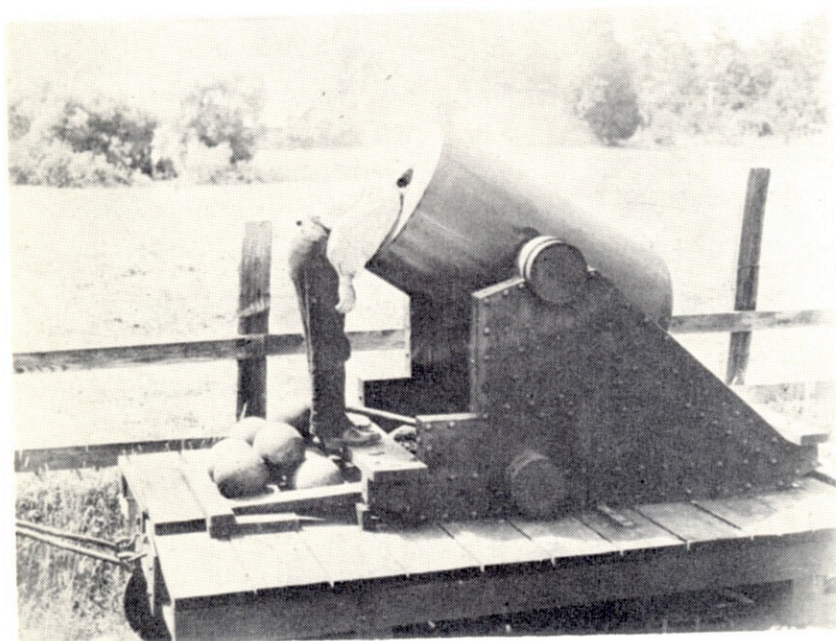




B



E



Albert Juross

In alphabetical order: L'Age des illusions, Les Amours d'une blonde, Le Chat dans le sac, It Happened Here, A Falecida, Nicht Versöhnt, Prime della rivoluzione (Before the Revolution), I Pagni in tasca, Rysopis, Walkover.

Pierre Kast

1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Giulietta degli spiriti. 3 A High Wind in Jamaica. 4 Lord of the Flies. 5 Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 6 La Vieille Dame indigne. 7 The Disorderly Orderly. 8 Les Communians. 9 Alphaville. 10 Kiss Me Stupid.

André S. Labarthe

1 Pierrot le fou, Paris vu par Rohmer et Chabrol, Shock Corridor, Les Communians, L'Amour a la chaine. The Family Jewels. 7 Les Femmes aussi (TV), L'As de pique, Yoyo, Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa.

Louis Marcorelles

1 Desna, Paris vu par Godard, Vidas Secas. 4 The Sandpiper, King and Country, Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa, La Vieille Dame indigne.

Michel Mardore

In alphabetical order: Les Communians. Desna, Journal d'une femme en blanc. Lilith. Nothing But the Best. Paris vu par Rouch. Pierrot le fou. La 317^e Section. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. La Vieille Dame indigne.

Christian Metz

1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Alphaville. 3 La Brulure de mille soleils. 4 L'As de pique. 5 Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 6 Une fille et des fusils.

Jean Mitry

In alphabetical order: L'As de pique. The Collector. Les Communians. Giulietta degli spiriti. King and Country. Kwaidan. Pierrot le fou. Shock Corridor. La 317^e Section. La Vieille Dame indigne.

Luc Moullet

1 Shock Corridor. 2 Pierrot le fou. 3 The Brig. 4 L'Amour a la chaine. 5 The Iperess File. 6 Mondo Cane n° 2. 7 Alphaville. 8 L'As de pique. 9 L'Enfer dans la peau. 10 Lord Jim.

Jean Narboni

1 Il vangelo secondo Matteo, Pierrot le fou. 3 Paris vu par Rouch. 4 Les Communians. 5 King and Country. L'Amour a la chaine. L'As de pique. 8 La Vieille Dame indigne. 9 Journal D'une femme en blanc. 10 Cargo pour la Réunion.

Claude Ollier

1 Pierrot le fou. Les Communians. 3 Lilith. Le Bonheur. The Family Jewels. 6 A High Wind in Jamaica. Vidas Secas. Vaghe Stelle dell'Orsa. Il vangelo secondo Matteo, Paris vu par Rouch et Rohmer.

Claude-Jean Philippe

1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 3 Shock Corridor. 4 Les Communians. 5 Pascal (Rohmer. TV). 6 L'Amour a la chaine. 7 Paris vu par Rouch. 8 The Family Jewels. 9 King and Country. 10 The Collector.

Jean-Daniel Pollet

In alphabetical order: L'As de pique. Le Bestiaire d'amour. King and Country. The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. Il momento della verita. Pierrot le fou. Ship of Fools. Le Tigre se parfume a la dynamite. La 317^e Section. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa.

Jacques Rivette

1 Pierrot le fou. 2 L'Amour a la chaine. L'As de pique. Giulietta degli spiriti. Journal d'une femme en blanc. Lilith. Paris vu par Rouch. Il vangelo secondo Matteo. La Vieille Dame indigne. Young Cassidy.

Jacques Robert

1 The Sandpiper. Pierrot le fou. 3 The Disorderly Orderly. In Harm's Way. Marie-Chantal contre le Dr Kah. Shock Corridor. Lord Jim. Thomas l'Imposteur. 9 La Vieille Dame indigne. Paris vu par...

Jacques Rozier

1 The Disorderly Orderly. Help! 3 Le Bonheur. Il momento della verita. Paris vu par..., Pierrot le fou. The Sandpiper.

George Sadoul

In alphabetical order of countries: Brazil: Vidas Secas. Czechoslovakia: L'As de pique. France: Pierrot le fou. Great Britain: King and Country. Italy: Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. Japan: Kwaidan. Pakistan: Quand naitra le jour. Spain: El Verdugo. United States: The Brig. U.S.S.R.: Desna.

Roger Tailleur

1 Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 2 La Vieille Dame indigne. 3 Les Communians. 4 L'Arme a gauche. 5 Il momento della verita. 6 The Sons of Katie Elder. 7 The Big Night. 8 Le Bonheur. 9 L'As de pique. 10 The Disorderly Orderly.

André Techiné

1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Paris vu par Rouch. 3 Il vangelo secondo Matteo. Les Communians. Lilith. 6 The Disorderly Orderly. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. The Family Jewels. 9 Alphaville. 10 L'Amour a la chaine.

François Truffaut

In alphabetical order: Alphaville. L'Amour a la chaine. L'As de pique. Les Communians. De l'Amour. Desna. Kiss Me Stupid. Pierrot le fou. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. Vidas Secas. La Vieille Dame indigne.

Some lists that reached us too late will appear in the next issue.



Howard Hawks: *Eldorado*, Robert Mitchum. Return to the genre of Rio Bravo.



Frank Tashlin: *The Alphabet Murders*, Tony Randall, Grazina Frame.

Drama

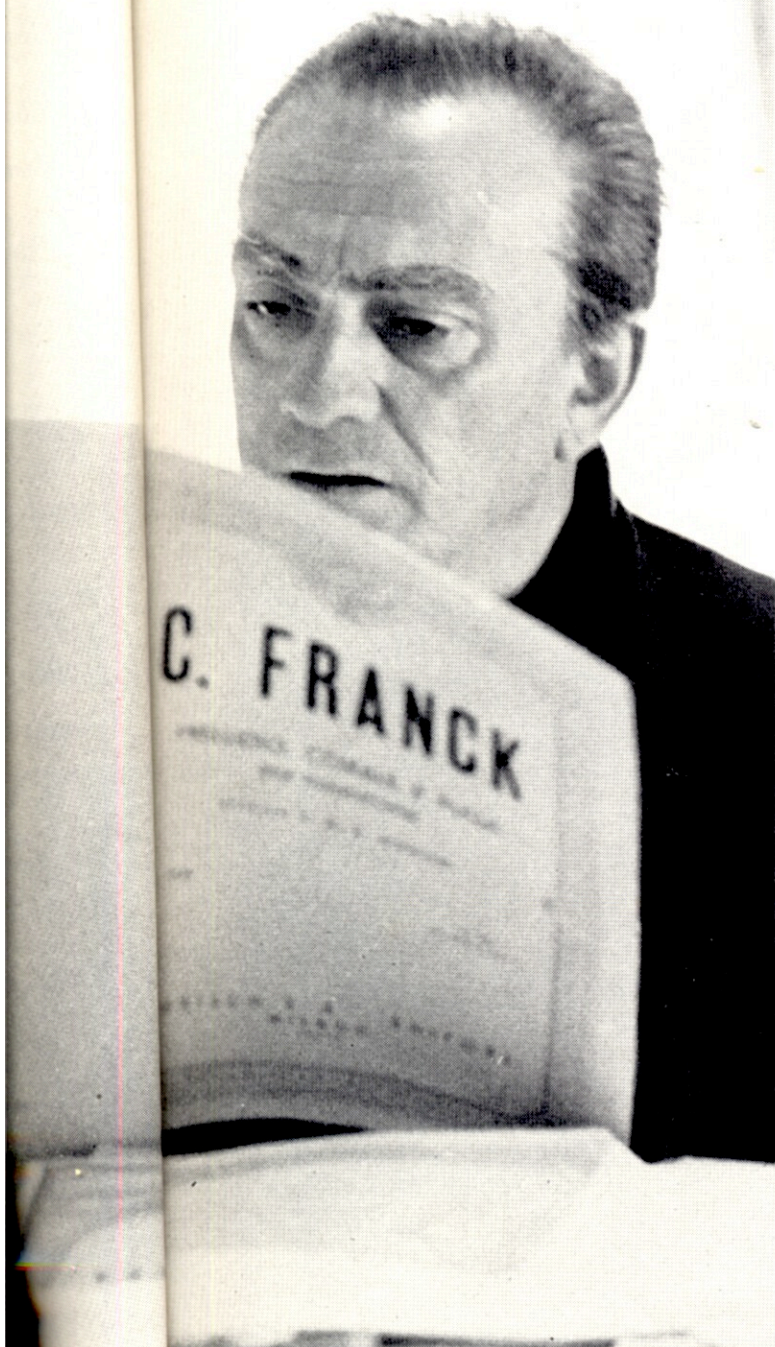
by



Shooting of *Vaghe Stelle Dell' Orsa* (Sandra): Claudia Cardinale, Luchino Visconti

Op-Existence

by Luisconti

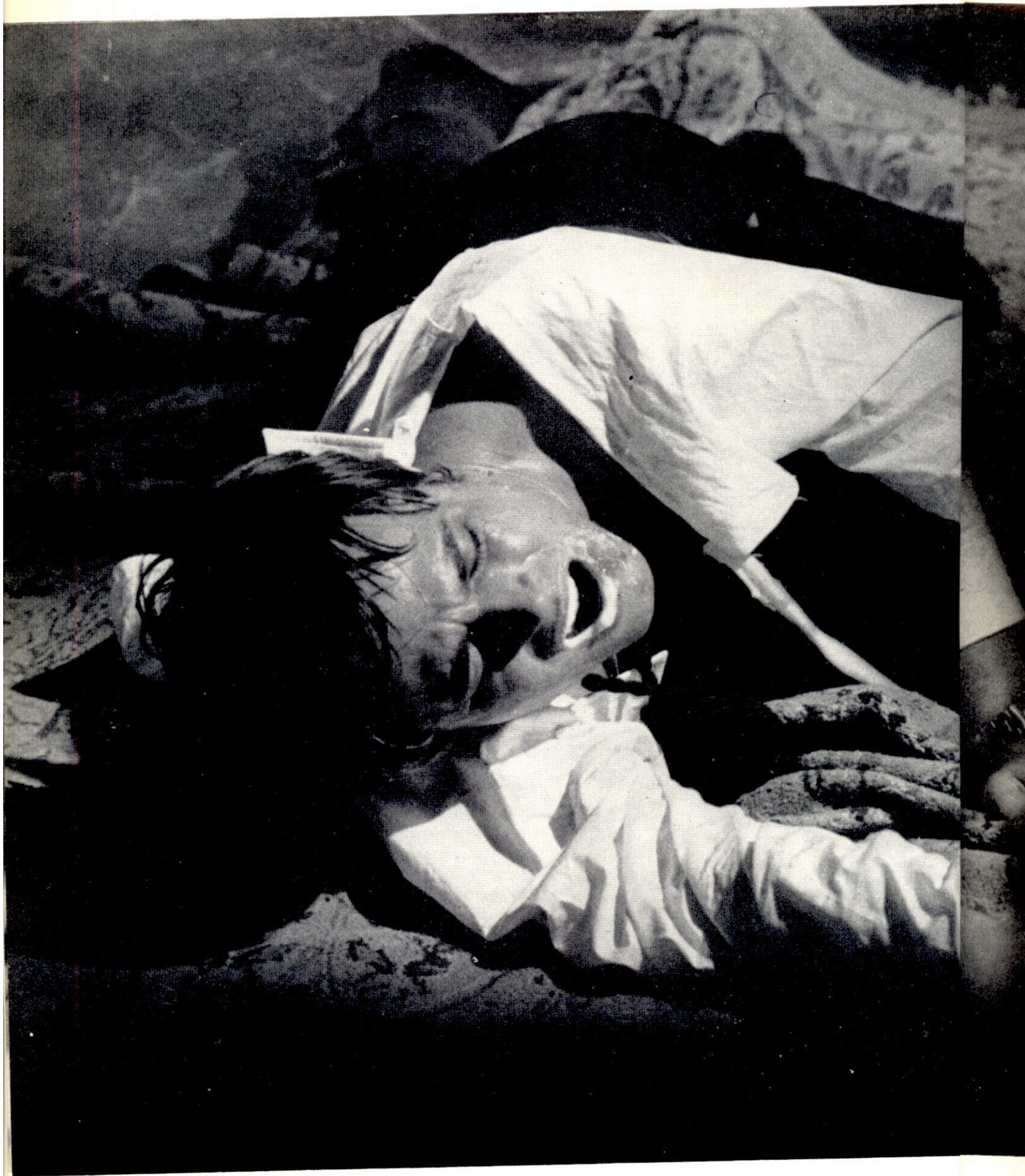


First of all I should like to discuss the reasons why I have always been reluctant to talk about my films in general and about *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . (*Sandra*) in particular. When I talk about cinema, I prefer to limit myself to general opinions, even about my own work. It's a form of respect toward the public—which is maligned by the belief that it goes to the cinema only to follow a story and know its ending. In reality, the spectator of today buys a ticket also to know what the author wanted to say to him, and to know it from a screen, not from statements.

Nevertheless I think that in the case of *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . I have broken all records for laconicism; but, before at least once respecting the rules of the game that insist that the cinéaste say "what" his film is and "why" he has made it, I must add something. That's why I answer the first question: this film is an unusual detective film. People have spoken of a "modern Electra," but to explain what I mean by "detective," I must cite another classical tragedy: *Oedipus the King*, one of the first detective stories. In it the guilty person is the character least open to suspicion. (Oedipus himself describes himself at the beginning of the tragedy as "the only stranger.")

Perhaps the spectators of Sophocles' time left the theater convinced that the true offender was not Oedipus, but fate; this convenient explanation is not enough for the contemporary spectator. He exonerates Oedipus only to the extent that he feels himself concerned, almost guilty.

So in my film there are dead men, there are those presumed responsible, but it is not said that they are the true offenders and the true victims. From this point of view, the reference that I myself have made to the *Oresteia* is nothing but a convenient reference. Let us take for example Sandra and Gilardini: she resembles Electra because of circumstances that determine her conduct; he, Aegisthus, because of his situation outside the family cell; but that is a matter of schematic analogies. Sandra has the characteristics of the judiciary, Gilardini those of the accused, but in reality these rules could equally well be reversed. Ambiguity is the true aspect of all the characters of the film except one: Andrew, Sandra's husband. He would like a logical explanation for everything and on the contrary strikes against a world ruled by the deepest, most contradictory and most inexplicable passions. This character is nearest the conscience of the spectator who, in his turn, precisely because he is unable to find a logical explanation for the events, should feel, all things considered, that he himself is directly implicated, called on to ask himself not so much if the mother and Gilardini are responsible for the death of the professor, or Sandra for that of Gianni, but rather if there has been offense and which, and if there are





Jean Sorel

not hidden in us a Sandra, a Gianni, a Gilardini.

In short, a detective story in which everything is clear at the beginning and obscure at the end, as when—ever someone involves himself in the difficult undertaking of reading himself with the bold certainty of having nothing to learn, then finds himself struggling with the anxiety-creating problem of non-existence.

I think that in this way I have made a start at a commentary on the "why" of my film. It's because I'm convinced—not a new conviction—that one way, and not the least significant, of observing contemporary society and its problems and of trying to find an explanation for them that is neither conventional nor stereotyped consists in studying the souls of some of its representative characters brought together in one way or another and seen from a certain angle. So I do not share the surprise of those who, interested in my work, have wondered why I had chosen an intimate story, almost related to the "kammerspiel," after the historical inspiration of films like *Rocco e i suoi fratelli* (*Rocco and his Brothers*) and *Il Gattopardo* (*The Leopard*).

The fact is that if I have succeeded in my project, *L'aghe stelle dell'Orsa . . .* will resemble my earlier films more than people now think, and will continue a dissertation that I began more than twenty years ago. From the old "kammerspiel" of Mayer and Lupu Pick, the film will have kept only the relative unity of time and of place, the strongly emphasized dramatic conflict, the frequent use of close-ups, as many entirely incidental characteristics.

All my attention has been brought to bear on Sandra's conscience, on her moral malaise, on just what impelled Ntoni, Livia, Rocco or the prince Salina not long ago. And if elsewhere I used a ball, a bath, a phenomenon of interior migration, the winning of daily bread, here it is the old Etruscan riddle that interested me—Volterra, which is its perfect expression—the superiority complex of the Jews, a woman character. Such are the fundamental, to a certain extent essential, "historical" elements that determined my film, as did the psychological elements: the acknowledged need for justice and truth, Sandra's lack of emotion and sexual satisfaction, the crisis in her marriage; as did, finally, the family drama (shared with the characters I mentioned before from my other films).

Impelled by the "incident" (the return to her family home) Sandra's conscience sets out on the difficult progression in search of truth, a truth profoundly different from that in which she thought she was firmly rooted, a painful truth and one which perhaps such a character will never succeed in winning completely.

Thus Sandra and her victims (or her persecutors) find a place in the framework of contemporary society, or else discover that for them there is no longer a

place. And, through their tragedy, they contribute towards a better understanding of our historical situation in its reality, of its meaning.

If I may take up again a theme that was dear to me at the beginning of my career, I will say that today more than ever I am concerned with an anthropomorphic cinema. *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . is a confirmation of this predominant interest, not an exception to it. That is "why" I made this film.

And to end this introduction, let us offer the reader some oddities, a few bits of information.

With regard to its elaboration, that is to say the passage "from idea to film," *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . has been perhaps my most difficult film.

As can be observed from the reading of the texts (1), many things changed even at the time of the takes. That is because the stuff of the film became more definite from day to day. I should say that contributions to it came, on the one hand, from the very stay at Volterra: the atmosphere of the Inghirami palace where I shot most of the scenes, the slow progression of autumn in the course of the shooting; and on the other hand from a growing knowledge of the actors, some of whom had been chosen at the last moment. For the protagonist, I had in fact always thought of Claudia Cardinale. The character of Sandra had even been written starting from her, and not only from the enigmatic quality the apparent simplicity of this actress conceals, but also from her physical appearance (her face in particular) related to the image of the Etruscan women as it has been handed down to us. There was no problem either about having my old friend Marie Bell in the role of the mother, or about having Ricci in that of Gilardini. It was more difficult to find Gianni. I had never worked with Sorel, and once he had been chosen, I had to learn to know him, consequently to adopt the character of Gianni day after day. More daring still was the choice of Michael Craig, who arrived in Italy just before the start of the shooting. There again the problem was set; but I think this complicated gestation was not at all accidental. Perhaps it was in the very nature of the film to have to be born in a laborious way, as its characters explain themselves: laboriously. The title itself is scarcely problematical. I have already told how it sprang up; I will add now that I am all the more pleased with it because it has been adopted in foreign countries although at the start people found it too difficult to pronounce.

And that is all. What can a film maker say about his film without excess of zeal or of presumption? Jean Renoir, who was a passionate ceramist from his youth, used to say that ceramics and cinema had this in common: the author always knows what he wants to make, but once the work has been put into the oven, he never really knows if he will find it again



Claudia Cardinale



DALLA RABBIA NAZISTA
STRAPPATO
AGLI STUDI ALLA VITA
AI DILETTI SUOI CARI

VOLTERRA AUSCHWITZ
8 MARZO 1937 4 SETTEMBRE 1942

as he wished it or at least partly different. I have left *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . in the oven a long time. The gestation was long, and once the shooting was finished, the time that passed before the editing was long as well. Today no one is more anxious than I to know if this uncertain "agglomeration of souls" will have had the right degree of baking.

And, to conclude, my thanks to all my collaborators, from the "regulars" (my assistants, the decorators, the costume designer, the editor, and especially the scenarist) to the "novices" (the cameraman, the production director and his entourage, the sound men). If this complex and tortured film has been born in the most simple and serene way possible, it is to them that I owe it.

Luchino VISCONTI

¹ Preface to the edition of "*Vaghe stelle* . . ." published by Cappelli, 1965.

The Absences Of Sandra

by Jean Collet

In their apartment in Geneva, a young couple are entertaining friends. The mistress of the house (Claudia Cardinale) is *acting* her part. She is speaking French, smiling a little too much, being a little too animated in the big living room. Until the moment when another music detaches itself from the music of the voices: the Cesar Franck prelude whose waves of violent romanticism break in a few measures. Suddenly Sandra's gaze becomes fixed and at the same time lost. The camera stops on her in close-up. A shot that never comes to an end, like a challenge to the mystery of that gaze. In the very moment of our impatience, the husband, Andrew (Michael Craig) comes into the shot, breaks the enchantment. "That music" is the only reply Sandra murmurs, while the piano tells its haunting chords. Visconti dissolves immediately on the same living-room-in-April shot. The guests who are leaving, the conventional goodbyes, the sudden emptiness of the huge room. Sandra who sinks into an armchair, sends her shoes flying in the air with the grace of a little girl. Her husband approaches to kiss her. Claudia Cardinale's laugh is sparkling and broken. But in the background of the room, the indiscreet presence of the butler who is clearing the table and already forbids all abandon. This furtive constraint that barely slips into this first moment of intimacy.

Perhaps a great film is recognized from the first three shots. Until now I knew only Hitchcock—the Hitchcock of *Marnie* for example, since in the end it is not so far from *Vaghe stelle* . . . — who could make an opening sequence so dense, so necessary. Who could say everything without explaining anything, who could catch a moment that contains in it-



Claudia Cardinale



self alone all the mystery of the film. But contrary to Hitchcock who appeals to the complicity of the spectator, who half-opens the mystery to make it the more elusive later, Visconti shuts up the moment on itself. It is a world without exit that we have just surprised, it is a secret that has got lost under our eyes. Very far from us; precisely when one thought one was grasping it. No need here to film the heroine from in back. No need to let her move away to stretch our attention. It is in the closeup itself that she is a thousand leagues from the camera, that she eludes us.

The opening of the film is admirable because it is precisely the contrary of an opening. It sets forth an absence. It brings darkness. It is that little tear that drowns Claudia Cardinale's gaze for a moment, and disappears. It is in pursuit of this little tear that we will find we must run, this fleeting tear that bit by bit will carry off the entire film. At the speed of music. A music that is not for us but for Sandra alone.

Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa is a short swift film. Even before the white BMW sports car carries us away, the film has already cast off. But this high-strung quality of the story intensifies the feeling of these sudden skids, these unexpected spasms, this clenching fist on a secret message. You have the impression that you are dashing into blind alleys. You cast off. You plunge. You bump into a wall. You set off again. And you say to yourself then that this impression of speed was illusory like the impression of advancing. The movement that impels the film makes me think of those spider's webs that tremble when an insect has just

become imprisoned in them and shivers with the illusion of freeing itself.

This quivering, this palpitation, is first of all the play of shadow and light. In this respect, there is a strange relationship between *Alphaville* and *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . both sparkle with all their rhythm on a background of night. Both are given their rhythm by this same vacillating alternation of black and white of day and darkness, of lie and truth. Painful oscillation between light too raw, dazzling whiteness, an impenetrable blackness.

As always with Visconti, and perhaps more than ever, the influence of milieu, of mood, of setting weighs on human beings. Volterra is a world confined behind walls, sheltered from looks. "You knew that light had physiological effects?" asks one character a little after you have seen Gianni change the light bulbs of the house and precisely before the big scene in which the characters are at last going to stop lying. No symbolism here, but secretly growing anxiety before the shadow that is gaining ground and that must be defeated with speed.

The shadow, the abyss, the absence, or rather the absences of Sandra. As at the time of the first sequence, one meets again the whole length of the film these trackings in on Claudia Cardinale's face. At first we think we are approaching a being, but it is precisely to discover that the being is not there, that the body is an empty wrapping. Perhaps one must see in this the secret of the proud sensuality that Visconti



Michael Craig, Jean Sorel

been able to communicate to his interpreter. The flesh is present, a thousand times more present when the spirit is absent, when the eyelids weigh on a lost gaze. When the voices die out all around, hollowing the emptiness besides this skin so living, so sensitive, in its immobility.

At the end of the first scene, Sandra is alone in her room, on her bed. The camera approaches her face. The waves of Franck break. Dissolve. Vulgar music from a transistor radio. Through the viewfinder of Andrew's camera, it is another Sandra—coquette, fleeting, laughing—that we are looking at. The same laugh as after the departure of the guests at the start. The laugh of someone who comes out of a bad dream. All the film is these passages, these reversals.

Absence. Presence. The same anxiety-creating alternation as shadow and light. "I think I've seen someone" says Andrew visiting the chateau. At that moment Sandra leaves her husband to go into the dark park. The veiled statue of the father beats at the wind like a ghost. Sandra stops. Gianni's face comes out of the shadow, meets Sandra's face. Andrew appears outlined at the background of the garden walk. Full shot. Gianni goes to shake Andrew's hand. Sandra joins them. Where is the true Sandra? Visconti takes care not to reply. He films Sandra who staggers at the same time as the world to which she belongs. The hill slides like the hill in *Muriel*. "Let's live here always" Sandra was saying a few moments earlier. But how can you take root in this vacillating universe?

Every Visconti film is the history of an illusion. The passage through appearances. A journey to the end of night. A Visconti hero is someone who hears voices and embarks in search of them even to shipwreck. He plunges into his dream even to failure. Countess Sapiere flees her lover to the end of baseness, then at last comes out the other side to lucidity. I referred to *Senso* a little at random. Let's take advantage of it. Perhaps starting from that film one will be able to see the radical newness of *Vaghe stelle dell'Orso*. . . In *Senso* we live the illusion with the characters. All the film is led toward the high scene of disillusion when we discover the true Franz at the same time as the Countess. We are with the characters on the side of passion until the brutal fall.

In *Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa* . . . we are completely alien to Gianni's passion for his sister. Better yet: not a single character is this passion's fool. Gianni tries desperately to recapture Sandra. She slips, thinks she is sinking in the abyss. But she is already far away from it. Andrew tries to understand, then struggles against the adversary. He films. And Gianni himself acknowledges that he has freed himself from his passion by writing his novel. Thus everyone moves away from the abyss when it has scarcely opened. Fascination-repulsion follow each other in accelerated motion.

Trackings in and out correspond to say that here, there is no longer either complaisance or indifference, but a passionate struggle at a fully mastered distance.

That is why, contrary to *Senso*, the big scene of *Vaghe stelle* . . . (the one in which brother and sister have it out with each other) no longer has dramatic value. It gives to Sandra and Gianni a last occasion to pit themselves against each other. It teaches us nothing, resolves nothing. No startling surprise. The startling surprise was at the beginning. And the film — like the camera in the crucial shots — proceeds backwards. About the mystery of the opening, we are told only that it is a permanent danger. One can only flee it. Or fall into its infernal trap. *Vaghe stelle* . . . is the flight and this fall both at the same time. The mad oscillations that animate Volterra's ghosts set them at a distance one from another when they ought to mix them. Little by little each one takes his distance again. Volterra is like murky water in which moths think they are finding their sunlight. They approach too closely: the water quivers, the sunlight is drowned, the mirror is broken, lo and behold they are driven off in pursuit of other lights.

Thus the entire film is like the scene in the cistern. One must reach this nerve center, plunge into this gulf, to draw from it the strength to escape it. Each will attempt this flight: Andrew goes away. Gianni burns the manuscript. Sandra leaves Gianni. But Gianni will not be able to live outside his cave.

The novel that bears the title of the film is evidently the film itself — which from the start will itself so distant from the spectator. The characters absent themselves, the film moves farther away. One thinks of the movement that guides *Muriel*, that search for a center where one oscillates without knowing it, that scattering of characters, that shattering to pieces that seems to affect the work itself. Everyone leaves. But that is perhaps better to reach the really absent person, the father. Similarly, the film withdraws from its *auteur* to give the most exact image of him.

If the final ceremony of the unveiling of the statue is so moving it is not only because the human voice has followed the music, the voice of the rabbi, the voice of the poet who alone can rejoin the past without drowning in it. This scene evokes the family photograph at the end of *Dernieres Vacances*. The camera is already very far from the human beings. It is a moment of life that is rocking in the memory. We feel here, as in Leenhardt's film, that one finds only what one can leave. The great paradox of absence is resolved. Andrew has never been nearer his wife. She has never been nearer her father. The film can withdraw in its turn. It is in this very moment that it finds its order and its splendor.

Jean COLLET

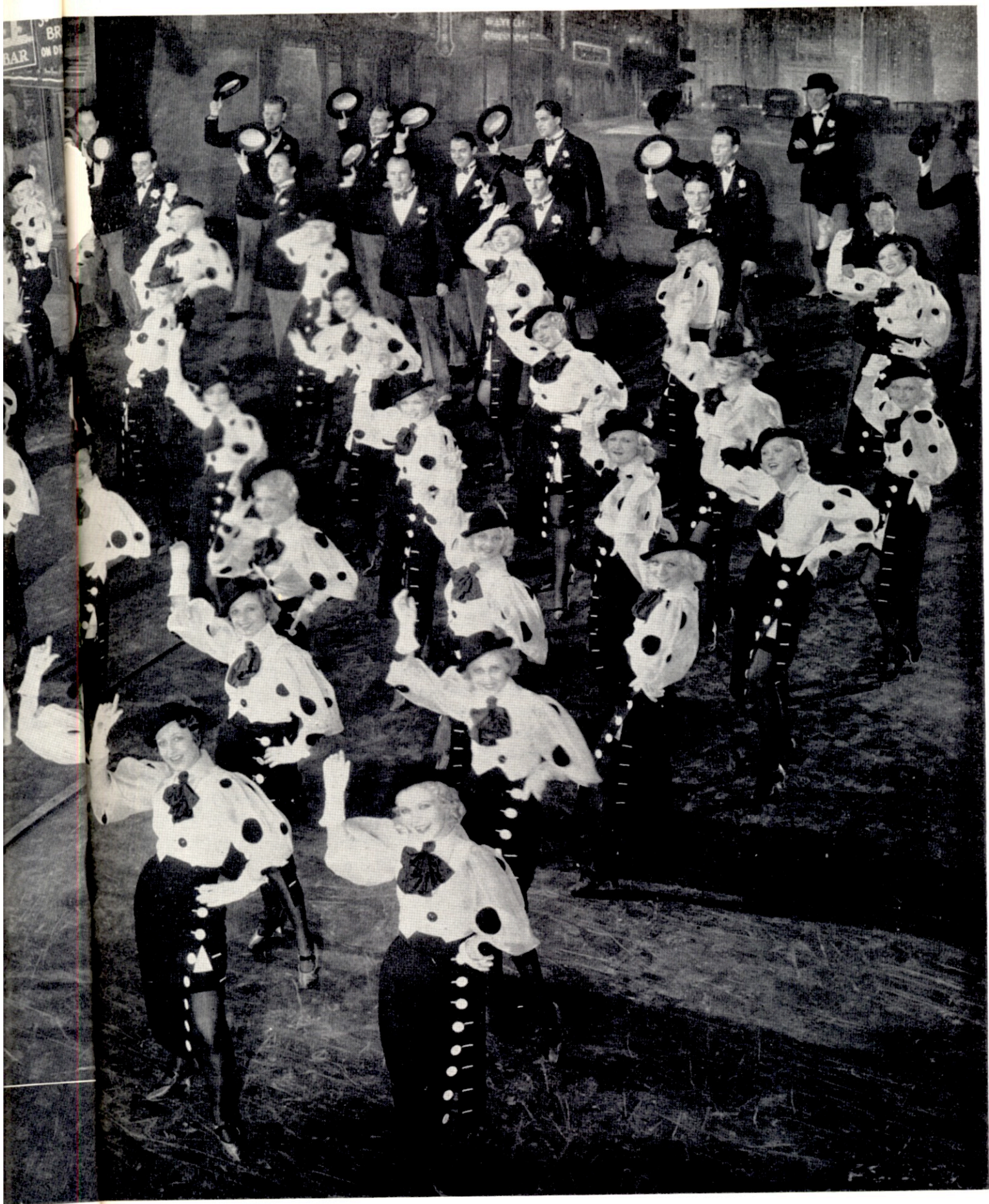
(Film credits on page 78)



Dancing Images

*Busby Berkeley's Kaleidoscope
by Jean-Louis Comolli*

Lloyd Bacon: 42nd Street, one of Busby Berkeley's ballet numbers.



Indeed, it is like a kaleidoscopic image — with its reversals of symmetry, its regular contrasts, its rhythmic alternations, with, too, the defiance of the order of time and of that of space, of its repetitions, its multiplications and divisions, its telescopic lap dissolves and the reductions or enlargements it brings forth — that every one, or almost every one, of the famous sequences conceived, set and often filmed by Busby Berkeley in Hollywood, appears at once and remains in the mind.

Nevertheless, these images — flowers of girls, forests of women in march with a single movement, dividing suddenly into equal masses, obeying in a mechanical ensemble the same abrupt starts and stops, breaking one another by the most abrupt angles or the contrary flowing along smooth curves — these images differ from those of the kaleidoscope in that they do not present entirely the same play of light, the same iridescences and ridges, nor the clouded zones and interference fringes proper to the projection that a reflected light, broken and repeated by the play of mirrors in a triangle, causes to appear. That is to say that these images, more learned than the notched reflection of the kaleidoscope, conceal the threads that animate them and suspend them on the screen; their beauty in uninterrupted genesis, the subtle play of their values and of their structure, mask without apparent effort the technical arsenal that is their foundation and the devices or deceptions that confer on them their powers of illusion.

Yet this cinema that resolves itself totally into spectacle, these images, these shots, these scenes that have no other function, no other meaning and no other existence but visual beauty, does not constitute an attempt (and it would be the only attempt brought off successfully) at pure cinema, of poetry and music made visual art, whose perfect gratuity — and consequently whose poverty — in a certain period was likened by the critics to the very nature and most specific characteristics of the cinema.

There are a thousand occasions to observe that every delirium, once filmed, once fixed in images, and the more if it is a question of a visual delirium, loses in number, in strength and in richness, in proportion to the field of things possible for it; impoverishes itself the more, the more that it offers to the imagination, and disappoints fatally in the measure to which it can present only one image from the crowd of those that throng in it and which would be as welcome, as well founded (that is to say as little) as the chosen one. There is in every expression of a visual delirium given as such a necessary share of arbitrariness which, far from opening doors to the imagination, imprisons it and makes it aspire to an expression at once more accidental and less accidental.

Now, the mad chains of images of Berkeley not only

do not disappoint expectation and do not restrain the flight of the eyes and of the mind, but subjugate them and constrain them to pass through the course the images follow, their arbitrariness changing the truth, that is because the cinema of Berkeley, if it sometimes draws close to the cinema of optical animation and to "pure cinema," does not have, as they most often do, as its only object that of proposing to the sight and to the mind an unfolding — necessarily monotonous and uninspired at length — of *plastic* displays of cadenced images, of luminous litanies or formal responses, but aims, rather than at this result, at showing the roads that lead there, at following the phantasmagoric birth stage by stage; thus the plastic delirium never draws its strength and its beauty except from the plasticity precisely; it is in the limit itself only a transition in its entirety, a rupture and a return of equilibrium, nothing but movement, linked dissolves of times and spaces: metamorphoses.

Berkeley's cinema is unique in having seized this truth of a dream and having illustrated it *directly*. Moreover, it thereby coincides more naturally and more exactly than the other attempts at cinematographic "purity" with that which can take the place of specificity in cinema: precisely, movement alone. Marrying the mechanics of cinema — or, rather, of spectacle — to the mechanics of a dream, he finds again and reveals directly the dream nature of the cinematographic spectacle.

Rather than a succession of images like those of the kaleidoscope, the cinema of Berkeley shows *how* these images arise and take form, following their constitution element by element, to the composed and complex image; then, starting again from this image where one would be tempted to stop, either he decomposes it element by element to the original forms, or he considers it itself as a simple element and integrates it into the composition of a new whole which, in its turn, will be seen either brought back and detailed to its original look, or taken itself as detail of a new whole, which, in its turn — etc. So there is a *système* Berkeley, as there is a *système* Raymond Roussel,* with which the American cinéaste, explorer of dreams and of cinematographic language — or, rather, of the language of cinematographic dreams — knots in that way strange bonds.

Like that of Roussel, the system of Berkeley proceeds by two essential approaches: either analysis and synthesis, composition and decomposition, the one resolving into the other in alternation; or the pun, the play on images, that is to say the abrupt (though pre-

*Raymond Roussel (1877-1933), poet and experimental writer (*Impression d'Afrique*, *Locus Solus*) —J.P.

pared) jump from one order to another. That is to say that, again like the art of Roussel, that of Berkeley plays at the same time on the tableau of logic and on that of nonsense, plays on a coexistence of coherence and surprise. With the one as with the other, logic is delirium, or the opposite; the construction of the discourse and the reasoning by analogy monopolize all the attention, build, bit by bit, an edifice that one accompanies to the top without noticing that, while it was rising, it shifted the place of its foundations and now is — with us — out of plumb; weaves a web that, from thread to thread, gives all the pledges of staunchness and security, and thus conceals, before revealing progressively or abruptly, that, like the flying carpet of the fakirs, it has long since detached itself from the lands of the real.

But the system of Berkeley (advantage or defect?) differs in one point at least from that of Roussel: with the maniac writer the *shoven* point of departure of the plot is a fable, certainly, but giving itself the look of an adventure or of an "action," while, in the best sequences of Berkeley, it is from the first the spectacle — the *show* — theater and ballet, which is the point of departure of the outbidding — outbidding wandering from then on among all, giddy and beautiful over all — of spectacle upon spectacle. It is a veritable alchemy of the *shoven*; alchemy the wrong way, backwards, such, to tell the truth, as is the initial spectacle — and banal as such; big Hollywood machines and dances that owe all their felicity to the atmosphere of the time, to legs and costumes of frightfully stereotyped dancers — which takes, in the course of its relay race, the maddest looks; which, once one comes back to its frame and its elements, burdens itself with all the recoils of delirium that it was at first far from announcing. On the rebound, in the course of the long wandering in the dream, it happens that one falls on a succession of more "realistic" (at least, by contrast) images or scenes; which makes one doubt then whether one is still on the other side of the mirror. Things become more complicated and more beautiful still if one observes that the system of Berkeley puts in doubt as it goes along the most familiar spatio-temporal principles, ceaselessly overlapping the infinitely great and the infinitely small, this group of harpsichordists becoming Dresden china, that Dresden china invading the screen and animating itself in a garden where snow is falling; thus playing on the flashback and the flash-forward in a space as elastic as mental time.

At the start of his fabulous succession of aerial, musical or nautical dreams, the dance then, the ballet. But Busby Berkeley — he says so himself a little farther on — *is not a choreographer: people do not dance* in his films, they evolve, they move about, they make a circle, the circle tightens or is released, bursts forward and forms again. The syntactical unit of this

ballet of images is not the pas de deux but the pas de mille, the dance of a thousand. And one can suspect Busby Berkeley of having given himself the ballet as an alibi for his mad frenzy — alas, unique in the history of cinema — to show in all possible fashions, in all situations and playing all parts, the largest possible number of uniformly dressed blonde *girls*, in the splendor of an impeccable alignment of their legs, making love in all the fan of poses with a shameless camera that forces the imagination to the point of passing, dollying in, under the arch of their thighs stretched out infinitely, forming a tunnel of dreams where it was desirable, once at least, that the cinema be engulfed.

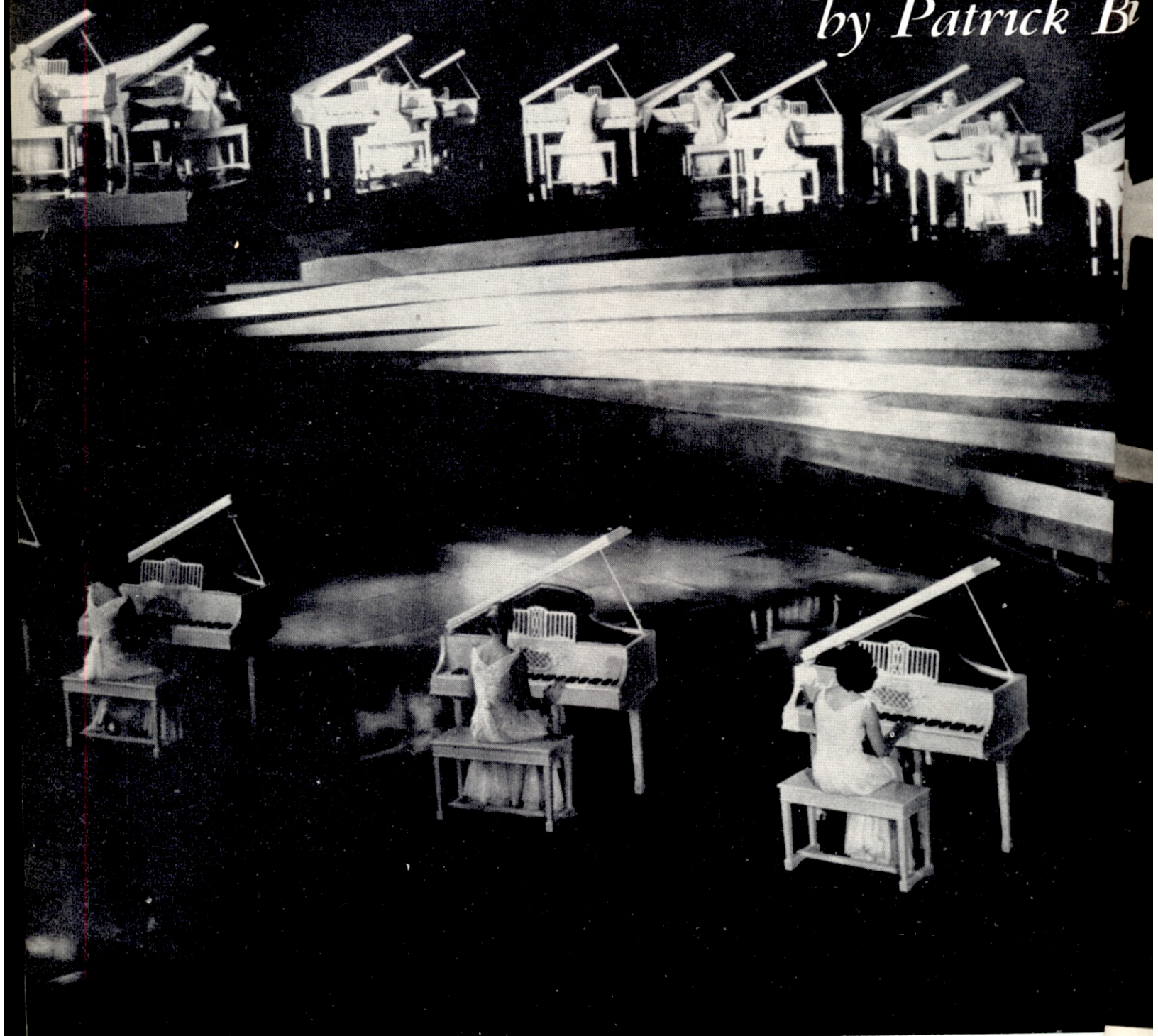
Jean-Louis COMOLLI.



Busby Berkeley and some of his girls.

A Style

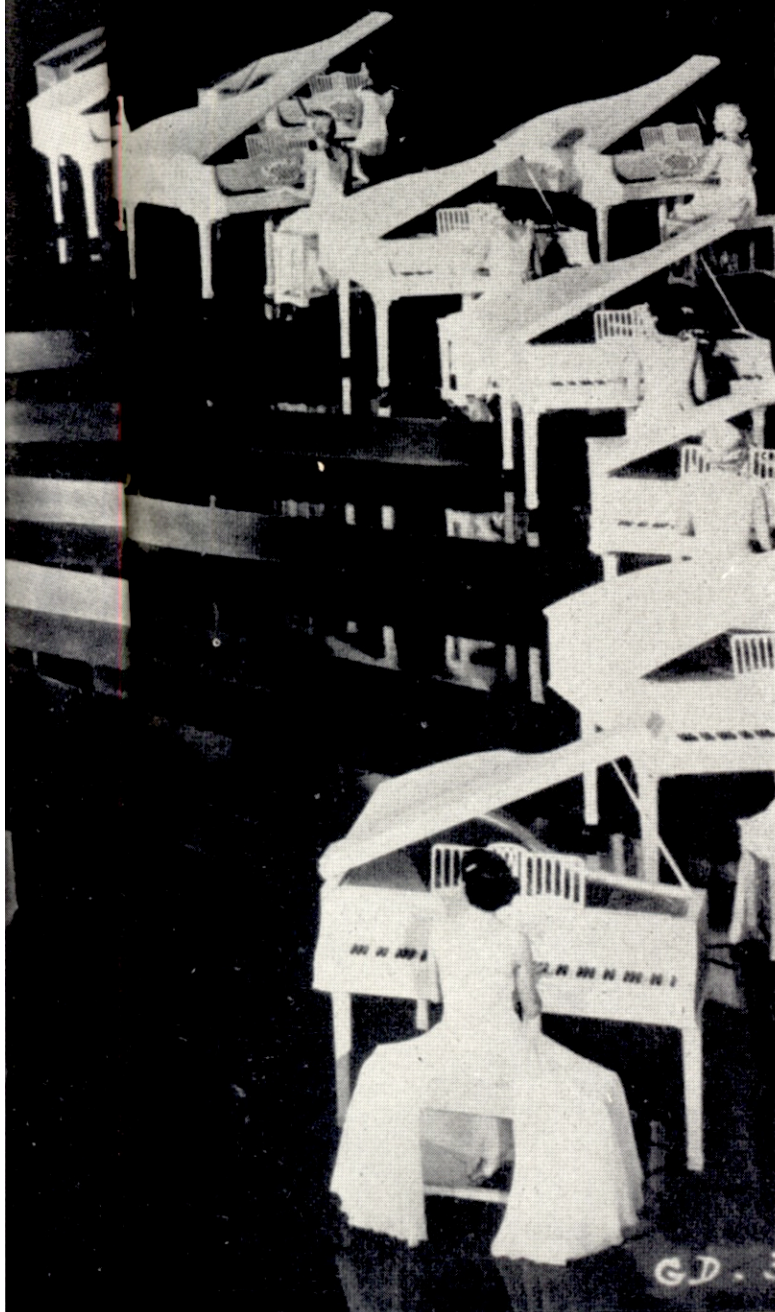
*Interview with
by Patrick B.*



Busby Berkeley: *Gold Diggers of 1935*

le of Spectacle

by Busby Berkeley
and Rene Gilson



CAHIERS—At the time you were doing the choreography for other directors, let's say for example Lloyd Bacon, did you create the musical numbers entirely alone or did you collaborate with the directors?

BUSBY BERKELEY—There was no collaboration; I did everything myself. From the conception to the execution, every step of the way, no matter who the director of the film, the musical numbers were entirely my own. I was alone on the stage, with my own collaborators.

CAHIERS—What distinction can you make between the numbers you did for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and those you did for Warner Brothers?

BERKELEY—There was no such thing as a difference in studio style, if that's what you mean. The crucial differences were determined by the story line. The Warner's musicals were generally built around a backstage plot, hence a certain type of musical number that was performed on stage as a formal spectacle. At Metro, on the other hand, the numbers were sort of slipped into the plot. If there was a love scene in a living room, one of the actors began to address the other with a song, and I remained in the living room for the ensuing dialogue in the sequence. And even if other characters came in, the scene remained very intimate. I didn't have the huge space that was at my disposal when I filmed such a sequence on what was supposed to be a theatre stage. But my creative activity remains on the same level in either studio. Generally I work with a large number of people, for spectacle means spectacular, and spectacular means that many people take part in very complex numbers. Instead of using a dozen girls as others do, I prefer to use forty-eight or sixty. Then, to come back to your question, if my films differ from one studio to another, it's a matter of the scenarios. But I myself am exactly the same wherever I stage my numbers and my ideas about the filming of these numbers remain the same.

CAHIERS—When your numbers involve only two characters, is this solely due to the necessities of the scenario?

BERKELEY—Not the necessities, but rather the spirit. What I had to be faithful to was a certain atmosphere in the story. For example, if it were a matter of a boy who left home to go fishing: There was a scene with his wife or his fiancée, in the half-light, and it might very well be that he had to sing a song of the type "How long it's going to be spending all this time far from you!" . . . Then I had to direct the scene pleasantly with the two characters, and end with the departure of the fellow in a boat. But it's not, strictly speaking, my personal inclination to direct this scene in a more intimate manner than others. I must adapt my style to the type of song, scene, and so on as it comes along. Thus, the principal number of *Wonder Bar* "When this lovely dance is

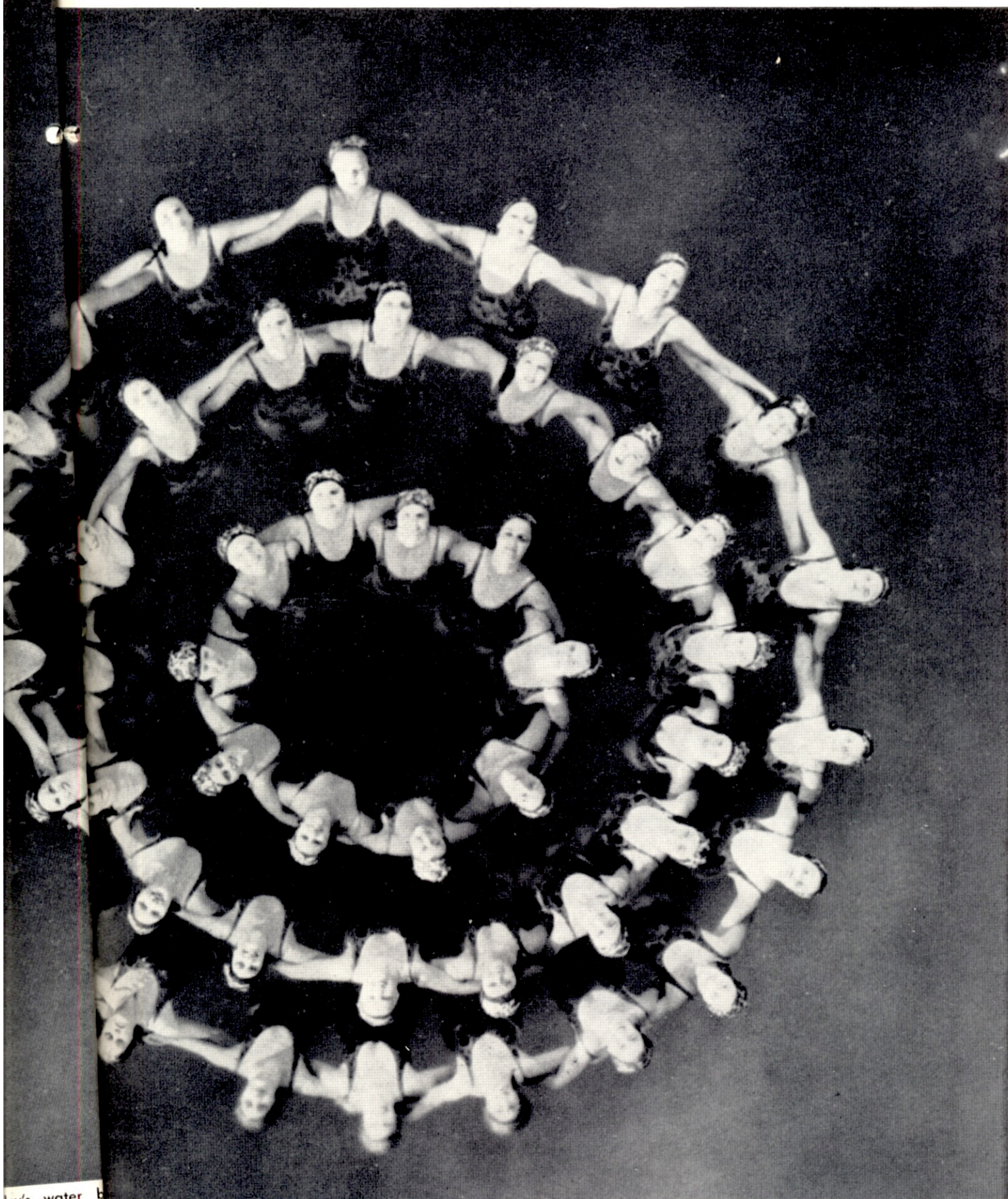
over don't say good night" was a spectacular cabaret scene with Dolores del Rio who was supposed to be a dancer in the cabaret. There were in addition sixty or seventy girls in the chorus. And I managed it so that audiences had the impression that there were a thousand. I work, I create, solely for the camera. For that reason the critics have often reproached me for neglecting the conventions in force, but that's all the same to me. If the public is enthusiastic, it doesn't wonder whether the number could have been mounted on a real stage or not. That question never comes up. So I concern myself exclusively with the fact that my work must take place in a film and must be successful in that medium. I have staged many shows on Broadway as well and so I know very thoroughly that they require an entirely different technique. The staging of a music hall spectacle is one thing, that of a cinematographic spectacle is another. For the actors, the difference is slight, but my technique must change entirely. At every instant I must be conscious that the only way I have of addressing the public is through the eye of a camera. So it is necessary to exploit the specific properties of the camera eye. Thus I have developed a certain technique that results from the way of imagining the number, of shooting it, of staging it, and so on, that people have called "the Berkeley technique" and that they have tried to copy. In vain, I might add, for the difference is in the way of imagining it. Recently I've seen very lovely musical numbers, especially on television, but you could see them as well in a cabaret or in a theater: that doesn't interest me. There is no longer any relation to the cinematographic spectacle, which for me was the result I felt I had to achieve. What I did from this point of view is unique, it could be done only in films, and even in films it hasn't been done since.

CAHIERS—Why is it that, in the middle of the musical films that constitute the essential part of your work, you made a dramatic film: *They Made Me a Criminal*?

BERKELEY—It was in my contract. Few people know it, but all my life—I mean in my youth especially—I have been interested in dramatic works. I have directed dramatic plays, that was my first interest. Then I tackled musical comedy and I discovered—what I wasn't aware of—that it was possible for me to create choreography when I had never taken a dancing lesson in my life. A great part of my work has not been the work of a choreographer strictly speaking, because, for me, if I dare to say it, it is the camera that must dance. There came a moment when I realized that in many aspects my choreography was more "dramatic" than "choreographic." From that time, why not make my own film instead of contenting myself with arranging a few sequences? Then my first film was *Gold Diggers of 1935*, but according to my contract, I was to make dramas as well as



Thorton Freeland: *Whoopie*, Busby Berkeley's water



ley's water b



Lloyd Bacon: *Footlight Parade*, James Cagney in one of Busby Berkeley's production numbers.



comedies. So they had me read a story that wasn't a comedy, but which I liked and which I filmed. I still have fond memories of it.

CAHIERS—Do you think the ballets of *42nd Street* influenced those of *Bandwagon* or of *Singin' in the Rain*?

BERKELEY—No. I tried to express some aspects of New York life, but New York belongs to everyone. I don't think there was any special influence.

CAHIERS—If your first choreographic settings could be termed essentially "decorative," isn't that partly because you still didn't have at your disposal very great dancers, but rather actors, like Mickey Rooney, who danced on occasion?

BERKELEY—Unfortunately at that time in Hollywood there was only one person who danced as I wished, that was Fred Astaire, who for me is the greatest dancer we have ever known. To see him dance with Ginger Rogers was truly something extraordinary and unequalled. But their style, which combined comedy scenes and dances, was entirely different from mine. For me it was a question only of what we have talked about and that I have called "spectacle." The most surprising occurrences followed one another in my ballets in a way that was my own, and that was what the public liked. People have often asked me how I went about creating these affects, how the idea for them came to me, and I have never known how to answer. Not that I don't want to, but I just can't. I'm completely at a loss to explain my "method." The only reply I could give such questions was "Come see me work, maybe you will understand how I go about it, but myself I can't be any help to you, I don't know anything about it." And one day, some admirers took me up on my suggestion, came to see me and explained to me how I went about it. It was astonishing! All that I was conscious of was my effort not to redo what had already been done, my effort to make something new, something surprising, something never seen before. Sometimes people ask me "If you had to do it over again, what would you do?" I am then obliged to answer that it's easy for me to say what I would do but that my questioners would be completely unable to visualize it and to recognize the images that I have in my mind. Often, besides, producers used to ask me what I was going to do and I was indeed obliged to tell them, but they didn't understand a word of what I said, and when they saw the result on the screen they exclaimed and said to me that they would never have thought that it would be that way. The only one who can know what the spectacle will be is the one who creates it, but it is impossible for him to describe it otherwise than in mounting it.

CAHIERS—Did you make use of several cameras?

BERKELEY—No. At the time, many directors oper-

ated that way and then chose takes in the cutting room. That was never the case with me. I created on the stage what I wanted to show on the screen. When I made *Whoopce*, I had never filmed before. Everything was new to me. Then I asked Sam Goldwyn for permission to walk about a little on the stages before filming to see how people worked and learn a little something. That was what I did. At the end of a few moments I understood that the camera can have only *one* eye and I said to myself: "Buzz, you can do an infinite number of things with a camera, it's your first film, you might as well begin at once." The first day of the shooting I came on the stage and saw four cameras. I asked the assistant cameraman why and he answered: "Buzz, we always use four cameras set in different places to get a variety of angles. Then at the cutting you organize it as you please." Then I said, "Me, I don't work that way! I only film with one camera!" He just stared at me, for everybody knew that I came from New York without having ever seen a camera before. I insisted: "Me, I do the editing in front of the camera." I proved it to them then and there, and I never had any trouble again. I trained myself to be able to imagine an entire musical sequence without having set foot on the stage, to film it exactly as it would be seen on the screen without the help of editing or of multiple cameras.

CAHIERS—Do you draw your numbers?

BERKELEY—I had sheets of paper covered with notes. But it's what's in my head that counts, what I see, what I imagine.

CAHIERS—In work like yours, does the director explain to the cameraman precisely what he wants, or does he let him choose the frames?

BERKELEY—Most film makers let him do what he wishes. Me, I don't work that way, I explain to the cameraman precisely what I want, and describe it for him to the final detail. Everything is already prepared in my head beforehand, so that doesn't take very long.

CAHIERS—In *Whoopce*, you weren't yet making use of your famous geometric patterns.

BERKELEY—No. In *Whoopce* what I did, for the first time in the history of films, was closeups of pretty girls. That had never been done in musical comedies. The patterns, the grand formation of dancers, came later when I worked for Warners and I filmed things like the "Shadow Waltz" of *Gold Diggers of 1935*. Ideas come in a strange way. One day in New York in the theatre I saw a girl dancing with a violin, the effect was very pretty and I said to myself that someday I would do that with a dozen girls or more. I never forgot it. Another day I saw four pianos on a stage. I thought it needed twenty or thirty. I still didn't know that I would go into films, but I never forgot that and when I made "Shadow Waltz" it was



Bus



Busby Berkeley: *Gold Diggers Of 1935*, "The Lullaby of Broadway" number.

with sixty girls, each with an illuminated violin.

CAHIERS—How long did the "Berkeley Girls" work and how much were they paid?

BERKELEY—I had sixteen magnificent girls under contract and I engaged others for each film. My beauties each earned sixty-four dollars a week, which wasn't bad if you consider that we were then in the middle of the depression. But they worked long hours. There was no union then to tell us to stop at six o'clock. I remember the shooting of "By a Waterfall." I took close-ups of girls in the water at three-thirty in the morning. And that didn't keep me from calling them back at eleven the same morning to go on! I think the people with whom I worked all liked me in spite of this heavy work, and they were all very nice to me.

CAHIERS—Can you talk to us about *Roman Scandals*?

BERKELEY—Two famous actresses made their starts in it. First of all, Paulette Goddard. I met her in the elevator of a Hollywood apartment building and I asked her if she had worked in movies before. She answered no. When I suggested a screen-test, she was very interested, and we made an appointment for the next day at the studio. She wasn't a dancer, but she became one of the Goldwyn Girls. *Roman Scandals* was also Lucille Ball's first film; she too was one of the Goldwyn Girls. One day, Goldwyn asked me to look at some tests he had asked some girls to make. He liked some of them, others not at all. Lucille Ball was one of the latter. Me, I liked her very much. Sam respected my opinion and that's how Lucille made her start. That was the movie in which Ruth Etting sang a number called "No More Love." It took place in a slave market where all the pretty girls were to be sold. They were shown on several levels of a huge pedestal. I thought it would be marvelous if they were all naked with long hair to their knees. I asked them if they were willing, taking into account that it would be filmed in an artistic manner and taking care to arrange their hair well over their breasts, and so on. They answered that they agreed, on condition of doing it at night, with the stage forbidden to all visitors. Only my cameraman and myself were present at the time of the shooting. Few people realize today, seeing the sequence, that I made it with girls completely naked. That was the only time that anything of the sort happened in a musical comedy.

CAHIERS—And *42nd Street*?

BERKELEY—After having signed my contract with Zanuck, I began rehearsals for that film. And immediately they made me sign a seven-year contract not because they had seen the rushes but because Zanuck was very impressed. He thought my imagination was extraordinary because I did things nobody

had ever done. So after *42nd Street* I enjoyed total freedom. Zanuck said: "Give him everything he wants in every department; that fellow knows the camera and he can make innovations." I was Zanuck's fair-haired boy. Mind you, *42nd Street* cost very little: 379,000 dollars, which is unbelievable in relation to today's budgets. My musical numbers at Warners came to 10,000 dollars a minute in the film and some of them lasted 7 to 10 minutes. So my numbers cost between 75,000 and 125,000 dollars.

CAHIERS—Wasn't "By a Waterfall" one of your longest sequences?

BERKELEY—Yes. The day I had the idea, I let Jack Warner know about it and he told me I would ruin even the Bank of America. Nevertheless, some weeks later, he asked me if I still wanted to make it. From then on he let me work with the technicians, design the enormous aquarium with glass sides to let the light pass through. There was extraordinary equipment to make the waterfall. It had never been done before. There were a hundred girls who took part in the number. We rehearsed fifteen days and shot in six. Today, I would do it in three. But "By a Waterfall" would cost a quarter of a million dollars a day. That was the most difficult number of my career to film because of the shots under water and because of the physical efforts that the girls had to make in the water. And then there was the equipment: it was comparable to the Queen Mary's.

CAHIERS—How many takes did you need?

BERKELEY—I have never in my entire career called for a second take. The only thing I've happened to do was to rewrite a scene and then, of course, refilm. But second take: never! The secret of my work is preparation. If you don't know what you're going to do, better not begin. Nevertheless I'm going to contradict myself by talking to you about *Wonder Bar*. For that film I asked the studio to construct forty or eighty mobile columns before I knew what I was going to do with them. All that I knew was that they would make an effect. I made use of them during the number "Don't Say Goodnight" making use, too, of mirrors that gave the impression that hundreds of people were dancing the minuet. The mirrors were 22 by 16 feet. On the stage, people thought that I was crazy and that the camera would be reflected in them and would be seen. Me, I knew that I could film 360 degrees with the camera. I had experimented in my office with a little miniature stage, mirror and a pencil. You must always invent. Unfortunately, it's hard to explain in an abstract manner how I proceeded.

CAHIERS—Could you talk to us about sound recording techniques?

BERKELEY—I made some films in which the orchestra was on the stage, the singers on another side

go back to the dance. That's not the way you should do it." But Bill insisted, "And if I had a ten-cent star, would that interest you? What would you do with it?" "About Eddie Cantor?" I answered "O.K. Who would be the producers?" "Ziegfeld and Goldwyn." "Very well, what's the show?" "*Whoopie*." It was Cantor's gre-

success on Broadway. After *Whoopee*, I was ready to return to New York to work in the theater again, but one day in 1932 Darryl Zanuck telephoned me to ask if I would like to stay. Warner Brothers were going to make a new series of musical comedies; I was to direct the numbers for them. Thus I signed with Zanuck and Warners for *42nd Street*, the *Gold Diggers* series, *Footlight Parade*, *Wonder Bar* and so on. I had no idea at all that Warners were in a desperate financial situation and that they were even about to close the studio. After that series of musical comedies, they got out of trouble.

CAHIERS—Could you go into detail about the role of a producer like Arthur Freed in the films you made for him at Metro?

BERKELEY—I made four or five with him. Once, for *Babes in Arms*, the story had been turned down by many producers and Arthur Freed, who decided to film it, couldn't find a director to do it. Nobody was willing. Then they had me read it and I thought it was terrific. I said: "Give me young Mickey Rooney, little Judy Garland, and I'll give you a fantastic film." The role of the producer consists in bringing everybody together: directors, actors, composers, scenarists, and so on. Then, afterwards, everything becomes the director's business. Of course before the shooting there are meetings where everyone gives his opinion, but in the end, the director's opinion is decisive. And the real work begins only then, when the director is sole master aboard.

CAHIERS—What do you think of the present situation of musical comedy?

BERKELEY—At present it's experiencing a bad period. But there are cycles in our profession, and it's not impossible that one of these days some one gifted with a great talent will make a musical comedy extraordinary enough to ensure the renaissance of the genre.

CAHIERS—How does it happen that after having been a director, you went back to being only a choreographer for other directors' films, sometimes mediocre films, like *Ziegfeld Girl*?

BERKELEY—I was making another film then and my contract stipulated that when I had finished it I was to set the ballets for *Ziegfeld Girl*, which was already begun. Therefore these musical numbers were to take place in a story that couldn't be changed and they were not very spectacular, except for one which was, I think, rather successful.

CAHIERS—Did you like working with Charles Walters?

BERKELEY—Oh yes! He was an old friend. It was he who wanted us to make *Jumbo* together. It was his film, and he thought nobody could direct the musical numbers he wanted as I could.

CAHIERS—How does it happen that you did nothing

between *Rose Marie* and *Jumbo*?

BERKELEY—Very fortunately, I don't have to work. I have a pleasant house away from the stir. If people need me, they know where to find me. And me, I write, I think calmly, I give myself to other creative activities. Ideas come to me, I write them up and develop them that way, in my study, in the event that I would be able to film them. But, since *Jumbo*, I have done nothing. I tell you, people are making hardly any musical comedies just now. But for my part,



I'm ready to work again, and it is probable that one of these days I will. I would like very much that it be for television.

CAHIERS—Have you taken certain parts of *Singin' in the Rain* as an homage that Kelly and Donen wanted to pay you?

BERKELEY—Perhaps. I don't know. But the film was remarkable. Gene is a very great dancer. He thinks that the film I made with Judy Garland and him: *For Me and My Gal* (a musical comedy, but

dramatic) is his best film. And yet it was his first. I must have taught him much. But he had capacity, he learned quickly! It was very gratifying to work with him.

CAHIERS—Among the dancers—men and women—with whom you worked, which was your favorite?

BERKELEY—No doubt Eleanor Powell. She was extraordinary! In her way she was as great as Fred Astaire. But the actress who is really my favorite, who for me is out of competition, was Ruby Keeler!



Mervyn Le Roy: *Gold Diggers of 1933*, Busby Berkeley's "Remember My Forgotten Man" number.

Filmography

by Ralph Crandall



They Made Me A Criminal, Huntz Hall, John Garfield, Billy Halop.

Busby Berkeley was born William Berkeley Enos at Los Angeles November 29, 1895. His father's name was William Enos and his mother's Gertrude Berkeley. He started, first on Broadway as impresario, director and choreographer, then joined Warner Brothers which, from the advent of the talking film, had specialized more or less in the musical.

For the filmography that follows, we have intentionally limited to three actors the casts of films for which Berkeley did only the choreography.

1930 WHOOPEE. 12 reels. *Director:* Thornton Freeland. *Producers:* Samuel Goldwyn, Florenz Ziegfeld (United Artists). *Scenario:* from the play "The Nervous Wreck" by Owen Davis and the story "The Wreck" by E. J. Rath and Robert H. Davis. *Music:* Walter Donaldson. *Lyrics:* Gus Kahn. *Choreography:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Eddie Cantor, Eleanor Hunt, Paul Gregory.

1931 KIKI. 10 reels. *Director:* Samuel Taylor. *Producer:* Feature Prod. Inc. *Scenario:* Samuel Taylor from the play by David Belasco, from the play by André Picard. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Mary Pickford, Reginald Denny, Joseph Cawthorne.

1931 PALMY DAYS. 9 reels. *Director:* Edward Sutherland. *Producer:* Edward Sutherland, Samuel Goldwyn (United Artists). *Scenario:* Keene Thompson from a story by Eddie Cantor, Morrie Ryskind, David Freeman. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Eddie Cantor, Charlotte Greenwood, George Raft.

1931 FLYING HIGH. 9 reels. *Director:* Charles F. Riesner. *Producer:* Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. *Scenario:* A. P. Younger. *Additional Dialogue:* Robert E. Hopkins. *Adaptation:* Charles F. Riesner. *Music and Lyrics:* George G. de Silva, Lew Burton, Ray Henderson, John McGowan. *Choreography:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Bert Lahr, Charlotte Greenwood, Charles Winninger.

1932 NIGHT WORLD. 6 reels. *Director:* Hobart Henley. *Producer:* Universal. *Scenario:* Richard Schayer from the story by P. J. Wolfson and Allen Rivkin. *Choreography:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Lew Ayres, Mae Clarke, Boris Karloff.

1932 BIRD OF PARADISE. 9 reels. *Director:* King Vidor. *Producer:* King Vidor (Radio-Keith-Orpheum). *Scenario:* Wells Root, Wanda Tuchock, Leonard Praskins from the play by Richard Walton Tully. *Choreography:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Joel McCrea, Dolores del Rio, John Halliday.

1932 THE KID FROM SPAIN. 11 reels. *Director:* Léo McCarey. *Producer:* Samuel Goldwyn (United Artists). *Scenario:* William Anthony McGuire, Bert Kalmar, Harry Ruby. *Music and Lyrics:* Bert Kalmar, Harry Ruby. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Eddie Cantor, Lyda Roberti, Robert Young.

1933 42ND STREET. 89 min. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Rian James, James Seymour from a story by Bradford Ropes. *Music and Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Warner Baxter, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler.

1933 GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933. 98 min. *Director:* Mervyn Le Roy. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Erwin Gelsey, James Seymour from the play by Avery Hopwood "Gold Diggers of Broadway." *Dialogue:* David Boehn, Ben Markson. *Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren. *Choreography:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, Ginger Rogers.

1933 SHE HAD TO SAY YES. 62 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* George Amy. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* Rian James, Don Mullaly from the story by John Francis Larkin "Customer's Girl." *Cast:* Loretta Young, Lyle Talbot.

1933 FOOTLIGHT PARADE. 104 min. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Manuel Seff, James Seymour. *Lyrics:* Irving Kahal, Sammy Fain, Al Dubin, Harry Warren. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* James Cagney, Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler.

1933 ROMAN SCANDALS. 10 reels. *Director:* Frank Tuttle. *Producer:* Samuel Goldwyn (United Artists). *Scenario:* William Anthony McGuire from the story by George S. Kaufman, Robert E. Sherwood. *Additional dialogue:* George Oppenheimer, Arthur Sheekman, Nat Perrin. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Eddie Cantor, Gloria Stuart, Ruth Etting.

1934 WONDER BAR. 10 reels. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* Earl Baldwin from the play by Geza Herazog, Karl Farkas, Robert Katscher. *Music and Lyrics:* Harry Warren, Al Dubin. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick

Powell, Al Jolson, Dolores del Rio.

1934 FASHIONS OF 1934. 78 min. *Director:* William Dieterle. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* F. Hugh Herbert, Carl Erickson from the story by Harry Collins and Warren Duff. *Lyrics:* Irving Kahal, Sammy Fain. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Bette Davis, William Powell, Reginald Owen.

1934 TWENTY MILLION SWEET-HEARTS. 9 reels. *Director:* Ray Enright. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* Warren Duff, Harry Sauber from the story by Paul Finder Moss and Jerry Wald. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Ginger Rogers, Pat O'Brien.

1934 DAMES. 10 reels. *Director:* Ray Enright. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Delmar (Delmer) Daves from the story by Delmar Daves and Robert Lord. *Lyrics:* Irving Kahal, Sammy Fain, Al Dubin, Harry Warren, Mort Dixon, Allie Wrubel. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, Joan Blondell.

1935 GOLD DIGGERS OF 1935. 98 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* Manuel Seff, Peter Milne from the story by Robert Lord and Peter Milne. *Photography:* George Barnes. *Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Adolphe Menjou, Gloria Stuart, Alice Brady, Glenda Farrell, Frank McHugh, Hugh Herbert, Joseph Cawthorne, Grant Mitchell, Winifred Shaw, Dorothy Dare, Thomas Jackson, Ramon and Rosita.

1935 GO INTO YOUR DANCE. 10 reels. *Director:* Archie Mayo. *Producer:* First National. *Scenario:* Earle Baldwin from the novel by Bradford Ropes. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Al Jolson, Ruby Keeler.

1935 A TRIP THROUGH A HOLLYWOOD STUDIO. 10 min. *Director:* Ralph Staub. *Commentary, dialogue:* Joe Traub. *Producer:* Vitaphone, Inc. *Cast:* Hugh Herbert, Winifred Shaw, Rudy Vallee, Pat O'Brien, Ann Dvorak, James Cagney, Dolores del Rio, BUSBY BERKELEY.

1935 BRIGHT LIGHTS. 83 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Bert Kalmar, Harry Ruby from the story by Lois Leeson. *Adaptation:* Ben Markson, Benny Rubin. *Photography:* Sid Hickox. *Music:* Leo Forbstein (D.) *Lyrics:* Bert Kalmar, Mort Dixon, Grant Clarke, Allie Wrubel. *Cast:* Joe E. Brown, Ann Dvorak, Patricia Ellis, William Gargan, Joseph Cawthorne, Henry O'Neill, Arthur Treacher, Gordon Westcott, Joseph Chehan, William Demarest, Jack Wise, Phil Ryley, Tom Kennedy, Howard Hickman, Gene Morgan, William Jeffery, Eddie Larkin, Irving Bacon, Grace Hayle, Sam Ash, Charles Kalcy, Milt Kibbee, The Maxelles, William Davidson, August Tularé.

1935 IN CALIENTE. 84 min. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Julius Ep-

stein from the story by Ralph Block and Warren Duff. *Adaptation:* Ralph Block, Warren Duff. *Music:* Leo Forbstein (D.). *Lyrics:* Mort Dixon, Allie Wrubel, Al Dubin, Harry Warren. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dolores del Rio, Pat O'Brien, Leo Carrillo.

1935 I LIVE FOR LOVE. 8 reels. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Bryan Foy (Warner Bros.). *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Julius J. Epstein, Robert Andrews from the story by Julius J. Epstein, Jerry Wald and Robert Andrews. *Photography:* George Barnes. *Music and Lyrics:* Allie Wrubel, Mort Dixon. *Cast:* Dolores del Rio, Everett Marshall, Guy Kibbee, Allen Jenkins, Berton Churchill, Hobart Cavanaugh, Don Alvarado, Mary Treen, Eddie Conrad, Shaw and Leon, Robert Craig, Mike Morita.

1935 STARS OVER BROADWAY. 89 min. *Director:* William Keighley. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Julius Epstein from the story by Mildred Cram. *Additional dialogue:* Patsy Flick. *Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren, Carson J. Robinson. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Bobby Connolly.* *Cast:* James Melton, Jane Froman, Pat O'Brien.

1936 STAGE STRUCK. 10 reels. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Tom Buckingham, Pat C. Flick from the story by Robert Lord. *Photography:* Byron Haskin. *Music and Lyrics:* E. Y. Harburg, Harold Arlen. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, Warren William, Frank McHugh, Jeanne Madden, Carol Hughes, Craig Reynolds, Hobart Cavanaugh, The Yacht Club Boys, Johnnie Arthur, Spring Byington, Thomas Pogue, Andrew Tombes, Lulu McConnell, Val Stanton, Edward Gargan, Ed Chandler, Libby Taylor, Mary Gordon.

1936 GOLD DIGGERS OF 1937. 101 min. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Warren Duff, Tom Reed from the play "Sweet Mystery of Life" by Richard Maibaum, Michael Wallach, George Haight. *Music and Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren, E. Y. Harburg, Harold Arlen. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Glenda Farrell, Lee Dixon.

1937 THE GO-GETTER. 92 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Hal B. Wallis (Warner Bros.). *Scenario:* Delmar (Delmer) Daves from the story by Peter B. Kyne. *Photography:* Arthur Edson. *Music:* Leo F. Forbstein. *Cast:* George Brent, Anita Louise, Charles Winninger, John Eldredge, Henry O'Neill, Joseph Crehan, Gordon Oliver, Eddie Acuff, Willard Robertson, Pierre Watkin, Helen Walkis, Herbert Rawlinson, Helen Lowell, Harry Beresford, Minerva Urecal, Mary Treen, Edward Price, Edward Gargan, George Humber.

1937 SINGING MARINE. 105 min. *Director:* Ray Enright. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Delmar (Delmer)

Daves. *Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren, Johnny Mercer. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Doris Weston, Lee Dixon.

1937 VARSITY SHOW. 121 min. *Director:* William Keighley. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay, Sid Herzig, Warren Duff from the story by Warren Duff and Sid Herzig. *Lyrics:* Johnny Mercer, Richard Whiting. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Fred Waring, Ted Healy.

1937 HOLLYWOOD HOTEL. 109 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Maurice Leo, Richard Macaulay from the story by Jerry Wald and Maurice Leo. *Photography:* Charles Rosher, George Barnes. *Music:* Leo F. Forbstein, Ray Heindorf. *Lyrics:* Johnny Mercer, Richard Whiting. *Cast:* Dick Powell, Rosemary Lane, Lola Lane, Hugh Herbert, Ted Healy, Glenda Farrell, Johnnie Davis, Alan Mowbray, Mabel Todd, Frances Langford, Allyn Joslyn, Grant Mitchell, Edgar Kennedy, Raymond Paige and his orchestra, Benny Goodman and his band, Louella Parsons, Jerry Cooper, Ken Miles, Duane Thompson, Perc Westmore, Fritz Feld, Curt Bois, Eddie Acuff, Clinton Rosemond, William Davidson, Wally Maher, Georgia Cooper, Libby Taylor, Joe Romantini, Paul Irving.

1938 MEN ARE SUCH FOOLS. 70 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Norman Reilly Raine, Helen Jackson from the story by Faith Baldwin. *Photography:* Sid Hickox. *Cast:* Wayne Morris, Priscilla Lane, Humphrey Bogart, Penny Singleton, Hugh Herbert, Marcia Ralston, Gene Lockhart, Kathleen Lockhart, Johnnie Davis, Donald Briggs, Mona Barrie, Reine Riano, Claude Allister.

1938 GOLD DIGGERS IN PARIS. 95 min. *Director:* Ray Enright. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Earl Baldwin, Warren Duff from the story by Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay and Maurice Leo. *Lyrics:* Al Dubin, Harry Warren, Johnny Mercer. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Rudy Vallee, Rosemary Lane, Carole Landis.

1938 GARDEN OF THE MOON. 94 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay from the story by H. Bedford-Jones and Barton Browne, published in the "Saturday Evening Post." *Photography:* Tony Gaudio. *Music:* Leo Forbstein. *Lyrics:* Johnny Mercer, Harry Warren, V. Rose, Larry Stock, J. Cavanaugh. *Cast:* Pat O'Brien, Margaret Lindsay, John Payne, Johnny Davis, Melville Cooper, Isabel Jeans, Mabel Todd, Penny Singleton, Dick Purcell, Jerry Colonna, Jimmy Fidler, Curt Bois, Granville Bates, Edward McWade, Larry Williams, Joe Venuti, Ray Mayer.

1938 COMET OVER BROADWAY. 69 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY.

Producer: Warner Bros. *Scenario:* Mark Hellinger, Robert Buckner from the story by Faith Baldwin. *Photography:* James Wong Howe. *Cast:* Kay Francis, Ian Hunter, John Litel, Donald Crisp, Minna Gombell, Sybil Jason, Melville Cooper, Ian Keith, Vera Lewis, Edward McWade, Clem Bevans, Linda Winters, Jack Mower, Jack Wise, Leona Marical, Ray Mayer, Nat Carr, Chester Clute.

1939 THEY MADE ME A CRIMINAL. 92 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producers:* Jack L. Warner, Hal B. Wallis, Benjamin Glazer (asst.) (Warner Bros.). *Scenario:* Sid Herzig from the story by Bertram Millhauser and Beulah Marie Dix. *Photography:* James Wong Howe. *Music:* Max Steiner. *Cast:* John Garfield, Claude Rains, Ann Sheridan, May Robson, Gloria Dickson, Billy Halop, Bobby Jordan, Leo Gorcey, Gabriel Dell, Huntz Hall, Bernard Punsly, Robert Gleckler, John Ridgely, Barbara Pepper, Louis Jean Heydt, Cliff Clark, Raymond Brown, William Davidson, Ward Bond, Robert Strange, Frank Riggi, Dick Wessel, Sam Hayes.

1939 BROADWAY SERENADE. 113 min. *Director:* Robert Z. Leonard. *Producer:* Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. *Scenario:* Charles Lederer from the story by Lew Lipton, Hans Kraly and John Taintor Foote. *Music:* Herbert Stothart. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Jeanette MacDonald, Lew Ayres, Ian Hunter.

1939 BABES IN ARMS. 97 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Jack McGowan, Kay van Ripper from the musical by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. *Photography:* Ray June. *Music:* George Stoll (D), Roger Edens, Leo Arnaud, George Bassman. *Lyrics:* Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart. *Cast:* Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, June Preisser, Guy Kibbee, Betty Jaynes, Douglas MacPhail, Charles Winninger, Grace Hayes, Margaret Hamilton, Rand Brooks, Leni Lynn, John Sheffield, Henry Hull, Barnett Parker, Ann Shoemaker, Joseph Crehan, George McKay, Henry Roquemore, Lelah Tyler.

1939 FAST AND FURIOUS. 73 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Fredrick Stephani (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Harry Kurnitz. *Photography:* Ray June. *Music:* Daniele Amfitheatrof, Constantin Bakelinkoff. *Cast:* Franchot Tone, Ann Sothorn, Ruth Hussey, John Miljan, Allyn Joslyn, Bernard Nadell, Mary Beth Hughes, Cliff Clark, James Burke, Frank Orth, Margaret Roach, Gladys Blake, Granville Kurnitz.

1940 FORTY LITTLE MOTHERS. 94 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Harry Rapf (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Dorothy Yost, Ernest Pagano from the story by Jean Guilton. *Photography:* Charles Lawton. *Cast:* Eddie Cantor, Judith Anderson,

Ralph Morgan, Rita Johnson, Bonita Granville, Diana Lewis, Nydia Westman, Margaret Early, Martha O'Driscoll, Charlotte Munier, Louise Seidel, Baby Quintanilla.

1940 STRIKE UP THE BAND. 121 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* John Monks, Fred Finklehoffe. *Photography:* Ray June. *Music:* George Stoll, Roger Edens, Arthur Freed, Ira Gershwin. *Cast:* Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, Paul Whiteman and his orchestra, William Tracy, June Preisser, Larry Nunn, Margaret Early, Ann Shoemaker, Francis Pierlot, Virginia Brissac, George Lessey, Enid Bennett, Howard Hickman, Sarah Edwards, Milton Kibbee, Helen Jerome Eddy.

1941 BLONDE INSPIRATION. 72 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* E. P. Fineman (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Marion Parsonnet from the play by John Cecil Holm. *Music:* Bronislau Kaper. *Cast:* John Shelton, Virginia Grey.

1941 ZIEGFELD GIRL. 131 min. *Director:* Norman Z. McLeod. *Producer:* Pandro S. Berman (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Marguerite Roberts, Soyna Levien from the story by W. Anthony McGuire. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Judy Garland, Hedy Lamarr, Lana Turner, James Stewart.

1941 LADY BE GOOD. 110 min. *Director:* Norman Z. McLeod. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Jack McGowan, Kay van Ripper, John McClain from the story by Jack McGowan. *Music:* George Stoll (D), Leo Arnaud, George Bassman, Conrad Salinger (O). *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Eleanor Powell, Ann Sothorn, Robert Young.

1941 BABES ON BROADWAY. 118 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Fred Finklehoffe, Elaine Ryan from the story by Fred Finklehoffe. *Photography:* Lester White. *Music and Lyrics:* Ralph Freed, E. Y. Harburg, Roger Edens, Harold Rome, Al Stillman, Burton Lane, Vincente Paiva. *Cast:* Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, Fay Bainter, Ray McDonald, Virginia Weidler, Alexander Wollcott, Richard Quine, Ann Rooney, Donald Meek, Luis Alberni.

1941 BORN TO SING. 82 min. *Director:* Edward Ludwig. *Producer:* Frederick Stephani (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Harry Clark, Franz G. Spencer from the story by Franz G. Spencer. *Music:* Dave Snell, Lennie Hayton (D), Wally Heglin, Leonid Raab (O). *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Cast:* Virginia Weidler, Ray McDonald, Leo Gorcey.

1942 CALLING ALL GIRLS. 20 min. *Producer:* Warner Bros. "Broadway Brevities." *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY.

1942 FOR ME AND MY GAL. 104 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario:* Richard Sherwood, Fred Finklehoffe, Sid Silvers from the story by Howard Emmett Rogers. *Photography:* William Daniels. *Lyrics:* Seymour Brown, Milton Ager, Henry Creamer, Turner Layton, Gus Kahn, Joe Young, Egbert van Alstyne, Chris Smith, Sam Lewis, Walter Donaldson, Howard Johnson, Percy Wenrich. *Music:* Roger Edens, Conrad Salinger, George Bassman, Leo Arnaud, George Stoll. *Choreographer:* Bobby Connolly. *Cast:* Judy Garland, Gene Kelly, George Murphy, Martha Eggerth, Ben Blue, Richard Quine, Lucille Norman, Horace McNally, Keenan Wynn.

1943 THREE CHEERS FOR THE GIRLS. 20 min. *Producer:* Warner Bros. "Broadway Brevities." *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY.

1943 GIRL CRAZY. 99 min. *Director:* Norman Taurog. *Producer:* Arthur Freed (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Fred F. Finklehoffe from the musical "Girl Crazy" by Guy Bolton and John McGowan. *Lyrics:* George and Ira Gershwin. *Choreographers:* Charles Walters (for Judy Garland's sequences), BUSBY BERKELEY (for the sequence "I Got Rhythm"). *Cast:* Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, June Allyson.

1943 THE GANG'S ALL HERE. 103 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* William LeBaron (20th Century-Fox). *Scenario:* Walter Bullock from the story by Nancy Winter, George Root and Tom Bridges. *Photography:* Edward Cronjager (Technicolor). *Lyrics:* Leo Robin, Harry Warren. *Music:* Alfred Newman (D). *Cast:* Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, Phil Baker, Benny Goodman and his Orchestra, Eugene Pallette, Charlotte Greenwood, Edward Everett Horton, Tony de Marco, James Ellison, Sheila Ryan, Dave Willock, Miriam Lavelle, Charles Saggau, George Dobbs, Leon Belasco.

1946 CINDERELLA JONES. 92 min. *Director:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Alex Gottlieb (Warner Bros.). *Scenario:* Charles Hoffman from the story by Philip Wylie. *Photography:* Sol Polito. *Lyrics:* Jule Styne, Sammy Cahn. *Music:* Ray Heindorf, Frank Perkins (O), Leo F. Forbstein (D). *Cast:* Joan Leslie, Robert Alda, S. Z. Sakall, Edward Everett Horton, Julie Bishop, William Prince, Charles Dingle, Ruth Donnelly, Elisha Cook Jr., Hobart Cavanaugh, Charles Arnt, Chester Clute, Ed Gargan, Margaret Early, Johnny Mitchell, Mary Dean, Monte Blue, Marianne O'Brien, Marion Martin.

1949 TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME. (cf. complete note in Betty Comden/Adolph Green filmography).

1950 TWO WEEKS—WITH LOVE. 92 min. *Director:* Roy Rowland. *Producer:* Jack Cummings (M.G.M.) *Scenario:* John Larkin, Dorothy Kingsley



Lloyd Bacon: 42nd Street, Ruby Keeler.

from the story by John Larkin. *Lyrics:* Sidney Baynes, Alfred G. Robyn, Thomas G. Railey, Lucien Denny, Roger Lewis. *Music:* Leo Arnaud (O), George Stoll (D). *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY (who directed the sequence "Aba Daba Honeymoon" with Debbie Reynolds and Carleton Carpenter). (Technicolor). *Cast:* Jane Powell, Ricardo Montalban, Louis Calhern.

1951 CALL ME MISTER. 96 min. *Director:* Lloyd Bacon. *Producer:* Fred Kohlmar (20th Century-Fox). *Scenario:* Albert E. Lewin, Burt Styler from the musical revue by Harold J. Rome and Arnold M. Auerbach. *Lyrics:* Harold J. Rome, Arnold M. Auerbach. *Music:* Leigh Harline, Earle Hagen, Herbert Spencer (O), Alfred Newman (D). *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. (Technicolor). *Cast:* Betty Grable, Dan Dailey, Dale Robertson.

1951 TWO TICKETS TO BROADWAY. 106 min. *Director:* James V. Kern. *Producer:* Howard Hughes (Radio Keith Orpheum). *Scenario:* Sid Silvers, Hal Kanter from the story by Sammy Kahn. *Music:* Walter Scharf, Constantin Bakaleinikoff (D). *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. (Technicolor). *Cast:* Tony Martin, Janet Leigh, Gloria deHaven.

1952 MILLION DOLLAR MER-

MAID. 115 min. *Director:* Mervyn LeRoy. *Producer:* Arthur Hornblow (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Everett Freeman. *Music:* Adolph Deutsch. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. (Technicolor). *Cast:* Esther Williams, Victor Mature, Walter Pidgeon.

1953 SMALL TOWN GIRL. 93 min. *Director:* Leslie Kardos. *Producer:* Joe Pasternak (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Dorothy Cooper, Dorothy Kingsley from the story by Dorothy Cooper. *Lyrics:* Leo Robin, Nicholas Brodsky. *Choreographer:* BUSBY BERKELEY. (Technicolor). *Cast:* Jane Powell, Ann Miller, Ebb Van.

1953 EASY TO LOVE. 96 min. *Director:* Charles Walters. *Second unit:* BUSBY BERKELEY. *Producer:* Joe Pasternak (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Laslo Vadnay, William Roberts from the story by Laslo Vadnay. *Photography:* Ray June (Technicolor). *Cast:* Esther Williams, Van Johnson, Tony Martin, John Bromfield, Edna Skinner, King Donovan, Paul Bryar, Carroll Baker, Eddie Oliver, Benny Rubin, Cyd Charisse.

1954 ROSE MARIE. 106 min. *Mervyn LeRoy. Second unit:* BUSBY BERKELEY (who directed the entire Indian ballet danced by Joan Taylor). *Producer:* Mervyn LeRoy (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Ronald Millar, George Froeschel from the musical by Oscar Ham-

merstein and Otto A. Harbach. *Photography:* Paul Vogel (Eastman color — Cinemascope). *Lyrics:* Paul Francis Webster, Rudolph Friml, George Stoll, Herbert Baker, Oscar Hammerstein, Otto A. Harbach. *Music:* Rudolph Friml, Herbert Stothart. *Cast:* Ann Blyth, Howard Keel, Fernando Lamas, Bert Lahr, Marjorie Main, Joan Taylor, Ray Collins, Chief Yowlachie, Abel Fernandez.

1962 JUMBO/BILLY ROSE'S JUMBO. 125 min. *Director:* Charles Walters. *Second unit:* BUSBY BERKELEY (who directed all the circus sequences). *Producers:* Joe Pasternak, Martin Melcher, Roger Edens (M.G.M.). *Scenario:* Sidney Sheldon from the musical by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. *Photography:* William H. Daniels (Metrocolor-Panavision). *Music and Lyrics:* Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. *Cast:* Doris Day, Stephen Boyd, Jimmy Durante, Martha Raye, Dean Jagger, Joseph Waring, Lynn Wood, Charles Watts, James Chandler, Robert Burton, Wilson Wood, Norman Leavitt, Grady Sutton, Robert B. Williams, Ron Henson, The Carlises, The Pedrolas, The Wazzans, Billy Barton, Corky Cristiani, Victor Julian, Richard Berg, Joe Monahan, Miss Lani, Adolphe Dubsky, Pat Anthony, Janos Prohaska, The Barbettes, Sidney.



Betty Comden and Adolph Green.

Interview With Betty Comden and Adolph Green

by Jean-François Hauduroy

It was at MGM, around producer Arthur Freed—his significance should never be overlooked—that Betty Comden and Adolph Green wrote the scenarios that had much to do with the success of the masterpieces of Minnelli, Donen and Kelly. In the influence on Kelly's musicals, their career intersects Busby Berkeley's. So we thought it opportune to join to his this valuable testimony—on their work, no doubt, but also on a genre and already: an epoch . . .

CAHIERS—How did you start?

BETTY COMDEN—At first we wanted to become actors and we met when we were looking for work in the theater. Shortly thereafter, we came to know Judy Holliday. With her and two other young acting aspirants, we formed a group called "The Revuers." Since we couldn't get an engagement on Broadway, we started at the Village Vanguard, a little club in Greenwich Village that was then lodged in a cellar. It wasn't a night club at that time; they didn't serve alcohol. Young poets of the 20's and 30's came there to recite their works, but the owner wanted to change his format, and that way we began to perform our shows Sunday evenings.

ADOLPH GREEN—We wrote our own material because we couldn't allow ourselves the luxury of paying writers. The proprietor, Max Gordon, who still owns the Village Vanguard, soon put us on the bill five evenings a week. In fact, people from Broadway and New York theatrical and literary circles began rushing down to watch our shows. We had in the Village an ideal audience, very representative of American culture. So our story, in a way, sounds like a musical comedy of that period. Besides, several films—we realized it later—were inspired by our adventure. You could have called it "The Greenwich Village Kids". . .

COMDEN—. . . or "Boys and Girls in a Cellar". . .

GREEN—But we had to go on struggling for several years. We wrote and played many shows. We worked also in radio. For a year and a half, we presented a half-hour show for which we wrote the material, the music and the songs and which our group performed—all that, at that time, for very little money. Today, with television, we would have become famous in one

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It was at MGM, around producer Arthur Freed—his significance should never be overlooked—that Betty Comden and Adolph Green wrote the scenarios that had much to do with the success of the masterpieces of Minnelli, Donen and Kelly. In the influence on Kelly's musicals, their career intersects Busby Berkeley's. So we thought it opportune to join to him this valuable testimony—on their work, no doubt, but also on a genre and already: an epoch . . .

CAHIERS—How did you start?

BETTY COMDEN—At first we wanted to become actors and we met when we were looking for work in the theater. Shortly thereafter, we came to know Judy Holliday. With her and two other young acting aspirants, we formed a group called "The Revuers." Since we couldn't get an engagement on Broadway, we started at the Village Vanguard, a little club in Greenwich Village that was then lodged in a cellar. It wasn't a night club at that time; they didn't serve alcohol. Young poets of the 20's and 30's came there to recite their works, but the owner wanted to change his format, and that way we began to perform our shows Sunday evenings.

ADOLPH GREEN—We wrote our own material because we couldn't allow ourselves the luxury of paying writers. The proprietor, Max Gordon, who still owns the Village Vanguard, soon put us on the bill five evenings a week. In fact, people from Broadway and New York theatrical and literary circles began rushing down to watch our shows. We had in the Village an ideal audience, very representative of American culture. So our story, in a way, sounds like a musical comedy of that period. Besides, several films—we realized it later—were inspired by our adventure. You could have called it "The Greenwich Village Kids" . . .

COMDEN— . . . or "Boys and Girls in a Cellar" . . .

GREEN—But we had to go on struggling for several years. We wrote and played many shows. We worked also in radio. For a year and a half, we presented a half-hour show for which we wrote the material, the music and the songs and which our group performed—all that, at that time, for very little money. Today, with television, we would have become famous in one



evening and our fortune would have been made, or we would have disappeared without leaving a trace. Finally our group broke up. Judy Holliday soon became a famous actress and at last we wrote our first show for the theater. It was *On the Town*, in which we acted and which was staged in collaboration with Leonard Bernstein and Jerome Robbins.

CAHIERS—*On the Town* was inspired by *Fancy Free*, Robbins' ballet?

GREEN—Only to the extent that it was about three sailors, and also because the talents of Bernstein and Robbins had been discovered when the ballet was created. One can say that in this way *On the Town* was indeed inspired by *Fancy Free*.

COMDEN—I played the part of Claire, the anthropologist, and Adolph acted that of Ozzie, the sailor. In the movie Jules Munshin did Ozzie and Ann Miller did Claire.

GREEN—But their numbers on the screen were not the same as those we did on the stage.

COMDEN—That was the last time we played a show, except for "A Party" which was presented in New York a few years ago. It was a one-man, one woman show in which sketches written over the years were collected. Some were extracts from our Village Vanguard shows, the others from our more recent shows.

GREEN—We had an astonishing success, as much with the critics as with the public. Astonishing to the extent that we hadn't foreseen anything of the kind. We had spent very little time preparing this show: one afternoon and an evening, then one whole day more for rehearsing it.

COMDEN—We had first thought of presenting it only two Sunday evenings in a small theater in the Village, but the director of the Theater Guild saw it and decided to restage it on Broadway.

CAHIERS—To return to *On the Town*, did you know Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen at that time?

GREEN—Yes. We had known them for some years. They are very old friends.

COMDEN—They were already under contract to MGM before we ourselves went to Hollywood. Gene Kelly had a great success as an actor. Stanley, who had been a dancer, was his assistant. Arthur Freed decided to let them make a film together. That was the first film that Stanley directed, or rather co-directed.

GREEN—We got on together wonderfully well. They have a great deal of talent, and as I was telling you a little while ago, they are very old friends. They know our style as well as we know theirs. So we understood one another without effort.

CAHIERS—That was the first time that a musical comedy was filmed partly out of doors . . .

conspectus of New York seen by the three sailors, was shot here, in New York. I remember having gone to see them work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, in the grey of dawn. Besides perhaps it wasn't dawn, and if the sky was grey, that was because of fog . . . However that may be, it expressed the poetry of New York morning marvelously well, and it was very fascinating.

GREEN—They stayed here only three or four days, but they had had much difficulty persuading the studio chiefs to make the trip to New York. Hollywood people had said to them, "Why not shoot here?" And they had replied rightly that it was completely indispensable to shoot in New York. Those first ten minutes give the film a tone that remains to the end.

COMDEN—And, at the end, the shots that were filmed on the spot leave you with a vision of New York at once very poetic and realistic.

CAHIERS—It was also one of the first times when the characters of a musical comedy didn't belong to the world of show business.

COMDEN—Yes. That was new. The studio people looked askance at us and said to us "What? These characters are going to sing and dance in the streets?" Until then, the heroes of musical films sang and danced only on the stage. We wanted on the contrary to show them in the setting of everyday life.

CAHIERS—Don't you think, in this connection, that there are in America elements in everyday life appropriate to musical comedy—which is in the end more realistic in its colors, its settings, its costumes, and so on, than people generally believe?

COMDEN—Yes, that is no doubt the case, but we made no conscious effort to make use of the elements you're talking about, because we didn't want to fall into folklore.

GREEN—What we wanted was to make deliberate use of the resources of musical comedy and of comedy to express what we had to say.

CAHIERS—Your collaboration with Donen and Kelly continued three years later with *Singin' in the Rain* . . .

COMDEN—Yes. And again it was a great pleasure to work with them. This script was in fact full of slightly mad things very difficult to stage. Now, everything we had imagined was kept completely. No doubt that was one of the rare occasions when a scenario was filmed exactly as it was written.

GREEN—We almost cried for joy the first time we saw the film. A dream had come true . . . As is almost always the case, we had worked alone. Then, when the script was finished, we read it to Gene and to Stanley who as yet knew practically nothing about it. Gene liked it very much and it was then that together we planned certain corrections

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CAHIERS—That was the first time that a musical comedy was filmed partly out of doors . . .

COMDEN—I believe in fact that that had never been tried before. The sequence at the beginning, that sums up the spirit of the film, that very cinematographic

conspectus of New York seen by the three sailors, was shot here, in New York. I remember having gone to see them work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, in the grey of dawn. Besides perhaps it wasn't dawn, and if the sky was grey, that was because of fog . . . However that may be, it expressed the poetry of New York morning marvelously well, and it was very fascinating.

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CAHIERS—Then your exchanges of ideas with the directors take place in general after the script has been



Vincente Minnelli: *The Bandwagon*, Fred Astaire.

finished?

GREEN—That was the case for *Singin'*. At first we were terrified, for Arthur Freed had asked us for a story inspired by the songs he had written with N. H. Brown for the first musical films such as *Broadway Melody*. We finally decided that the only way to get out of the difficulty was to construct a story set in the period when these songs full of charm had been created. Then, we called on our memories. We have always been—and we are still—great movie nuts. We saw then a unique opportunity to show the madness of that period: that of the transition from silent film to sound. As Betty just told you, Gene and Stanley remained absolutely faithful to our scenario, even going us one better on the slightly mad things we had imagined. Something rather comic happened to them in this connection. They hadn't pointed out to the editors that the displacement of image from words in the preview sequence was intentional. After having waited for that sequence several weeks, they realized that, during that time, the editors had been trying to make the sound and the image coincide!

COMDEN—I would like to say a few words about Arthur Freed . . . He's a man who completely backs up the people he hires. Thus, in the case of *Singin'* which includes a long flashback at the beginning without counting all the slightly crazy ideas to which we have alluded . . . Well, he accepted all that, and, sincerely, I don't believe many producers would have done as much.

GREEN—He let us work without ever interfering. And he approved all that we did. Freed was—and he still is—an exceptional producer. He loved the people he put to work and he appreciated their talents. Roger Edens was his right arm at the time. Together they made an incomparable team.

COMDEN—I think our experience in Hollywood at that time remains almost unique. It happened almost as in the theater. We could give our opinion about everything and to everyone. Everybody knows that screenwriters are generally mistreated in Hollywood. Scripts pass from hand to hand and in the end forty authors have worked on the same story . . . For our part, we never knew these problems.

GREEN—With Arthur we actually talked out everything. We didn't have the impression of working in a factory.

CAHIERS—There was an interval in your collaboration with Donen and Kelly, since it was Minnelli who directed *The Band Wagon* . . .

COMDEN—Yes. Again we were given songs as a point of departure—songs by Howard Dietz and Arthur Schwartz this time. Fred told us "Go at it, children, do something with that for me." Also we were to write this film for Fred Astaire, and naturally we were very happy about that. All those songs had been written for spectacular shows and revues. So it

was very difficult to fit them into a story. Therefore, we finally decided to write a scenario whose plot would be set in the world of show business. In this perspective one of the songs, "By Myself," expressed wonderfully well the mood of the actor who thinks he's finished.

GREEN—That was a forgotten song by Schwartz and Dietz. It had been first done in a show they had written in 1936: *Between the Devil*. It's a very moving song and suddenly it seemed to us that it corresponded to the situation perfectly: Astaire returning forgotten from Hollywood and passing unnoticed at Grand Central.

COMDEN—That was also the period when there were people in the theatre like Jose Ferrer, who staged four or five shows at the same time. Then the idea came to us of an actor of the old school fallen into the hands of an avant-garde director who wanted desperately to overload a simple musical with high-brow intentions.

GREEN—In the two years that followed *The Band Wagon*, there were seven plays that made use of the Faust theme in one way or another.

CAHIERS—Did you give a scenario to Minnelli completely finished?

GREEN—We gave it to him to read part by part and there were major exchanges of ideas with Vincente as we went ahead in our work.

CAHIERS—In an interview published in Cahiers, Minnelli said that the pair of writers acted by Oscar Levant and Nanette Fabray had been suggested to you at the start by Garson Kanin and Ruth Gordon . . .

GREEN—Aside from the fact that Betty and I aren't married, it's ourselves that we were thinking about. We never patterned anything on Kanin and Gordon. In fact, within the measure of possibility, we always make use of elements of our personal lives. Thus, when Fred Astaire, after having sung "By Myself," arrives in the lobby of Grand Central, Fabray and Levant are waiting for him, carrying placards that read "Tony Hunter Fan Club."

In Hollywood, long ago, Betty and I were washed-up actors. Our group had broken up, and we were looking vainly for work. Betty came back to New York to see her parents. Then my mother fell ill and I too came back to New York. I arrived at Grand Central, hopelessly depressed, but the moment I entered the lobby of the station I saw Betty, who was waiting for me, carrying a placard that proclaimed "The Adolph Green Fan Club!"

CAHIERS—What was the origin of *It's Always Fair Weather*, your third and last film with Donen and Kelly?

COMDEN—We were going to Hollywood and we were trying to think of an idea for a new show. The



Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly: *Singin' In The Rain*, Debbie Reynolds, Gene Kelly, Jean Hagen.

Vincente Minnelli: *The Bandwagon*, Fred Astaire, Nanette Fabray, Jack Buchanan.



idea then came to us of writing something about three service buddies—like those we had shown some years before in *On the Town*. We had decided to write this show for the theater, we already had the beginning of a plot and some characters in our heads, when, by chance, while we were trying to think of another idea for Gene, we told him this story. He liked it and, in his turn, he told it to Freed. Then it was no longer a question of the theater and we stayed there to write the film. It was not shot in New York, which is regrettable. For example, it's obvious that the opening sequence—the scenes in front of the bar and the dance with the garbage cans—was shot in a studio. They would have liked very much to come here, but in the end that wasn't possible.

CAHIERS—The movie's relative lack of success was due no doubt to its bitterness?

GREEN—What put off the public was that at that time—but isn't it always the case?—the cinema was going through a period of transition. Moreover, *It's Always Fair Weather* was released quietly and was not suitably exploited. It had, however, excellent reviews and we appeared on all the 10-best lists. Ultimately, I think people imagined they had already seen it! There were Cyd Charisse, Gene Kelly, Dan Dailey and they said to themselves "Oh yes! I've already seen that!" It was like the series of films that were made in the 40's with Getty Grable and that are made today with Doris Day. But there are people who still mourn the film's failure, and who want to see it again. We have some friends, Groucho Marx for example, who have it projected for them frequently . . . I think that it was the first film in which television, the methods of Madison Avenue, and so on, were violently satirized. In that connection there was Dan Dailey's number, "Situation-wise and Saturation-wise."

COMDEN—We showed a television program, inspired by "This Is Your Life," in which people's personal tragedies were more or less exploited for a commercial end.

GREEN—I believe that we did something too that has not been repeated too often since: interior monologue to music. The friends, at the restaurant, ill at ease, singing to the tune of the "Blue Danube". . .

CAHIERS—Then you wrote *Auntie Mame* . . .

COMDEN—That wasn't one of our favorite films, but it was a great commercial success. We had come to know Rosalind Russell in *Wonderful Town*, a Broadway show for which we had written the lyrics to music by Leonard Bernstein. She had made a big hit in it and later she asked us to write the scenario for *Auntie Mame* which, like *Wonderful Town*, had given her a big Broadway smash.

CAHIERS—Then you rejoined Minnelli for *Bells Are Ringing*. What was the origin of that scenario?

COMDEN—We had wondered what telephone answering services could really be like . . . At first we

imagined that a service of this sort must be set up in plush modern surroundings, and that the operator must be the efficient secretary type. So driven by our curiosity, we went to have a look at Adolph's answering service. To our great surprise, we discovered that the service in question was housed in a dark, dirty basement. The operator was in a housecoat and wearing curlers! In this sinister setting, she spent her time receiving and transmitting messages for theater people, like Noel Coward, ourselves, and so on. The contrast between these two worlds was rather astonishing and we were interested in the character of an operator living that way through the existence of well known people.

CAHIERS—Your last film was *What a Way to Go* . . .

COMDEN—That was a story that Gene Kelly had given to a producer, who then commissioned us to write the scenario.

CAHIERS—You must not be very satisfied with the film?

COMDEN—Our feelings are very mixed. I believe that the script was good, but the director showed bad taste in his work. Everything was terribly exaggerated. Thus, the girl was to remain someone very simple whose character was in contrast to the men who surrounded her. Now, in the film, she changes at the caprice of circumstances. Thus, in the "Lush Budget" sequence, the idea was to see her in short scenes, dressed each time in a different dress. The laughter was to spring from the fact that contrary to the preceding sequences, she wore improbable dresses in the comical climax. The effect we had wanted to obtain was lost, however, because the director made her wear eccentric costumes in the sequences that came before, instead of saving the surprise. Moreover, every change of dress was heavily stressed and the name "Lush Budget" was repeated indiscriminately.

GREEN—We wrote a letter in the Hollywood trade papers to protest against the alterations made in our scenario and also to repudiate the bad taste and vulgarity to which this movie had descended.

CAHIERS—How do you collaborate?

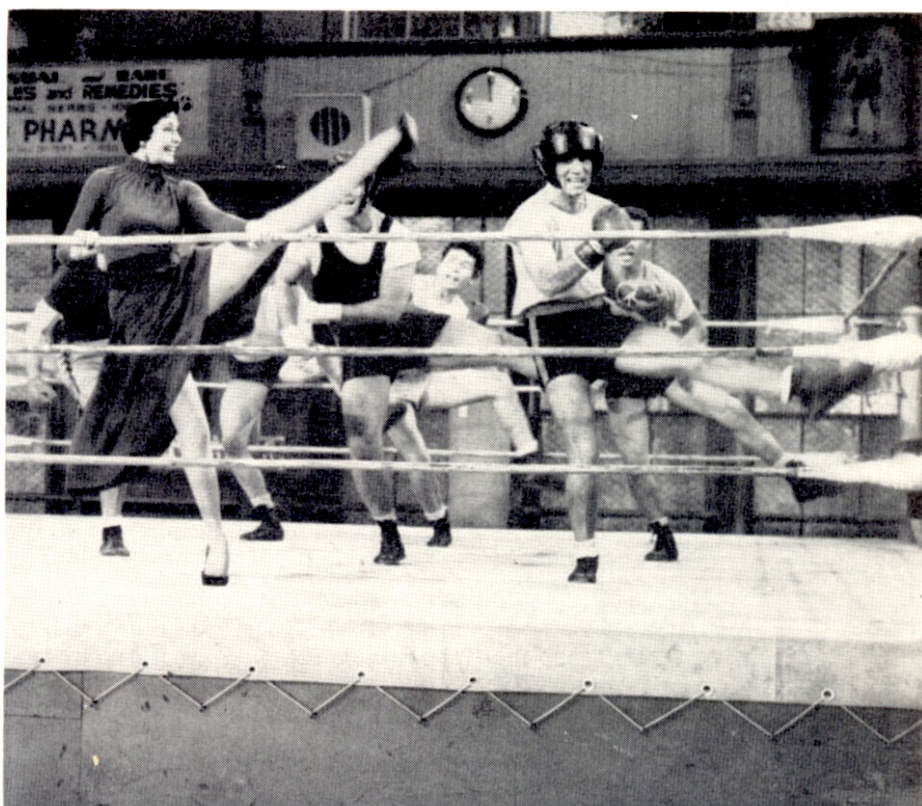
COMDEN—We never work alone, without one another. Plots and dialogues are worked out in togetherness.

CAHIERS—Who are the directors with whom you would like to work?

COMDEN—We would enjoy collaborating with Stanley Kubrick. That would certainly be an exciting experience. We would be happy also to collaborate with Richard Quine and with Tony Richardson — Truman Capote told us there were many good things in *The Loved One*. Finally, if the opportunity presented itself, we would like to work in Europe with François Truffaut and Alain Resnais.

Filmography

by Patrick Brion



Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly: *It's Always Fair Weather*, Cyd Charisse.

Betty Comden was born Elizabeth Comden in Brooklyn May 8, 1916 and studied at the Brooklyn Ethical Culture School, then at New York University, from which she has a degree. From 1939 to 1944, she appeared in night clubs with the group "The Revuers."

Adolph Green was born December 2, 1915, in New York. Together they have written for Broadway: *On the Town*, *Billion Dollar Baby*, *Two on the Aisle*, *Wonderful Town*, *Peter Pan*, *Do Re Mi*, *A Party*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *Subways Are For Sleeping*. Let us note also that they apparently project their own self-portrait in the Oscar Levant - Nanette Fabray couple of *The Band Wagon*.

1947 *GOOD NEWS*. 93 min. *Director*: Charles Walters. *Producers*: Arthur Freed, Roger Edens (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green from the musical by Lawrence Schwab, Lew Brown, Frank Mandel, B. G. de Sylva and Ray Henderson. *Photography*: Charles Schoenbaum (Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Edward Carfagno, Edwin B. Willis, Paul G. Chamberlain. *Music and lyrics*: De Sylva, Brown, Henderson, Comden, Green, Edens, Martin, Blane, Rodgers, Hart. *Editor*: Albert Akst. *Choreographer*: Charles Walters. *Color consultants*: Natalie Kalmus, Henri Jaffa. *Asst.*: Al Jennings. *Costumes*: Helen Rose (W), Valles (M). *Cast*: June Allyson (Connie Lane), Peter Lawford (Tommy Marlowe), Patricia Marshall (Pat McClellan), Joan McCracken (Babe Doolittle), Ray McDonald (Bobby Turner), Mel Torme (Danny), Robert Strickland (Pet-

er van Dyne III), Donald McBride (Coach Johnson), Tom Dugan (Pooch), Clinton Sundberg (Prof. Burton), Loren Tindall (Beef Kenyon), Connie Gilchrist (Cora), Morris Ankrum (Dean Griswold), Georgia Lee (Flo), Jane Green (Mrs. Drexel). The song "French Lesson," sung by June Allyson and Peter Lawford is by Betty Comden, Adolph Green (lyrics) and Roger Edens (music).

1949 *TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME*: 93 min. *Director*: Busby Berkeley. *Producer*: Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Harry Tugend, George Wells, from the story by Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen. *Photography*: George Folsey (Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Daniel B. Cathcart, Edwin B. Willis, Henry W. Grace. *Music*: Adolph Deutsch. *Lyrics*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Roger Edens. *Editor*: Blanche Sewell. *Asst.*: Dolf Zimmer. *Choreographers*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Special effects*: Warren Newcombe. *Color consultants*: Natalie Kalmus, James Gooch. *Montage sequences*: Peter Ballbusch. *Cameraman*: Robert Pronner. *Costumes*: Helen Rose (W), Valles (M). *Production manager*: Sergei Petschnikoff. *Script supervisor*: Les Martinson. *Cast*: Frank Sinatra (Dennis Ryan), Esther Williams (Katharine C. Higgins), Gene Kelly (Eddie O'Brien), Betty Garrett (Shirley Delwyn), Edward Arnold (Joe Lorgan), Jules Mushin (Nat Goldberg), Richard Lane (Michael Gilhooly), Tom Dugan (Slappy Burke). *Lyrics*: (Comden/Green/Edens): Yes In-

deedy — O'Brien to Ryan to Goldberg — It's Fate, Baby, It's Fate — The Right Girl For Me.

1949 *THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY*. 109 min. *Director*: Charles Walters. *Producers*: Arthur Freed, Roger Edens (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario and idea*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Photography*: Harry Stradling (Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Edward Carfagno, Edwin B. Willis, Arthur Krams. *Music*: Harry Warren. *Lyrics*: Ira Gershwin. *Editor*: Albert Akst. *Costumes*: Irene (for Ginger Rogers), Valles (M). *Special effects*: Warren Newcombe. *Production manager*: Hugh Boswell. *Script supervisor*: Eylla Jacobus. *Asst.*: Wallace Worsley. *Color consultants*: Natalie Kalmus, Henri Jaffa. *Choreographers*: Robert Alton, Hermes Pan (for the sequence "Shoes With Wings On"). *Optical effects* for "Shoes With Wings On": Irving G. Reis. *Cast*: Fred Astaire (*Josh Barkley*), Ginger Rogers (*Dinah Barkley*), Oscar Levant (*Ezra Miller*), Billie Purke (*Mrs. Livingston Belney*), Gale Robbins (*Shirlene May*), Jacques Francois (*Jacques-Pierre Barredout*), George Zucco (*Judge*), Clinton Sundberg (*Bert*), Inez Cooper (*Pamela Driscoll*), Carol Brewster (*Gloria Amboy*), Wilson Wood (*Carry*).

1949 *ON THE TOWN*. 98 min. *Directors*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Producers*: Arthur Freed, Roger Edens (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green, from their musical and Jerome Robbins' ballet "Fancy Free." *Photography*: Harold Rosson

(Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Jack Martin Smith, Edwin B. Willis, Jack D. Moore. *Music*: Leonard Bernstein. *Lyrics*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Editor*: Ralph E. Winters. *Asst.*: Jack Gertsman. *Production manager*: Hugh Boswell. *Cameraman*: Robert Martin. *Script supervisor*: Jack Aldworth. *Costumes*: Helen Rose. *Color consultants*: Henri Jaffa, James Gooch. *Special effects*: Warren Newcombe. *Cast*: Gene Kelly (Gabe), Frank Sinatra (Chip), Betty Garrett (Brunhild Esterhazy), Ann Miller (Claire Huddesen), Jules Munshin (Ozzie), Vera Ellen (Ivy Smith), Florence Bates (Mme. Dilyouska), Alice Pearce (Lucy Shmesler), George Meader (Professor), Carol Haney (Dancer in green), Hans Conried (Headwaiter), Robert E. Williams, Tom Dugan, Peter Chong (Asiatic barman). *Lyrics*: (Comden/Green): New York, New York — Miss Turnstiles — Pre-historic Man — Come Up to My Place — Main Street — You're Awful — On the Town — Count on Me.

1952 SINGIN' IN THE RAIN. 103 min. *Directors*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Producer*: Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Photography*: Harold Rossen (Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Randall Duell, Edwin B. Willis, Jacques Mapes. *Music*: Nacio Herb Brown, Roger Edens. *Lyrics*: Arthur Freed, Al Hoffman, Al Goodhart, Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Editor*: Adrienne Fazan. *Choreographers*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Costumes*: Walter Plunkett. *Cast*: Gene Kelly (Don Lockwood), Debbie Reynolds (Kathy Selden), Jean Hagen (Lina Lamont), Donald O'Connor (Cosmo Brown), Millard Mitchell (Simpson), Cyd Charisse (Dancer), Rita Moreno (Zelda Zanders), Douglas Fowley (Roscoe Dexter), Madge Blake (Dora Bailey), Kathleen Freeman (Phoebe Dinsmore), Dawn Addams (Teresa), Robert B. Williams (Cop), King Donovan (Rod), Paul Moxie (Businessman), Stuart Holmes (Businessman), Ray Teal (Employee), Jimmy Thompson (the singer of "Beautiful Girl"), Del Moore (the speech teacher), Charles Evans (the irascible spectator who doesn't approve of the work of the dialogue writers). The film includes stockshots in black and white from *The Three Musketeers* by George Sidney. One recognizes in them, besides, in addition to Kelly, Lana Turner. The song "Moses" sung by Gene Kelly and Donald O'Connor is by Betty Comden, Adolph Green (lyrics) and Roger Edens (music).

1953 THE BAND WAGON. 112 min. *Director*: Vincente Minnelli. *Producers*: Arthur Freed, Roger Edens (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green and Vincente Minnelli for the text of the ballet "Girl Hunt." *Photography*: Harry Jackson (Technicolor). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Preston Ames, Edwin B. Willis, Keogh Gleason. *Music and lyrics*: Howard Dietz, Albert Schwartz, Roger Edens (for "Girl

Hunt"). *Editor*: Albert Akst. *Asst.*: Jerry Thorps. *Color consultants*: Henri Jaffa, Robert Brower. *Costumes*: Mary Ann Nyberg. *Choreographer*: Michael Kidd. *Cast*: Fred Astaire (Tony Hunter), Cyd Charisse (Gaby Girard), Oscar Levant (Lester Marton), Nanette Fabray (Lily Marton), Jack Buchanan (Jeffrey Cordova), James Mitchell (Paul Byrd), Robert Gist (Hal Benton), Roy Engel (Reporter), Steve Forrest (Man in the train), Douglas Fowley (Auctioneer), Jimmy Thompson (Jimmy), Stuart Holmes (Old businessman), Del Moore (Tony Hunter's servant), Herbert Vigran (Interlocutor in the train), John Lupton and Ava Gardner playing themselves. Cyd Charisse is vocally dubbed by India Adams.

1955 IT'S ALWAYS FAIR WEATHER. 102 min. *Directors*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Producer*: Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Photography*: Robert Bronner (Eastmancolor-Cinemascope). *Decor*: Cedric Gibbons, Arthur Lonergan, Edwin B. Willis, Hugh Hunt. *Music*: Andre Previn. *Lyrics*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green. *Editor*: Adrienne Fazan. *Asst.*: Al Jennings. *Costumes*: Helen Rose. *Choreographers*: Gene Kelly, Stanley Donen. *Cast*: Gene Kelly (Ted Riley), Cyd Charisse (Jackie Leighton), Dan Dailey (Douglas Hallerton), Dolores Gray (Madeline Bradville), Michael Kidd (Angie Valentine), Jay C. Flippen (Charles Z. Culloran), David Burns (Tim), Peter Leeds, Alex Gerry, Madge Blake, Hal March, Steve Mitchell, Paul Moxie, Frank Richards, Lou Lubin. *Lyrics*: (Previn/Comden/Green): March, March (G. Kelly, D. Dailey, M. Kidd) — Once Upon a Time (G.K., D.D., M.K.) — Baby You Knock Me Out — Stillman's Gym (L. Lubin and chorus) — The Time for Parting (G.K., D.D., M.K.) — Blue Danube (G.K., D.D., M.K.) — Situation Wise (D.D.) — I Like Myself (G.K.) — Thanks a Lot, but No Thanks.

1958 AUNTIE MAME. 143 min. *Director*: Morton Da Costa. *Producers*: Robert Fryer, Laurence Carr (Warner Bros.). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green from the story by Patrick Dennis and the play by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. *Photography*: Harry Stradling (Technicolor - Technirama). *Decor*: Malcolm Bert, George James Hopkins. *Music*: Bronislau Kaper. *Editor*: William Ziegler. *Asst.*: Don Page. *Costumes*: Orry Kelly. *Cast*: Rosalind Russell (Auntie Mame), Forrest Tucker (Beauregard Burnside), Coral Browne (Vera Charles), Fred Clark (Mr. Babcock), Roger Smith (Patrick Dennis), Patric Knowles (Lindsay Woolsey), Peggy Cass (Agnes Gooch), Jan Handlik (Patrick Dennis as a child), Joanna Barnes (Gloria Upson), Pippa Scott (Peggy Ryan), Lee Patrick (Mrs. Upson), Willard Waterman (Mr. Upson), Robin Hughes (Brian O'Bannion), Connie Gilchrist (Norah Muldoon), Yuki Shimoda (Ito), Brook Byron (Sally Cato), Carol

Veazie (Mrs. Burnside), Henry Brandon (Acacius Page), Margaret Dumont.

1960 BELLS ARE RINGING. 127 min. *Director*: Vincente Minnelli. *Producer*: Arthur Freed (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green from the musical "Bells are Ringing." *Music* by Jule Styne. *Book and lyrics* by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. *Photography*: Milton Krasner (Metrocolor - CinemaScope). *Decor*: George W. Davis, Preston Ames, Henry Grace, Keogh Gleason. *Editor*: Adrienne Fazan. *Asst.*: William McGarry. *Color consultant*: Charles F. Hagedorn. *Special effects*: A. Arnold Gillespie, Les LeBlanc. *Costumes*: Walter Plunkett. *Choreographer*: Charles O'Curran. *Cast*: Judy Holliday (Ella Peterson), Dean Martin (Jeffrey Moss), Fred Clark (Larry Hastings), Eddie Foy Jr. (J. Otto Prantz), Jean Stapleton (Sue), Ruth Storey (Gwynne), Dort Clark (Inspector Barnes), Frank Gorshin (Blake Barton), Ralph Roberts (Francis), Valeria Allen (Olga), Steven Peck (First gangster), Bernie West (Doctor Joe Kitchell), Nancy Walters (Actress), Gerry Muligan (Ella's escort), Oliver Blake (Ludwig Smiling), Richard Collier (Man in the street), Frank Richards (Man in the street), Joe McTurk (Man in the street), Lenny Bremmen (Man in the street), Stuart Holmes (Old man in the park), Hal Linden ("Midas"), Jacqueline Green, Barbara Hines, June Kirby, Suzanne Ames, Sandy Warner, Karen Scott, Susan Avery (Seven girls at the party at Hastings). *Lyrics*: (Styne/Comden/Green): Overture (chorus) — It's a Perfect Relationship (J. Holliday) — Do It Yourself (D. Martin) — It's a Simple Little System (E. Foy, chorus) — Better than a Dream (J.H., D.M.) — I Met a Girl (D.M., chorus) — Just in Time (D.M., J.H., chorus) — The Party's Over (J.H., chorus) — The Midas Touch (H. Linden, chorus) — Finale (chorus).

1964 WHAT A WAY TO GO. 111 min. *Director*: J. Lee Thompson. *Producer*: Arthur P. Jacobs (20th Century-Fox). *Scenario*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green from the story by Gwen Davis. *Photography*: Leon Shamroy (DeLuxe-Color - Cinemascope). *Decor*: Jack Martin Smith, Ted Haworth, Walter M. Scott, Stuart A. Reiss. *Music*: Nelson Riddle. *Lyrics*: Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Jule Styne. *Editor*: Marjorie Fowler. *Choreographer*: Gene Kelly. *Costumes*: Edith Head. *Asst.*: Fred R. Simpson. *Cast*: Shirley MacLaine (Louisa), Paul Newman (Larry Flint), Robert Mitchum (Rod Anderson), Dean Martin (Leonard Crawley), Gene Kelly (Jerry Benson), Robert Cummings (Dr. Steffanson), Dick van Dyke (Edgar Hopper), Reginald Gardiner (Painter), Margaret Dumont (Mrs. Foster), Lou Nova (Trentino), Fifi d'Orsay (Baroness), Maurice Marsac (Rene), Wally Vernon (Policeman), Jane Wald (Polly), Lenny Kent (Hollywood lawyer). Shooting title: *I Love Louisa*.

Hitchcock Versus Hitchcock

by Andre Bazin



The Director and His Star

I trust that the following account of my encounter with Alfred Hitchcock will not disappoint his wildest partisans. They may accuse me of being unworthy of the privilege of confirming all their insights. Certainly, where I am in doubt, I would prefer to give them the benefit of that doubt. I cannot say that the combined efforts of Schérer, Astruc, Rivette and Truffaut have entirely convinced me of Alfred Hitchcock's flawless genius, particularly in his American work, but they have at least persuaded me to question my previous skepticism. Consequently, I can report that I approached my assignment in good faith and a constructive spirit by conscientiously assuming the point of view most favorable to the director and by insisting on his recognizing for himself and by himself every last morsel of meaning French critics had assigned to his films. Moreover, I would have been delighted if his answers had vindicated his champions and if the reservations I had formulated about such works as *Rope*, *The Paradine Case* and *I Confess* had been reduced to rubble.

Before going any further, however, I propose some critical axioms, which the Hitchcockians may scorn as useless and undignified alibis.

I will begin with an embarrassingly personal anecdote. Once upon a time I analyzed a certain scene in *The Little Foxes*, the one in which Marshall is seen about to die on the stairway, in the background, while Bette Davis sits immobile in the foreground. The fixed gaze of the camera seemed to me to be intensified (moreover, if I remember correctly, the remark came from Denis Marion) by the fact that in the course of his movement the actor moved out of the line of vision and then came in again a little further away, while the lens — identified somehow with Bette Davis' implacability — did not deign to follow him.

When I attended the Brussels Festival in 1948 I had occasion to meet William Wyler, whose native language is French, and I explained my interpretation to him. Wyler seemed astonished. He insisted he had done everything quite simply with no intellectual premeditation. As for my crucial point about Marshall's departure from the field of vision, Wyler explained the specific reason: Marshall had a wooden leg and had difficulty climbing stairs; his eclipse permitted a double to be substituted for the last few seconds of the scene.

The anecdote was too funny to ignore even though the joke was on me. I reported it in "Le Film d'Ariane" (*Roman Holiday*) in *Ecran Français* under the collective signature of the Minotaur and held my ground as far as my initial analysis was concerned. My candor was rewarded with an ironic letter about critics of Spanish inns from some sly type reminding me of the Minotaur's note which I was forced to ig-

nore in order to continue to ascribe to Wyler aesthetic calculations, a hypothesis that he himself had demolished.

I have verified the truth of this edifying story on several other occasions. There are, occasionally, good directors, like René Clément or Lattuada, who profess a precise aesthetic consciousness and accept a discussion on this level, but most of their colleagues react to aesthetic analysis with an attitude ranging from astonishment to irritation. Moreover, the astonishment is perfectly sincere and comprehensible. As for the irritation, this often springs from an instinctive resistance to the dismantling of a mechanism whose purpose is to create an illusion, and only mediocrities gain, in effect, from malfunctioning mechanisms. The director's irritation springs also from his resentment at being placed in a position that is foreign to him. Thus, I have seen a director as intelligent (and conscious) as Jean Grémillon play the village idiot and sabotage my debate on *Lumière d'été* evidently because he did not agree with me. And how can I say he is wrong? Is not this impasse reminiscent of Paul Valéry's leaving the lecture hall where Gustave Cohen had presented his famous commentary on *Cimetière Marin* with a word of ironic admiration for the professor's imagination? Must we conclude then that Paul Valéry is only an intuitive artist betrayed by a pedant's textual analysis and that *Cimetière Marin* is merely automatic writing?

As a matter of fact, this apparent contradiction between the critic and the author should not trouble us. It is in the natural order of things, both subjectively and objectively.

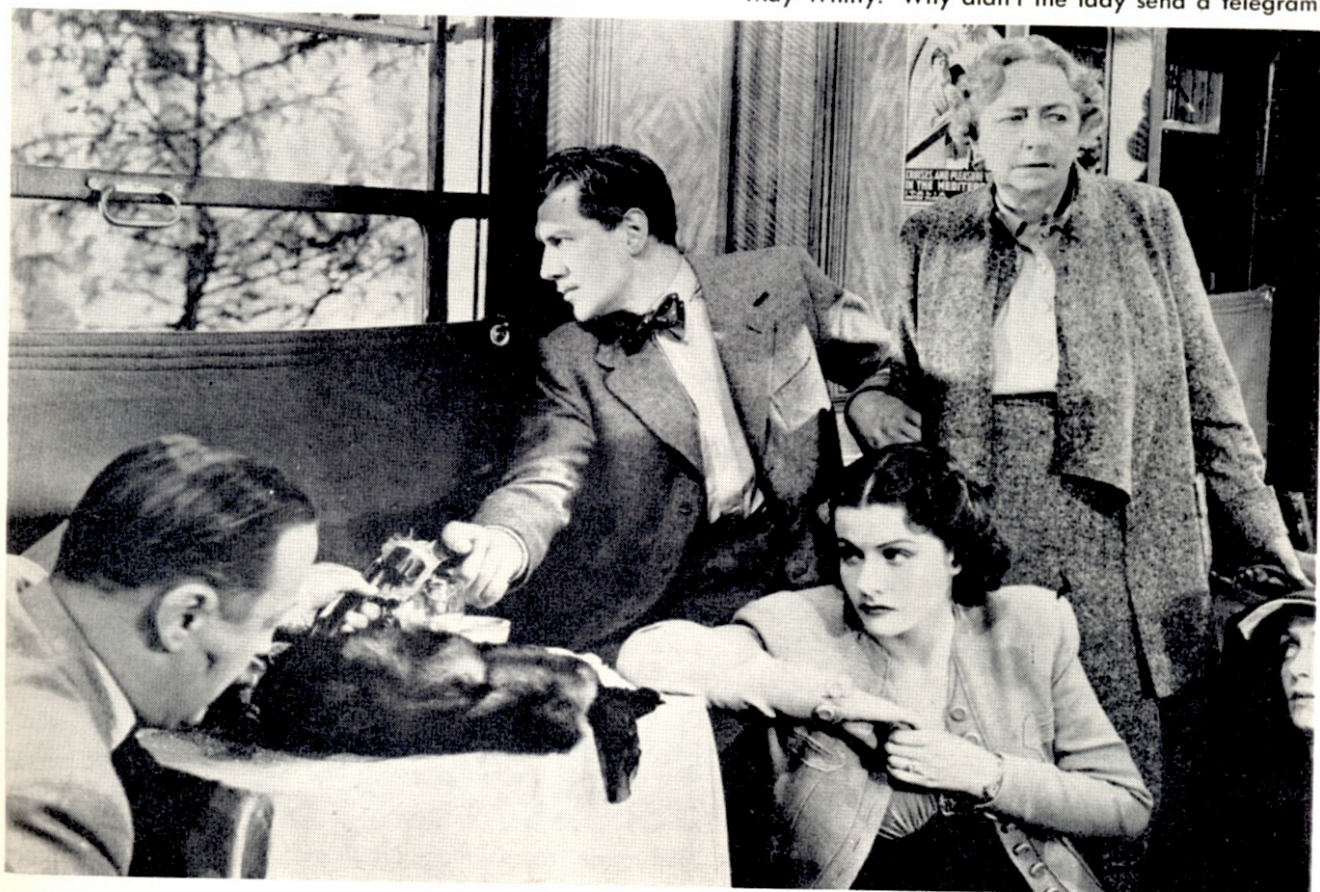
Subjectively, because artistic creation — even with the most intellectual temperaments — is essentially intuitive and practical: it is a matter of effects to attain and materials to conquer. Objectively, because a work of art escapes its creator and bypasses his conscious intentions, in direct proportion to its quality. The foundation of this objectivity also resides in the psychology of the creation to the extent — inappreciable — to which the artist does not really create but sets himself to crystallize, to order the sociological forces and the technical conditions into which he is thrust. This is particularly true of the American cinema in which you often find quasi-anonymous successes whose merit reflects, not on the director, but on the production system. But an objective criticism, methodically ignoring "intentions" is as applicable to the most personal work imaginable, like a poem or a picture, for example.

This does not mean that knowing *auteurs* personally, or what they say about themselves and their work, may not clarify the critic's conception, and this is proven by recently taped interviews that we have published. These confidences, on the contrary, are infinitely precious, but they are not on the same plane



The Secret Agent (1936): John Gielgud, Peter Lorre. Maugham, not Conrad.

The Lady Vanishes (1938): Basil Radford, Michael Redgrave, Margaret Lockwood, Dame May Whitty. Why didn't the lady send a telegram?



as the criticism I am discussing; or, if you will, they constitute a pre-critical, unrefined documentation, and the critic still retains the liberty of interpretation. Thus, when Wyler told me he had had Marshall leave the field of vision merely in order to substitute a double, I thought to myself that the flaws in the marble were useful only to good sculptors and that it was of little importance that the camera's fixity was imagined to come out of a technical contingency. But the following day when I saw Wyler again, it was he who returned to the subject and explained to me that Marshall's going out of the frame was not part of his artistic intentions and that, in turn, the light and soft quality of the background (the stairway where Marshall is dying) had been asked of Gregg Toland in order to create an uneasy feeling in the spectator by the imprecision of the action's essential point. In this context, virtually the entire film was shot in deep focus. Quite possibly, the softness and the disappearance had the same function: to camouflage the substitution of the double for the actor. Simply in the case of the softness, the director was conscious of the effect and the means, which suffices to elevate material servitude to the dignity of artistic windfall. Unless, profoundly astonished that so many things could be seen in this unfortunate sequence, he dreamed it up during the night and, when he woke up the next morning, was retrospectively persuaded that he had done

it on purpose. It is of no real importance in terms of Wyler's glory and the excellence of *The Little Foxes*, but I am more partial to this explanation than to my original interpretation.

I make the foregoing observations in order to reassure and encourage those who, in this same issue of *Cahiers du Cinema* (#39, October 1954), will credit Alfred Hitchcock with more talent than is implied in this interview. I am also perfectly conscious of not having pushed the *auteur* of *The Lady Vanishes* to a point where I could get past his defenses. Also the relatively serious nature of my questions undoubtedly had little in common with what he was accustomed to in American interviews, and the sudden change in critical climate may have upset him. Besides people say that his answers anywhere tend more to mask than to reveal, and his penchant for straight-faced jesting is familiar enough to lend credence to this interpretation.

But now that I have raised every possible objection against my interviews with Hitchcock, I might well add that I am personally convinced of my interlocutor's sincerity, and I do not suspect for a moment that he accommodated my questions in order that I might judge his work less severely.

We met the first time at the flower market in Nice. They were shooting a scuffle. Cary Grant was fighting with two or three ruffians and rolling on the ground



The Thirty-Steps (1935): Robert Donat, Peggy Ashcroft, John Laurie. More vintage British period.

good hour, during which time Hitchcock did not have to intervene more than twice; settled in his armchair, he gave the impression of being prodigiously bored and of musing about something completely different. The assistants, however, were handling the scene, and Cary Grant himself was explaining Nice police judo techniques to his partners with admirable precision. The sequence was repeated three or four times in my presence before being judged satisfactory, after which they were to prepare to shoot the following sequence — an insert in close-up of Cary Grant's head under an avalanche of pink flowers. It was during this pause that Paul Feyder, French first assistant on the film, presented me to Hitchcock. Our conversation lasted 50 or 60 minutes (there were retakes) during which time Hitchcock did no more than throw one or two quick glances at what was going on. When I saw him finally get up and go over for an earnest talk with the star and the assistants, I assumed that here at last was a matter of some delicate adjustment of the *mise en scène*; a minute later he came towards me shaking his head, pointing to his wristwatch, and I thought he was trying to tell me that there was no longer enough light for color — the sun being quite low. But he quickly disabused me of that idea with a very British smile: "Oh! No, the light is excellent, but Mister Cary Grant's contract calls for stopping at 6 o'clock; it is six o'clock exactly, so we will retake this sequence tomorrow." In the course of that first interview I had time to pose nearly all of the questions I had had in mind, but the answers had been so disconcerting that, full of caution, I decided to use a counter-interrogation as a control for some of the most delicate points. Most gracefully, Hitchcock devoted another hour to me several days later in a quiet corner of the Carlton in Cannes. What follows comes out of these two interviews without, in general, any distinction between what was in the first or the second.

I must make it clear at the outset that I speak and understand English too poorly to manage without an interpreter. I had the good fortune to find in Sylvette Baudrot, French scriptgirl with the crew, more than a faithful dragoman, a persistent collaborator. I take this opportunity to thank her cordially.

I attacked in more or less these terms: "While traditional criticism often reproaches you for brilliant but gratuitous formalism, several young French critics, on the contrary, profess a nearly universal admiration for your work and discover, beyond the detective story, a constant and profound message. What do you think about that?"

Answer: "I am interested not so much in the stories I tell as in the means of telling them." There followed a long account of *Rear Window* in terms of the technical improvisations that gave the film its originality. The film takes us, once more, into the

conducted in this instance by a convalescing magazine photographer, obliged to stay in his room because his leg is in a cast. He is also to discover a crime and identify the criminal solely by observing the comings and goings through the windows of the apartment building across the courtyard. During the entire film the camera remains in the journalist's room and sees only what he can physically see, either with the naked eye or with the aid of binoculars, which in any event allows for the use of different lenses. Telescopic lenses were ultimately required to keep the action in some sort of meaningful dramatic focus. The construction of the set posed equally complicated problems in order to permit the protagonist to observe as much as possible of his neighbor's actions without falsifying the architecture of an American city. Hitchcock himself insisted that half the film's action should be silent because the journalist cannot be expected to hear his neighbors at the distance he sees them. Thus the director had to resort to the guile of "pure cinema" which he adored. In general, dialogue is a nuisance to him because it restricts cinematographic expression, and he reproaches several of his films for this restriction.

At this point I did not abandon the point of my original inquiry by taking up the fallacious opposition of form and content. What Hitchcock calls "means" may be, perhaps, only a more indirect (and more unconscious) manner of following, if not a subject, at least a theme. I insisted, therefore, on the unity of his work, and he agreed with me in a negative way. All he demands of a scenario is that it go his "way." Let us stick our foot in the crack of that door. What I wanted was the exact definition of this "way." Without hesitation, Hitchcock spoke of a certain relationship between drama and comedy. The only films that may be taken as "pure Hitchcock" (sic) are those in which he has been able to play with this discordant relationship. Although this is more a matter of the way of conceiving a story than content properly speaking, it is, all the same, no longer a question of simple formal problems. I risk the word "humor." Hitchcock accepts it; what he is trying to express may well be taken as a form of humor and he spontaneously cites *The Lady Vanishes* as conforming most closely to his ideal. Must we conclude from this that his English work is more "purely Hitchcock" than his American? Without a doubt, first of all because the Americans have much too positive a spirit to accept humor. He could never have made *The Lady Vanishes* in Hollywood; a simple reading of the scenario and the producer would have pointed out how unrealistic it would be to send a message with an old woman by train when it would be quicker and surer to send a telegram. He thought he

would please his old Italian maid by taking her to see *The Bicycle Thief*, but all she felt was astonishment that the worker did not end up borrowing a bike: America is rapidly becoming less colorful. Moreover, in Hollywood films are made for women; it is toward their sentimental taste that scenarios are directed because it is they who account for the bulk of the box-office receipts. In England films are still made for men, but that is also why so many studios close down. The English cinema has excellent technicians but English films are not "commercial" enough and Hitchcock declares, with pain mixed with shame, that they are idle there while he is working. But it is still essential for a film to bring in more than it costs; the director is responsible for other people's money, a great deal of money, and he has a duty, in spite of everything, to be commercial. Hitchcock told me that his "weakness" lies in being conscious of his responsibility for all this money.

What I am inserting here is parenthetical: At the time of our second interview, the question came up again. Hitchcock appeared to me to be somewhat conventionally concerned with correcting that indirect criticism of being commercial by affirming that it was easy to make an "artistic" film, but the real difficulty lay in making a good commercial film, a very feasible paradox, after all. Such as it was, the sense of his first self-criticism was unequivocal and the necessity of renouncing adult, masculine humor in order to satisfy American producers was presented as an exquisite torture. When he arrived from England, and saw the technicians standing in line with their mess-bowls, under the clock, at the door of Warners', he anxiously asked himself if, in all this hub-bub, film could possibly still be concerned with a form of the Fine Arts.

Faithful to my role of Devil's advocate, I remarked that, in the Hollywood studios, perhaps he had gained a sumptuousness of technical means that just suited his inspiration. Had he not always been concerned with ingenious and sometimes complex technical effects in order to obtain certain effects of *mise en scène*? Categorical answer: The importance of the technical means placed at his disposal did not particularly interest him. To the extent that they rendered the film more costly they even augmented commercial servitude. To sum it up, his ideal is, under those conditions, to accomplish perfection of "the quality of imperfection." This rather oracular line was one of those about which I was determined to see Hitchcock again to pin him down to a more precise confirmation. My interpreter, Hitchcock and I spent a good quarter of an hour on this one point. He maintained what he had said and commented on it, but it never became perfectly clear. His exact words, in English, were, "I try to achieve the quality of imperfection." I believe I understood that the quality in question was American technical perfection

(lacking in the European cinema) and the "imperfection" that margin for liberty, imprecision and, shall we say, humor that makes, for Hitchcock, the English cinéaste's position superior. Thus it is a question for the director of *I Confess* of achieving the almost impossible marriage of perfect technical execution



The Paradine Case (1947): Ann Todd, Charles Laughton

through Hollywood's oiled and supple machinery with the creative stumbling block, the unforeseen Acts of God, as in the European cinema. I am paraphrasing here and forcing myself to give a resumé of a conversation that, as far as I can see, was persistently obscure due to my lack of intellectual agility with the English

language but also, I strongly believe, due to Hitchcock's instinctive irony. For I noticed several times his taste for the elegant and ambiguous formulation that goes so far as to become a play on words. Chabrol became aware of this tendency several times in Paris when Hitchcock made theological jokes based on



Charles Laughton.

"God" and "Good." This linguistic playfulness assuredly corresponds to a cast of mind but undoubtedly it is also a certain form of intellectual camouflage. For all that, I did not have the impression that this preoccupation affected our dialogue more than marginally. In general, the answers were clear, firm and categorical. The circumstances were rare when, whether to correct the excessiveness of an affirmation that was a little too scandalous or paradoxical, or the question was particularly embarrassing, he used this sort of critical humor to rectify something or to pirouette his way out of a statement. The general sincerity of his answers and, I even dare to say, up to a certain point, their naïveté (if I am not misjudging how much is bravado and how much paradox) was indirectly proven to me by his reaction to one of my arguments. Always pursuing my initial purpose of having him recognize the existence and the seriousness of a moral theme in his work, I decided, in default of obtaining an acknowledgment from him, to suggest one myself, borrowing for this the perspicacity of the fanatic Hitchcockians. Thus, I had him notice that one theme at least reappeared in his major films that, because of its moral and intellectual level, surely went beyond the scope of simple "suspense" — that of the identification of the weak with the strong, whether it be in the guise of deliberate moral seduction as in *Shadow of a Doubt* where the phenomenon is underlined by the fact that the niece and the uncle have the same name, whether, as in *Strangers on a Train*, an individual somehow steals the protagonist's mental crime, appropriates it for himself, commits it and then comes to demand that the same be done for him, whether, as in *I Confess*, this transfer of personality finds a sort of theological confirmation in the sacrament of penitence, the murderer considering more or less consciously that the confession not only binds the priest as witness but somehow justifies his acceptance of the guilty role. The translation of such a subtle argument was not very easy. Hitchcock listened to it with attention and intensity. When he finally understood it I saw him touched, for the first and only time in the interview, by an unforeseen and unforeseeable idea. I had found the crack in that humorous armor. He broke into a delighted smile and I could follow his train of thought by the expressions on his face as he reflected and discovered for himself with satisfaction the confirmation in the scenarios of *Rear Window* and *To Catch a Thief*. It was the only incontrovertible point made by Hitchcock's enthusiasts, but if this theme really exists in his work he owes it to them for having discovered it.

However, I did not keep the initiative very long and the self-criticism that he pursued was rather severe. *I Confess*, for example, was rejected for its lack of humor — the comedy was not in step with the drama. He is no longer enchanted with the players. Anne

Baxter is an excellent actress but her personality is not socially true to life in relation to Canada. He would have liked Anita Bjork whom he greatly admired in *Miss Julie*, but Hollywood had been scared off by her extra-marital entanglements. (Ingrid Bergman's troubles still lingered in the studio's memory.)

In opposition to this I remarked that he had, however, held on to this subject, taken from a little known French boulevard play, given to him four years earlier by Louis Verneuil ("sold," he corrected). If he had not shot it before, he explained, it was only because Warners was afraid of censorship; there was thus nothing mysterious about the delay. Good; but must we not assume that the films he produced would have a hold on his heart? — Not at all, notably *Under Capricorn* which, in spite of its failure, had been principally a commercial enterprise. All of his efforts to save something from this film were in vain. Hitchcock complained that because of her fame Ingrid Bergman was no longer tenable. "All the same," I said, "the brilliant sequences, continuous in time, that called for the utmost in technical experience, in *Rope* . . ." "Let us talk about that!" he interrupted. "These continuous scenes were boring enough later during the montage; there was nothing to cut!"

However, coming back to *I Confess*, I obtained an important concession. When I praised the extreme technical sobriety, the intensity in austerity, it was not in order to displease him. It is true that he applied himself here and that the film finds favor in his eyes for these formal reasons. In order to characterize this rigor of mise en scène it would be necessary to employ an epithet from the "clerical vocabulary." . . . I suggested "Jansenist." — "What is Jansenist?" Sylvette Baudrot explained to him that the Jansenists were the enemies of the Jesuits. He found the coincidence very droll for he had studied with Fathers and, for *I Confess*, had been obliged to free himself from his education! I did not tell him I would have thought him, nevertheless, a better student. At least in theology.

Which, then, at least among his American films, did he consider to be the most exclusively commercial and the least worthy of esteem? — *Spellbound* and *Notorious*. Those that found grace in his eyes? *Shadow of a Doubt* and *Rear Window*.

We have already spoken of the last one. What, in particular, does he like in the first? — the truth, the social and psychological realism, in the framework, naturally, of that dramatic humor we have already defined. He was able to avoid the concessions and commercial "fantasies" that more or less debased his other American films.

The interview came to an end, not because my interlocutor had the air of becoming impatient, but because I could see no way to bring the debate back to the essential. I come now to the formal and secondary questions: is it true that he never looked through the cam-

era? — Exactly. This task is completely useless since all the framing has been planned and indicated in advance by little drawings that illustrated the cutting technique. At my request he immediately executed several. If I may, I will add a personal comment here: it seemed to me, as much from certain precise points made in the conversation as from statements gathered from Hitchcock's collaborators, that he had a permanent notion of *mise en scène*, that of a tension in the interior of a sequence. A tension that one would not know how to reduce either to dramatic categories or plastic categories but which partakes of both at the same time. For him it is always a question of creating in the *mise en scène*, starting from the scenario, but mainly by the expressionism of the framing, the lighting or the relation of the characters to the décor, an essential instability of image. Each shot is thus, for him, like a menace or at least an anxious waiting. From German expressionism, to whose influence he admits having submitted in the studios in Munich, he undoubtedly learned a lesson, but he does not cheat the spectator. We need not be aware of a vagueness of impression in the peril in order to appreciate the dramatic anguish of Hitchcock's characters. It is not a question of a mys-

terious "atmosphere" out of which all the perils can come like a storm, but of a disequilibrium comparable to that of a heavy mass of steel beginning to slide down too sharp an incline, about which one could easily calculate the future acceleration. The *mise en scène* would then be the art of showing reality only in those moments when a plumb line dropped from the dramatic center of gravity is about to leave the supporting polygon, scorning the initial commotion as well as the final fracas of the fall. As for me, I see the key to Hitchcock's style, this style that is so indisputable that one recognizes at a glance the most banal still from one of his films, in the admirably determined quality of this disequilibrium.

One more question to get off my conscience, the answer to which is easy to predict: does he use any improvisation on the set? — None at all; he had *To Catch a Thief* in his mind, complete, for two months. That is why I saw him so relaxed while "working." For the rest, he added with an amiable smile, lifting the siege, how would he have been able to devote a whole hour to me right in the middle of shooting if he had to think about his film at the same time?

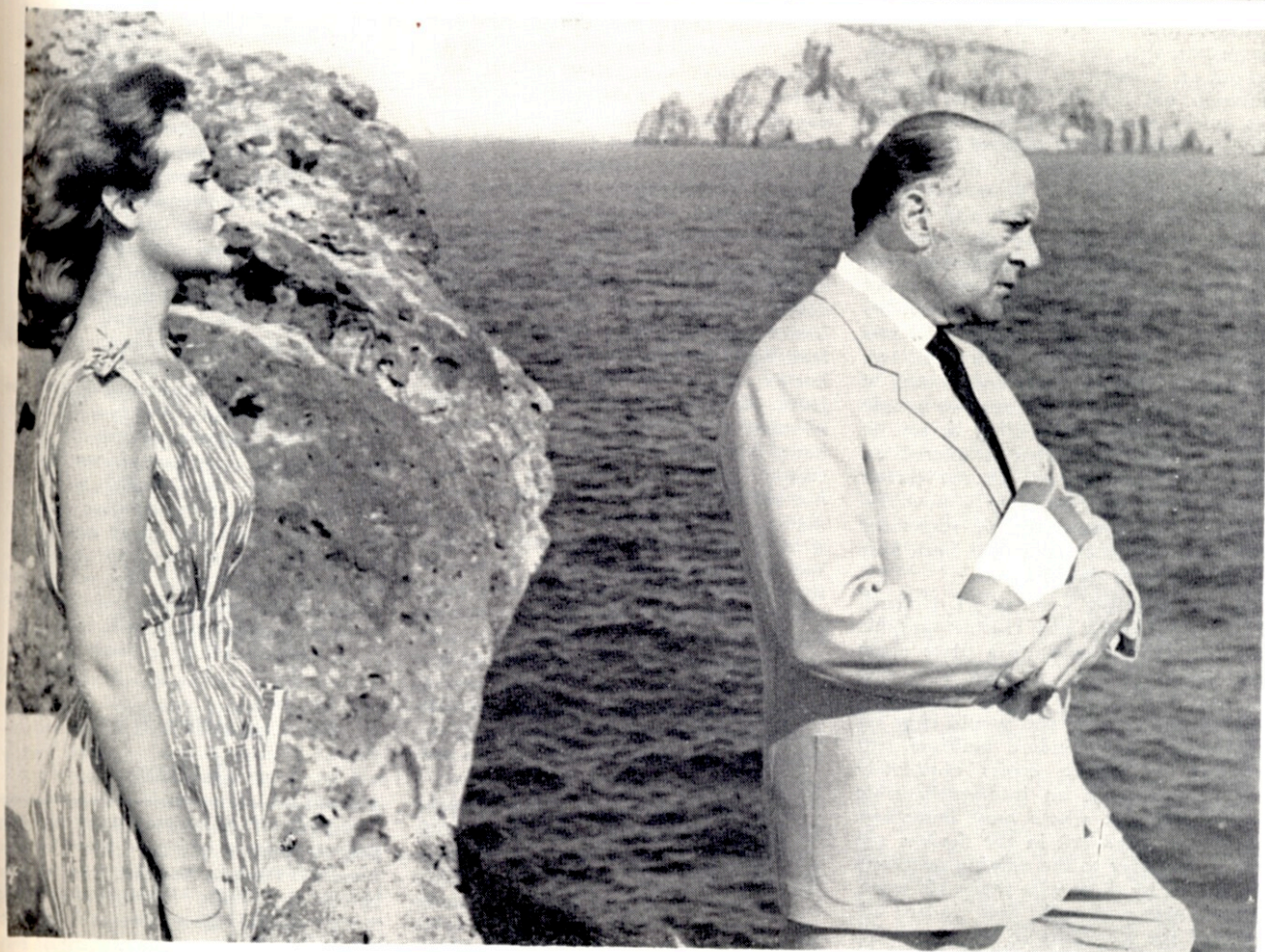
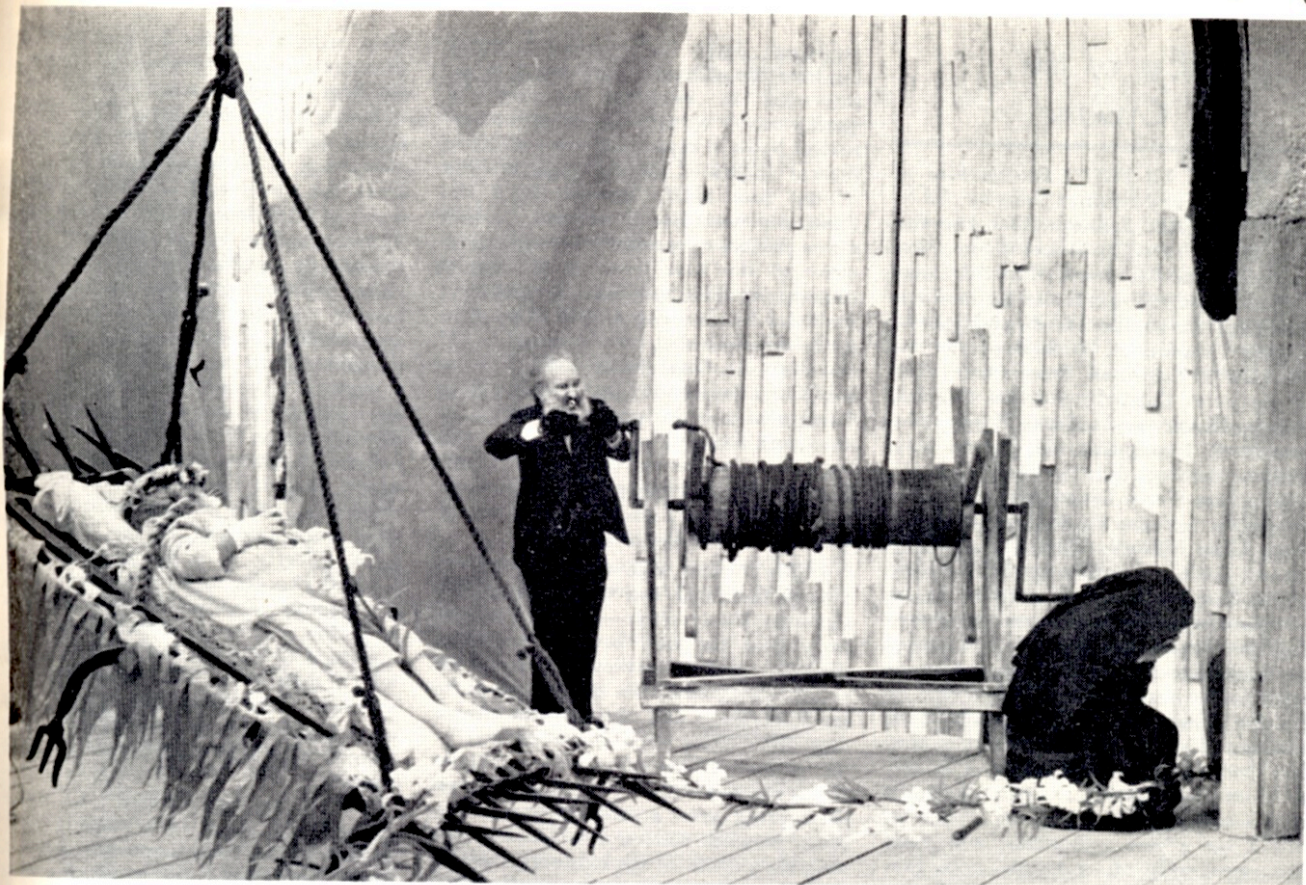
It was a charming way to end our conversation.



To Catch A Thief (1955): Mr. Cary Grant stops scuffling at six. It's in his contract.



Suspicion (1941): Cary Grant, Joan Fontaine. The view is subjective.



Skeleton Keys

By Francois Truffaut

When *Cahiers du Cinema* decided to devote an issue to the films of Alfred Hitchcock, I planned that my contribution would be an article on Criticism with relation to Hitchcock's Films. But from the start of my research I was so put off by the amount of nonsense written about him that I gave up the idea, since I still have a few friends in the profession! For instance, one critic found fault with the happy ending of *Suspicion* and, in another article, he was indignant that Cotten had been made to die at the end of *Shadow of a Doubt*. In both cases he accused the censor without realizing that he was definitely wrong in one of the two cases. Besides, and I'll prove it further on, he was wrong in both.

I prefer therefore, to give the readers of *Cahiers* some general reflections on a cinéaste who, according to my personal hierarchy I place only after Renoir, Rossellini and Hawks. However, what I find more serious—perhaps because of the very esteem which almost always accompanies it, is the misunderstanding of which he is the complaisant victim. Placing hardly any value on what one calls "keys," since closed doors should be battered open with crowbars, and revolving doors don't count since they have no locks, I opted from then on for this "bunch of skeleton keys."

André Bazin was fortunate enough to have had two long meetings with Alfred Hitchcock, and I must quote here the most important passage of his article: "I made him (Hitchcock) realize that one theme at least kept recurring in his major films . . . that of the identification of a weak character with a stronger, held in moral captivity by the fascination exercised very deliberately over him . . . as in *I Confess*, when the transference of personality finds in the sacrament of penance a kind of theological confirmation.

"When he finally understood my meaning I saw, for the first and only time in that interview, that he was struck by a sudden and totally unforeseen idea. I had found the chink in that armor of humor. He smiled delightedly and I could follow the path of the idea on his face. Clearly, the more he thought about it, the more pleased he was to discover its accuracy, and it was from within himself that he found his confirmation—in the scenarios of *Rear Window* and *To Catch a Thief*. It is the only incontrovertible point made by Hitchcock's enthusiasts, but if this theme really exists in his work, he owes it to them for having discovered it."

I will attempt to prove to you, my dear André, that Hitchcock, while he remained silent, was thinking only



of ways of making you believe that you had just revealed to him a secret of which he was unaware. I will not give it up: Hitchcock lied to you and if you will only read this attentively, I hope you will admit it, because I am well aware of your unfailing good faith.

André Bazin's extreme kindness incites him to reassure us: in effect, what he is telling us is not to worry, that he himself recently experienced a similar disappointment with Wyler, and that my idea, though false, is good because it is ingenious.

So one must conclude that we are bad bedfellows, or that our pride is inordinate since we wish to admire not the idea that we have of Hitchcock, but Hitchcock himself; we do not want a genius unaware of himself. I claim that Alfred Hitchcock is more aware than Renoir and Rossellini and perhaps — as far as I am concerned — less great than they because of the total absence in his works of that which Gide called the "share of God."

In 1940 Hitchcock's lifelong dream was realized: he landed in America. The first film that he shot there is *Rebecca*, and it is essential that I give a brief resumé of its action. Haunted by the death of his wife Rebecca, mysteriously lost at sea. Maxim de Winter falls in love with a young woman, and marries her. From the moment of her arrival in the family mansion Manderley, the new Mrs. de Winter is harassed by the governess Mrs. Danvers, who was devoted body and soul to Rebecca. At a fancy-dress ball Mrs. de Winter appears in front of her husband dressed in a costume which she had made in great secrecy with Mrs. Danvers' advice. When he sees the costume Maxim becomes violently angry; this dress was the one Rebecca had worn, and the maneuver of Mrs. Danvers would have succeeded if the circumstances of Rebecca's death had not finally been revealed—finally to restore order.

Thus in Hitchcock's very first American film the theme of the transference of identity appears with a psychological force greater than the use of the double which one finds in several of his English films, among them *The Lady Vanishes*, and also *Foreign Correspondent*, which follow *Rebecca* in chronological order. *Foreign Correspondent* tells the story of a young journalist who unmasks a Nazi spy (Herbert Marshall) and marries his daughter (Laraine Day).

In 1942 — *Suspicion*, where Joan Fontaine believes that her elegant and charming husband, whom she knows definitely to be a gambler, a liar and a swindler, wants to poison her. Few spectators notice that from Lina's first suspicions the direction, objective as it was, becomes subjective and that from there on, sharing her anguish, it is normal that we begin to dramatize the least event with her. (Cary Grant loves his wife, he is not a murderer, and has no desire to kill her). That is why the end of the film is the best possible end for it, since there are innumerable films where the husband is guilty and dies (*Gaslight* of Cukor, re-

make of *Gaslight* by Dickinson taken from a play by Hamilton, *Undercurrent* of Vincente Minnelli, etc.)

I will pass quickly over *Saboteur* which, like *Foreign Correspondent*, is nothing but an excellent detective story, but I should like to mention that Priscilla, a prisoner of German spies, believes that they will poison her with a glass of milk, as in *Suspicion* ("Where there is an antidote, there is poison" — the detective in *Bizarre, Bizarre* . . .)

And so we come to *Shadow of a Doubt* which (after *Suspicion*) Hitchcock's second important American film. Here a sequence of 16 frames taken from the film itself would express perfectly what I want to say, since that is impossible, words will have to replace images, inadequate as they are.

1. A furnished room; pensive, fully-dressed, stretched out on the bed, is Uncle Charlie (Joseph Cotten). Important point: the head is towards the right of the screen, and the door at the back is on the right of the wall.

2. Two men are looking for Cotten; he comes out of his house; he is followed, but manages to fool the two policemen.

3. In a little American town. Pensive, fully-dressed, stretched out on the bed is Charlie Newton (John Wright), Uncle Charlie's niece. The direction of the sequence is identical with that in which Cotten was first presented to us, but it is reversed: Charlie's head and the door at the back are on the left of the screen.

4. A sort of moral confusion takes possession of the Newton family. Charlie suggests inviting Cotten to spend a few weeks with them; she goes for the post office to send the telegram, but just as a cable arrives for the Newtons: Uncle Charlie announces his arrival.

5. Uncle Charlie arrives; the whole Newton family is waiting for him on the platform at the station.

6. Uncle Charlie has been the guest of the Newton family for some days, and all seems to be going well. It is only the audience which has guessed that Charlie is that murderer of rich widows whom the police are looking for.

7. Two young men who claim to be journalists come to the audience as well as Cotten guess to be the murderer, come twice to the house, question the family, photograph Uncle Charlie, in spite of himself.

8. One of the two "journalists," Jack Graham, takes Uncle Charlie to the cinema. On the way back, they sit on a public bench. Charlie refuses to believe in Uncle's guilt, but promises the police to say nothing to him.

9. The investigation continues. Uncle Charlie commits two blunders which arouse and confirm the family's suspicions.

10. One morning, in front of the Church, the police tell Charlie that they will have definite proof in

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days; the police are following in the East, *another suspect* whose comings and goings in the towns where the murders were committed correspond to the dates on which they were committed.

11. Then follow *two* attempts to murder Charlie, under the guise of accidents. (We are shown Cotten seeing a step in the stairway, opening the exhaust of the car and locking the garage). But one evening Uncle Charlie announces his departure. The man the police were following in the East, the second suspect, fled as they were about to arrest him at an airfield and died, *crushed by the propellers of a plane*.

12. Convinced now of Uncle Charlie's guilt, his niece still hesitates to denounce him. "Your mother would die if you did," he says: but she entreats him to flee; he refuses.

13. The dossier for the investigation is closed, but will Charlie speak? *Second* scene at the station: the Newton family accompanies their dear Uncle Charlie to the train; the children want to get in also. Charlie goes in with them. The train starts, the children descend, but Cotten prevents Charlie from getting off with them, and as soon as the train picks up speed he tries to push her out; but she struggles and it is he who falls out, and is *crushed by a train* coming from the opposite direction.

14. Last sequence. Second scene in front of the Church: only Charlie and Jack who are to be married, know the truth. From the Church one hears the funeral eulogy for Uncle Charlie, the benefactor. But this same Church later on will reverberate to the strains of a wedding march: Charlie will become Jack's wife, she will become a woman.

To the theme of identity, which I have difficulty in believing is unconscious here, must correspond an obsession with the number Two. It is in fact in this manner that the extraordinary rhythm of the film is constructed.

Identical presentation of the two Charlies, two scenes at the Church, two scenes in the garage, two visits by the police, two scenes of the Newtons' at the dining table, two murder attempts, two scenes at the station, framing the action and, above all this which is admirable, *two suspects*, one in the West, the other in the East, who are both crushed to death, carrying their secret with them.

For the rest, nothing prevents us from thinking that Jack Graham, take the other suspect, on his side, had murdered some of those widows.

In *Notorious* as in *Foreign Correspondent* the heroine is the daughter of a spy. The opening of *Notorious* shows us Alicia, a high-society wreck, with her life disrupted by alcohol, who becomes a spy because of her undeclared love for Devlin. Her mission leads her to marry the Nazi spy Sebastian. When, without her realizing it she has been found out, Alicia's husband starts to poison her slowly, Cary

Grant finally admits his real feelings for Alicia and arrives just in time to save her.

In *Under Capricorn*, whose scenario Jean Domarchi describes in detail elsewhere, Lady Henrietta will follow the same road as Alicia, the road which leads from alcohol to poison. Accustomed to the effects of alcohol Alicia, as well as Henrietta, do not suspect that they are being poisoned, and it is only the fear of this poisoning that is able to reveal to them the horror of their past life, and efface it forever. One does not pay enough attention, when speaking of *Under Capricorn*, to the fact that Sam Flusky paid for the murder that his wife committed. Henrietta, having killed her brother to defend Sam, accomplished in fact Sam's murder, i.e. the murder that Sam could have committed.

It is the same situation in *Strangers on a Train*. Robert Walker offers to get rid of the tennis champion's wife for him in return for which he, Farley Granger, has only to rid him of his father, a stupid old man. It is the same idea of murder-exchange outlined in *Under Capricorn*. But there are no Hitchcock couples without the idea of domination, and if Judith Anderson, Cary Grant, Cotten, Madame Konstantin and Margaret Leighton terrorize respectively Joan Fontaine (Mrs. de Winter), Joan Fontaine (Linda), Teresa Wright (Charlie), Ingrid Bergman (Alicia), and Ingrid Bergman (Henrietta), Robert Walker and Farley Granger in *Strangers on a Train* as John Dall and Farley Granger in *Rope*, offer us a sinister variant on the abject union of a madman and a coward. Make no mistake about it: Hitchcock condemns the heroes of *Strangers on a Train* as unequivocally as those of *Rope*.

I Confess, and those who can read between the lines will understand Jacques Rivette's excellent criticism of this film in *Cahiers*, takes up again this basic theme of exchange: the priest lets himself be judged for a crime he has not committed. But the criminal sacristan is more innocent than the priest because, taken by surprise while stealing, he kills in self-defense. The crime, then, was not *his* but the *priest's*, since the victim was blackmailing Anne Baxter because of the priest, whose fiancée she had been long ago.

Dial M for Murder, like *Strangers on a Train*, deals with a perfect crime through an intermediary. I know very little about *Rear Window*, but the subject of *To Catch a Thief* deserves to be described in detail in that it renews with great ingenuity the theme of identification: Cary Grant is the chief of a gang of thieves whose activities take on an international and quasi-official standing, which saves him from being bothered by the police. Then follow, on the Cote d'Azur, a series of robberies which bear the mark of Cary Grant, of his pride and his glory. They imitate, in a sort of way, his hold-up technique. Naturally the police are powerless and because of the harm caused, Cary Grant

decides to set himself to catch the imitator, and arrives at the conclusion: "Since he imitates me and plagiarises from me, I can guess his intentions by asking myself what I would do if I were me, that is if I were he trying to be me."

One sees how faithful Hitchcock has been to the themes with which he has never ceased to deal since *Rebecca*, enriching them from film to film by divesting them of their earlier irrelevancies. It is without doubt in *Under Capricorn* and *I Confess* that that which I dare, without laughing, to call the message of Hitchcock, finds purest and proudest expression. One cannot demand of Hitchcock that each year he offer us a film of equal importance — particularly since these two were the least commercial and least appreciated by the critics.

One does not realize clearly enough the inferior position in which we critics find ourselves when face to face with the creator of a film. We spend two hours watching a film, seeing it badly because if the story sets us thinking about one image, the rest rush past a vacant stare. But on leaving the film we still demand to know as much as the director who prepared his film, shot it, supervised the editing of it. All directors, even Marcel Blistene, know their films shot by shot, and the sound-track by heart. The homage that one can pay to an author or film-maker is to attempt to know and understand his book or his film as well as he does himself.

When, on seeing Hitchcock's films over and over again one realizes that in spite of the variety of sources and script-writers, the themes, the situations, are always the same, it becomes obvious that when Hitchcock says, "Well! ! It is true, but I never noticed it," he lies deliberately. Because one cannot work for years (since 1947), on the scenario of *I Confess*, *Suspicion*, *Notorious*, *Under Capricorn* and *Strangers on a Train*. It is not due to the machinations of the Holy Ghost that the films are so perfectly fitted together. One does not improvise the construction of a scenario such as that of *Shadow of a Doubt*.

Why Does Hitchcock Lie?

1. He was brought up by Jesuits.
2. Its secret, because secret there is, is so simple and based on so few words and so many images that it is from them that the simple formula emerges. And moreover, the secrets of its making are not divulged. Hitchcock revels in being misunderstood, more so because it is on misunderstandings that he has constructed his life. Whereas a Graham Greene for example aspires to be a Catholic novelist and his novels metaphysical, Hitchcock prefers to remain in

the actual cinema. "Alfred Hitchcock is modest. He is

not interested in festivals, with a jury to discuss the prize he should receive. He does it better himself. He has always told journalists "My only good film is the one I have just finished." Since he has made this announcement 18 times, he must like all his films, and yet, to Chabrol who asked him: "Which is your worst film?" he answered: "All." Lies.

3. Hitchcock is a Hitchcockian character; he loathes having to explain himself. He must realize, however, that one day he will have to behave like his characters who assure their salvation by admitting this. But to

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not interested in festivals, with a jury to discuss the prize he should receive. He does it better himself. He has always told journalists "My only good film is the one I have just finished." Since he has made this announcement 18 times, he must like all his films, and yet, to Chabrol who asked him: "Which is your worst film?" he answered: "All." Lies.

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admit that he is a genius is difficult, particularly when it is true.

We can never dispute the formal genius of Hitchcock, even though we are still squabbling over his responsibility for the scenarios that he shoots.

It is evident that this permanence of themes whatever, so very rare in the history of cinema, is not irrefutable proof of his genius. In another this would reveal an "idée fixe" and an incapacity for self-renewal. Since Hitchcock has been a Hollywood filmmaker for 15 years now, let us remain in the field of American

cinema.

In 30 years of silent films, Hollywood has produced some masterpieces among which Griffith's *True Heart Susie* and Murnau's *Sunrise* appear to me to be the purest. In the same way that I am incapable of seeing *True Heart Susie* without thinking of *Sergeant York* of Hawks, I cannot see *Sunrise* without thinking of Hitchcock. If in Murnau's film the country woman is Hawksian, it is the same stylization of acting as when Milly dances perfidiously around Sam Flusky. The gag of the straps could be Hitchcock. There is again,



Murder (1954): Ray Milland, Grace Kelly. Conscience through collage.

the beauty of ideas, their finesse, their rarity, behind the image which they create.

In its persevering mediocrity, French cinema offers the advantage of presenting us with touching fidelity, the image of what one must never do.

—An Idea from the French Cinema

In *Les Orgueilleux*, Michèle Morgan, newly-widowed, at the end of her resources, sends a telegram to her family, asking for money. The employee at the Post Office counts the number of words and tells her the amount, to which she replies, "Take out 'love'."

And that is typical of the ideas one finds in almost all French films. It is not an idea of the director Yves Allégret, but of the script writer Jean Aurenche. It has the double merit of being impressive and of giving Geneviève Agel something to think about. It has, on the other hand, the triple inconvenience of being base, of making each spectator an intellectual, and of affirming the superiority of authors over their characters since Michèle Morgan is unaware of the cruelty of her "mot d'enfant" (child's word).

—And Here, an Idea of Alfred Hitchcock's

My well-known impartiality led me to pick two films which have a common subject — the downfall of a woman, and her salvation.

In *Under Capricorn* Ingrid Bergman is at the height of her downfall. In order not to see the reflection of her moral ugliness in her own eyes, she removes all

mirrors from her home. Michael Wilding who has taken on the self-imposed task of making her come alive again, evokes for her the beauty of his native Ireland where "the gorse still grows on the top of the hills." He takes off his jacket, holds it behind a window-pane and forces Henrietta-Bergman to look at her still-intact beauty, as in a mirror.

Since the job of dialogue-writers is to write dialogue, one knows better than to attribute this idea to them. This is an idea of Hitchcock's, like the glass of water on the forehead of the Attorney General in *I Confess*. These are directorial ideas. A very good idea!

Renoir and Rossellini are the greatest contemporary directors, because they frequently transcend the barrier of sound, and it is thus that their genius is affirmed. In this penetration of the barrier of sound they pass from the false to the more real than real. With the idea of the window-pane in *Under Capricorn* I was seized by a similar vertigo, and that is why, as long as I am not able to find a similar idea in other directors, I will continue to insist on placing Hitchcock above them. On the other hand, it is only normal that we would admire Hawks and Hitchcock, the only cinéastes who appear to have absorbed the heritage of Griffith and Murnau, with something added. For, since *The River*, *Monkey Business* and *Under Capricorn*, the cinema has entered what we can well call "The Phase of Intelligence."



Strangers On A Train (1951): The transfer of guilt from Robert Walker to Farley Granger.

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Hitchcock Confronts Evil

By Claude Chabrol

"Do not think of Evil as a material substance: perversity does not subsist as if it were some living thing; it will never appear before your eyes as if it really existed, for Evil is simply the denial of Good."

Saint Basile

In order to penetrate the Hitchcockian universe in good style, we must begin by rejecting certain misleading surface impressions of characters supposedly conceived solely in terms of the artificial conventions of "suspense." The devices of the detective story are always exterior to the characters and independent of them, and the problems posed are never such that a well organized detective story cannot resolve them.

The objective in Hitchcock's films is of a different order entirely; the type of question posed is always, definitively, a moral dilemma most often limited to a relatively small number of characters, and the cameras are always tirelessly aimed at these characters, as objectively as possible (the characters in relation to the intrigue) and, at the same time, as subjectively as possible (Hitchcock in relation to his characters).

The police, or let us say the security apparatus, the *deux ex machina* of every detective story, appear here as an instrument of forces already set in place, like certain objects or psychological characteristics, and they serve, at the discretion of the *auteur*, sometimes as a protective shield and sometimes as an instrument of torture. The crime itself has no significance of its own. Thus to describe Hitchcock as "sadistic," obsessed or as a dangerous maniac would be nothing but polemics, stupidity, blindness or disagreeable name-calling. Even a rapid and superficial examination of his work easily proves this; either the crime is conjured away (*Under Capricorn*, *Rebecca*, *The Paradine Case*, *I Confess*) or transcended by the mode of narration (*Strangers on a Train*) or purely and simply necessary (*Rope*).

The crime represents for the Hitchcockian character only a test, deliberately chosen because it is the most difficult and the most vertiginous situation in which a being may be placed.

It is striking that Hitchcock's lesson belongs to the domain of Ethics: I mean that his moral conceptions end up being integrated into a metaphysic. It is quite

with his dignity. But behind that there remains a more profound truth than that of moral laws, a truth which the artist can attain only by circumvention; this truth that haunts him cannot be handed us on a silver platter: it is up to us, as we discover its moral significance, to look behind the act or gesture and grasp its definitive meaning, for which it was brought into being for all eternity, and which can never be expressed in words. We should never forget that this Englishman studied with the Jesuit Fathers, a fact which explains his important dialectical and moral formation; nor should one be astonished that his work has as its main axis Man and the battle he must sustain. How lacking in vision are those who reproach him for his choice of subjects and their arbitrariness, and how uncomprehending of their admirable continuity; a continuity such that no work is independent of the others but a perpetual deepening, a perpetual enrichment, until the highest justice is ultimately rendered.

It would no more enter Hitchcock's mind to illustrate, more or less flatly, a day in the life of Vincent de Paul, than to be tempted to ask Jules Berry or Palau to represent — with or without horns — Evil, of which he has, thank God, a more correct conception, and which his masters as much as his own thoughts have taught him not to try to concretize. He knows that Mephistopheles is the image of only one complex notion among all the ones he has sought, throughout his work, to express as rigorously as possible. As it must, Satan's whisper ceaselessly pervades his films, but we will only discover it by signs, by more and more perfectly exact symbols; he is the first, without a doubt, to have suggested the infernal presence to us without being compelled to point it out expressly, succeeding there where Balzac, Dostoevsky and Bernanos half-failed—not because he has more genius than they, to be sure, but because he has in his hands a medium of expression with the greatest resources, a medium whose miraculous power he is one of the

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It is striking that Hitchcock's lesson belongs to the domain of Ethics; I mean that his moral conceptions end up being integrated into a metaphysic. It is quite evident that, on the human scale, morality constitutes the only constructive metaphysic and that man's hope, which is the motif itself of the Hitchcockian tapestry, is, in the final analysis, strictly confounded there

with his dignity. But behind that there remains a more profound truth than that of moral laws, a truth which the artist can attain only by circumvention; this truth that haunts him cannot be handed us on a silver platter: it is up to us, as we discover its moral significance, to look behind the act or gesture and grasp its definitive meaning, for which it was brought into being for all eternity, and which can never be expressed in words. We should never forget that this Englishman studied with the Jesuit Fathers, a fact which explains his important dialectical and moral formation; nor should one be astonished that his work has as its main axis Man and the battle he must sustain. How lacking in vision are those who reproach him for his choice of subjects and their arbitrariness, and how uncomprehending of their admirable continuity; a continuity such that no work is independent of the others but a perpetual deepening, a perpetual enrichment, until the highest justice is ultimately rendered.

It would no more enter Hitchcock's mind to illustrate, more or less flatly, a day in the life of Vincent de Paul, than to be tempted to ask Jules Berry or Palau to represent — with or without horns — Evil, of which he has, thank God, a more correct conception, and which his masters as much as his own thoughts have taught him not to try to concretize. He knows that Mephistopheles is the image of only one complex notion among all the ones he has sought, throughout his work, to express as rigorously as possible. As it must, Satan's whisper ceaselessly pervades his films, but we will only discover it by signs, by more and more perfectly exact symbols; he is the first, without a doubt, to have suggested the infernal presence to us without being compelled to point it out expressly, succeeding there where Balzac, Dostoevsky and Bernanos half-failed—not because he has more genius than they, to be sure, but because he has in his hands a medium of expression with the greatest resources, a medium whose miraculous power he is one of the few to have understood and known how to utilize. Thus rather than recognize in a character a satanic presence that can only be a nothingness or a lack and, in this way, resign oneself to never understanding



Rebecca (1940): Joan Fontaine, Judith Anderson.

Hitchcock's work, it is advisable to stop and think about these implicit indications: The grimacing painting that haunts Anny Ondra throughout *Blackmail*, Professor Jordan's missing phalanx finger, Rebecca's disappearance, the *chasm created* between the husband and wife in *Suspicion*, Gregory Peck's *amnesia* in *Spellbound*, why Father Benoit's bicycle is off-balance in *I Confess*.

The Catholic conception of existence, which is Hitchcock's, cannot envisage the direct (I understand *living*) intervention of God in this struggle, in which the prize is Man's salvation, for Man is considered in the last resort, to be perfectly free. It is within him, on his own ground, that the battle takes place: it is up to him to sink or swim. Also, even though there are frequently in Hitchcock's films brutal plot reversals that are also manifestations of divine omnipotence, like the Bible that Hannay carries—*without knowing it*—over his heart and which keeps him from being killed by Jordan, like the abrupt discovery of Rebecca's boat at the moment when Joan Fontaine, driven by despair, is on the verge of committing suicide, or the confession by the sacristan's wife when the priest is going to be lynched; even though, by the very nature of things, the traps set by the devil are so many victorious occasions for the one who, more cunning than the devil himself, knows how to be worthy—most often we find ourselves in the presence of a human

being, armed by his unique nature, a prey to temptation. This is because Hitchcock knows very well that this battle, the most decisive phases of which he presents to us with a marvelous clarity, is only the human reflection of the true. Also, he occasionally applies himself to the issue with a single gesture or a single word. The glass of milk in *Suspicion* is the last object the one that will conclude things; it matters little if it be poisoned or not (in fact, it is infinitely stronger and more characteristic that it not be), what is important is that Joan Fontaine believes that it is. It is the ultimate trap around which the entire film is built. To drink it is a suicide to which the young woman has just been artfully tempted. ("Does it leave traces? Must one suffer?"—"No trace at all, my dear, and one dies as if going to sleep."), to drink it is to give the triumph to despair which is by far the most formidable arm of the Demon.

Similarly Father Logan has but to say one word to establish his innocence and end his torments, but this would be to betray, less his ministry than his faith, and to lose that dignity which Montgomery Clift expresses admirably at all times (one has only to be reminded of the ferryboat scene). As, on the other hand, Ingrid Bergman's fall in *Under Capricorn* is expressed, in the hallucinatory sequence of the shrunk head, by the fact that Bergman *cannot refrain from* contemplating it.

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Spellbound (1945)

This latter film shows us, moreover with an astonishing clarity, that the unhappiness of beings is caused by their misunderstanding their own force. The cancer that gnaws at this couple originates in their mutual sacrifices, like the way Bergman and Cary Grant spend a long time on the borderline of happiness because of the repugnance they feel toward self-explanation. This necessity for confession, for explanation, this recognition of oneself, this will to accept not one's destiny (the Hitchcockian characters are free and masters of their life) but one's personality, is presented to us by Hitchcock as the supreme exorcism and the principal condition of Man's final triumph.

Such a notion implies the acceptance of responsibilities; in this way the heroine of *Under Capricorn* can only save her happiness by confessing her crime and accepting the consequences, joining, for example, Anny Ondra in *Blackmail*; this situation is the very subject of *Rope*.

To consider this latter film as Nietzschean in inspiration escapes being absurd only if one offers as reference the chapter devoted to the murderer of God (chapter VII of book IV) in *Zarathustra*. This chapter clarifies, as well, the profound motivation of Brandon¹ (to want to take God's place—is it not to seek to kill him?) and offers us all the more a parallel between Zarathustra himself and Rupert Cadell: as the Murderer of God affirms to Zarathustra that he

is the instigator of his crime, so Brandon wishes to make Cadell the source of his inspiration. But, thank God, the parallel stops there. While Zarathustra goes away without really knowing what to answer, head lowered and "chilled to the very marrow" (this, parenthetically, is bad publicity for Nietzschean philosophy), Cadell, who is not an atheist, knows how to save face. He rejects the idea of complicity ("Something in me would have kept me from doing it"), but realizes perfectly that flight would be undignified and therein lies the trap. Thus he accepts his responsibility for the crime, for in spite of everything he is responsible (whence the admirable symbol of the wounded hand) before mankind, and the final image shows him with two wretches in an anguished wait for the moment when the sirens will stop, weary, beaten, near the coffer from which the books have fallen, and feeling a remorse his students do not know how to feel. This unconsciousness in criminals, always pushed to go to the limit of their abjectness, this monstrous and terrible pride, which will be even more pronounced in Robert Walker in *Strangers on a Train*, can justly qualify only as demonic. But it would be absurd to see in these characters a more or less

¹ The immediate motivation is well understood to be of a purely sexual order: it is a question of two partners in search of new sensations (one has only to remember the dialogue that follows the crime).



Spellbound (1945): Ingrid Bergman treats Gregory Peck's amnesia.

symbolic figuration of Satan. They are only the representation of those who have given up, like Cotten in *Shadow of a Doubt*, like Claude Rains in *Notorious*. Demonic, more exactly possessed, they have become thus only by their own will. If a chance of salvation still exists for them, it lies in repentance and confession. This last chance is seized by Otto Keller, and, if you will, by Bergman in *Under Capricorn*, and by Anne Baxter in *I Confess*. It is always possible to retreat.

This chance is rejected by Uncle Charlie when he decides, once more, on the train, to do away with his niece, and by Bruno Anthony as well when, dying (and no longer having anything to lose but his soul), he lies again in order not to confess. What these people, carried away by a not uncommon aberration, want is to find some sort of grandeur in pride; what they achieve belongs to Lucifer himself and lies entirely in the realm of abjectness.

Hitchcock conserves in all his characters their deep-seated ambiguity. There is not one for whom he does not feel some affection. He has too much faith in man, too much love for him, not to seek some excuse for those who founder. Rebecca's cancer, Uncle Charlie's childhood accident, Bruno's love for his mother are so many reasons that justify their weakness. Brandon himself—the most repugnant of all, without a doubt—is touching in the naïveté of his love for Cadell. The sacristan of *I Confess* steals and is pushed to kill only because of love for his wife (this is, moreover, the reason why she keeps her silence for so long). His crime is for him only an accident, without any premeditation at all, a reflex of justifiable self-defense in his eyes. It is through this breach that Satan rushes in, like the wind in drafty houses. His confession is doubtlessly sincere. But when Keller, after having wept on his wife's knees, raises his head, his look, now overcast and malevolent, and his insinuating voice have become those of the Devil himself. And that genuflection, first filled with defiance but ending with lowered eyes, that tête-à-tête with the priest several instants later when the look of the possessed cannot withstand the transparent gaze of the antagonist and is imbued with terror, are so many testimonies of the infinite powerlessness of Satan. And when, finally, Keller is no longer anything but a gesticulating silhouette at the foot of a profane altar, an unknown voice rises from him, cavernous and frightful, *sniggering*, believing it is celebrating the defeat of the man of God. Yet when this man of God advances, he finds himself face to face with only a poor, desperate, distracted man, who seeks to kill the priest out of pity, believing him to be as alone as he is himself, and ends by dying piously in the priest's arms.

In this fight, the child can never be a protagonist.

Since the victory of Evil can be the result only of the defeat of man, Satan's immense pride cannot attack total innocence; the child, set aside, remains an unconscious instrument in the hands of those who avail themselves of him as they would certain objects. Sometimes one sees him used for the most abject ends, as in *Sabotage*, in which he unknowingly carries a murderous time-bomb; sometimes he will serve to brandish the revealing object which will unmask the cleverly camouflaged Evil, as is the case in *Stage Fright*.

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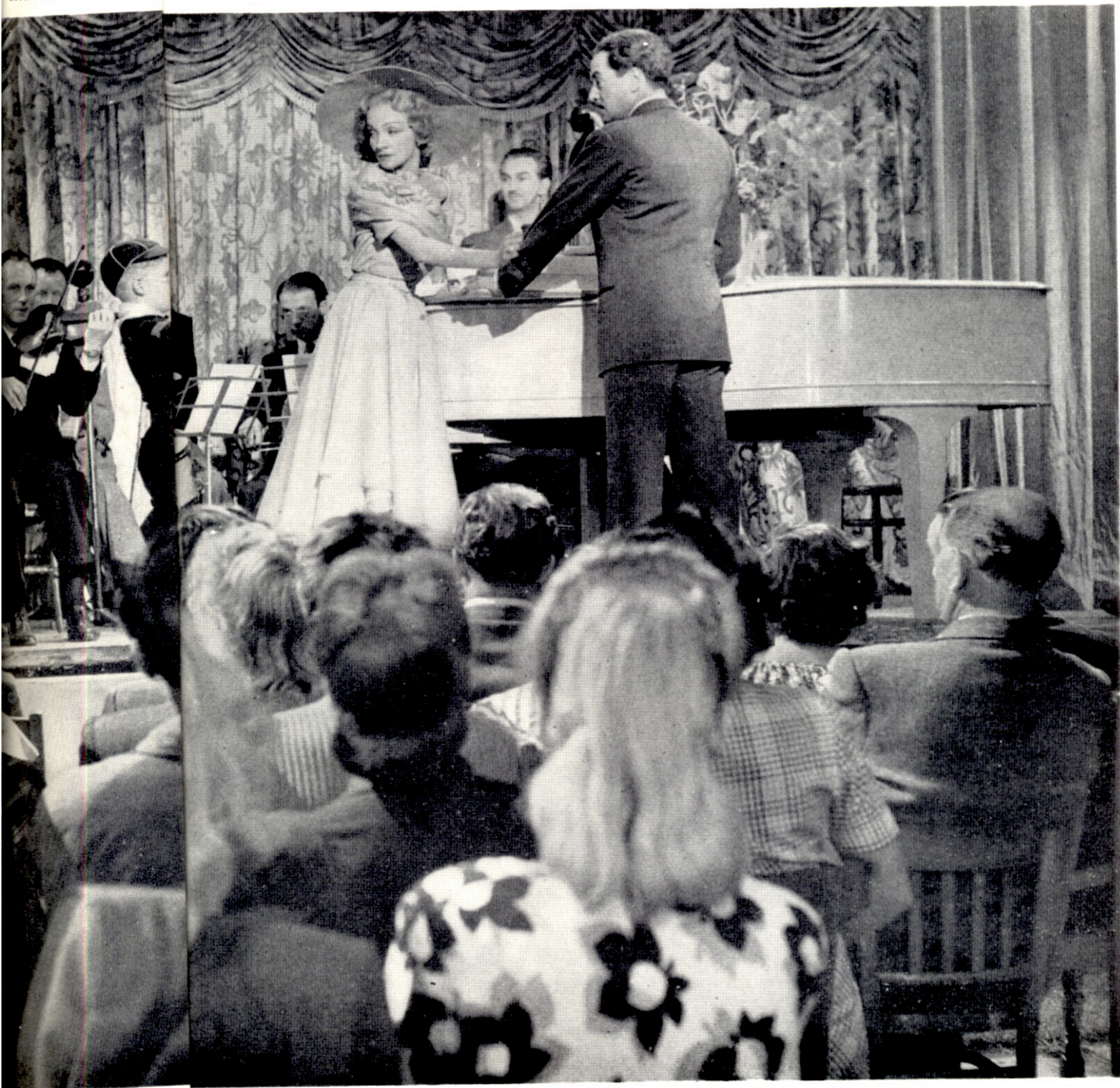
Fright.

Moreover, the subject itself (in part) of this film and also that of *Shadow of a Doubt* is the abrupt revelation to childish innocence of the terrible reality of Evil. Jane Wyman and Teresa Wright learn to know the horror of the malediction of the damned and also their unfathomable solitude. Also, may I be permitted to consider Patricia Hitchcock's terror-stricken face in Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*, after Bruno tried to somehow mentally strangle her,

as being that of the little girl with glasses in *Shadow of a Doubt* to whom the vertiginous depth of the Shadowy Abyss has just been revealed.

And may Hitchcock himself pardon me for having tried to clarify this important motif of his work which he has always sought, with so much care and modesty, to conceal.

My excuse is that this enterprise will perhaps help to clear up a misunderstanding that was causing confusion.



Stage Fright (1950): The child is innocent, but Marlene Dietrich is guilty.

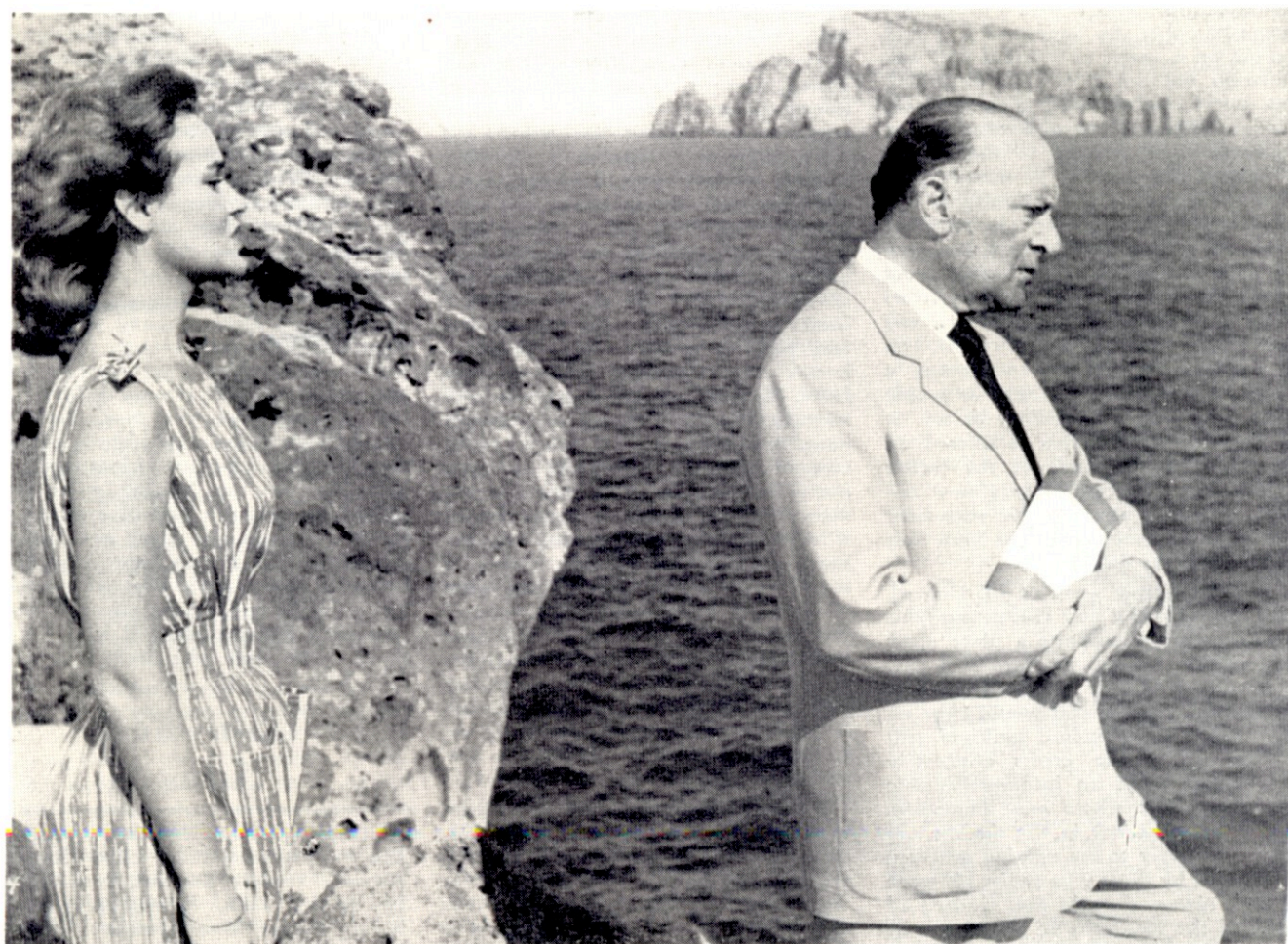
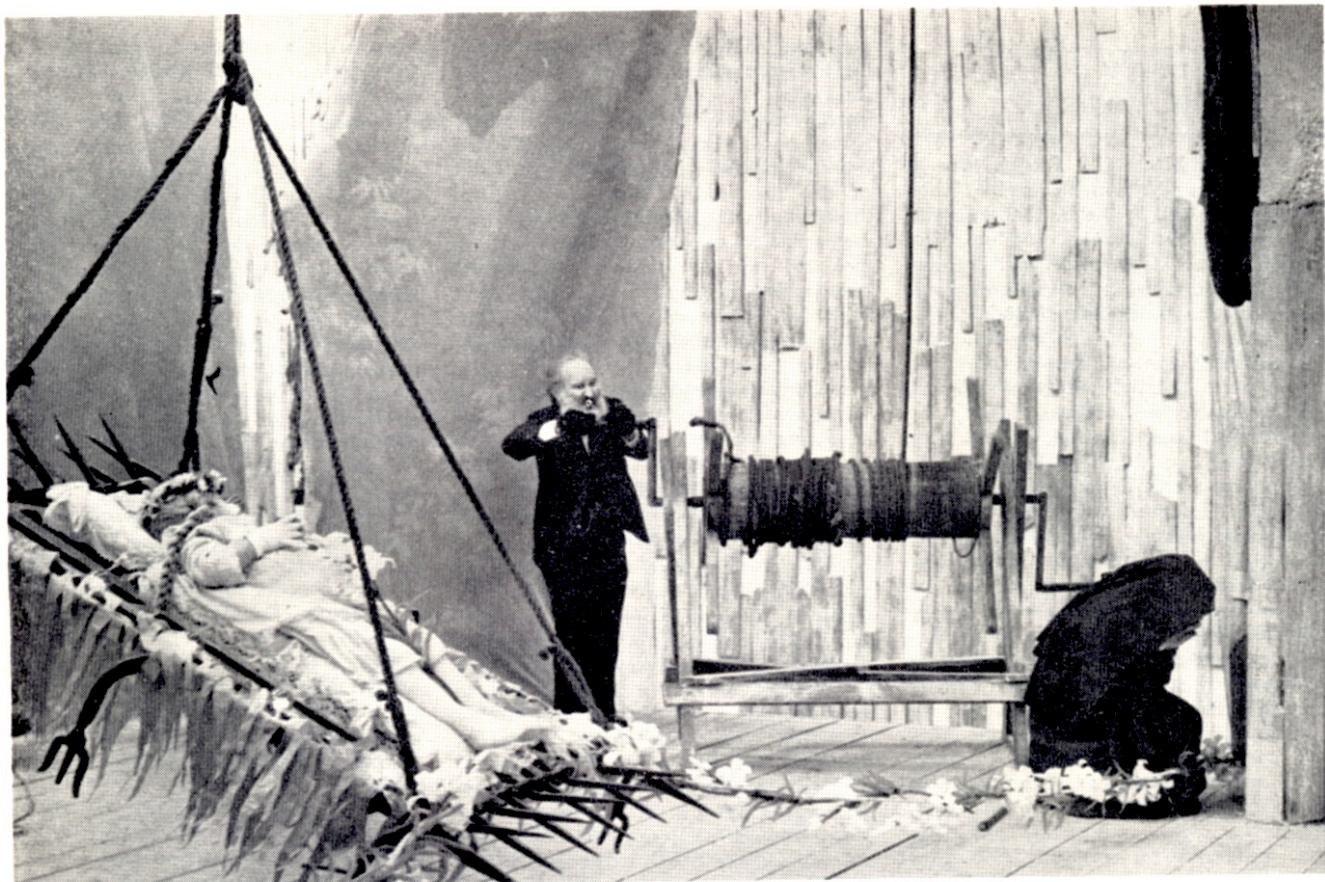


Cabiers Critiques

- A. JEAN-LUC GODARD: *Pierrot Le Fou*, Anna Karina, Jean-Paul Belmondo.
- B. CLIVE DONNER: *What's New Pussycat?*, Romy Schneider.
- C. FEDERICO FELLINI: *Juliet Of The Spirits*, Alba Cancellieri, Lou Gilbert.
- D. MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI: *L'Avventura*, Dominique Blanchar, Renzo Ricci.



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Eye of the Cyclone

PIERROT LE FOU. French film in Techniscope and Eastman color by JEAN-LUC GODARD. *Scenario:* Jean-Luc Godard, from a novel by Lionel White. *Photography:* Raoul Coutard. *Music:* Antoine Duhamel. *Editor:* Francoise Colin. *Cast:* Jean-Paul Belmondo (Ferdinand), Anna Karina (Marianne), Dirk Sanders (the "brother"), Raymond Devos (the man of the port), Graziella Galvani (Maria), Roger Dutoit and Hans Meyer (the gangsters), Jimmy Karoubi, Christa Nell, Pascal Aubier, Pierre Hanin, Lazlo Szabo, Jean-Pierre Léaud, Samuel Fuller. *Producer:* Georges de Beauregard-Rome Paris Films (Paris)—Dino De Laurentiis (Rome), 1965. Distributor: S.N.C.—Imperial. Length: 1 hour 52 minutes. If the

brilliant beauty of *Pierrot le fou* makes an impression at first viewing, it remains no less true that this latest (soon next to the last) Godard discourages analysis on account of a dangerous obviousness that has been begged too often. The immediate temptation is to affirm defiantly the astonishing richness of the film, strike up a few aphorisms, and close the paragraph on a lyrical note that should answer possible contradictors ahead of time. So it is with a deplorable unconcern that the commentator would set out on a course of praise if only one question did not persist in disturbing his moral comfort: why does this new Godard appear to be situated in a new perspective in relation to the earliest works of this auteur? A second question—aimed at the difficulty of approach to the work by the roads of criticism—brings a rudimentary answer. If it is more difficult to write about *Pierrot le fou* than about *Les Carabiniers* (*The Riflemen*) or *Une femme est une femme* (*A Woman Is a Woman*), this is not because we are confronting a resumé-film or an anthology—as people have been only too willing to say. It is not a new facet that is offered us. Not even the synthesis of the earlier works, but more probably a new disclosure that compels us to reconsider the reference points we had been able to believe were definitely set.

In the multiple work of J-L Godard, bent on exploring new cinematographic regions, *Pierrot* occupies a place apart and marks perhaps the start of a new period, as *A bout de souffle* (*Breathless*) opened the chapter that would close on *Alphaville*. Work indeed multiple, still unclear to certain critics obstinately recognizing in it an incomprehensible uniformity, but whose most immediate aspect has been left in the shadow too often. Contrary to the opinion generally held even by those who praise his work, I have always thought that Godard addressed the sensibility of the viewer before addressing his intelligence. Only a

deliberate desire to experiment presiding over the elaboration of each film has succeeded in masking this essential quality until now. This time Godard refutes stylistic experimentation to make *Pierrot le fou* a continual questioning of the film itself. Without even the flimsiest general line in advance, Godard seems subject to a necessity that belongs more to the film than to the auteur confronting this work as it elaborates itself day by day with a kind of passionate spontaneity that leads straight to the essential. As Sam Fuller defined it to Ferdinand-Belmondo, the cinema is a battle, and it is no longer a question of conjuring away its ups and downs from the public, but on the contrary of showing its slightest encounters and reworkings to the point of making them the very essence of the work.

I don't mean that the technique is obvious here—as was the case for *The Collector* for example—but, on the contrary, that the film never preexists its shooting, and that every image reveals, as its watermark, the auteur's will to say everything and the rhythm of his own life. What then more natural, if the tempo of this action filming seems to be the heartbeat of a being bent on discovering, after a proceeding that hesitates between Céline and Husserl, the tangible proofs of his existence? Before the film tilts toward this "controlled happening" that is the expression of life itself, the first sequences make up an entomological description of a congealed universe, a kind of air-conditioned nightmare that the auteur contemplates not without fear, witness the color filters that establish a necessary distance. To this spirit of scientific analysis (spectral decomposition) corresponds a new vision, polychromatic even to satiety, coincidental with Ferdinand's escape. But from the first chapter of this adventure, before the column of black smoke rises, or before he discovers the fatal signs in people's looks, Ferdinand knows that he is only a dead man on leave. He does not satisfy himself with learning this truth, he actually assimilates it to the point of making it his reason for living. That is why one must not smile (in spite of the ceaseless passages from the grotesque to the tragic) if he declares he wants to stop time because one morning, on the harbor, a slightly mad queen, the sunlight, some vibration of light and the presence of Marianne found again make him perceive more acutely than ordinarily the flow of life in his body. This new awareness will be accompanied immediately by another revelation superimposed on it, the impossibility of making two universes coincide entirely.

If Godard has willed to recompose an impression starting from its various elements, it is to the opposite proceeding that Ferdinand gives himself, hoping by analysis to identify a phenomenon that escapes him since he himself is its center. Life is in him but its manifesta-

tions remain exterior to him. How to seize the central phenomenon? How can one film the eye of a cyclone?

Before this near-impossibility he assigned himself, Godard chooses to say everything at each image: anxiety, violence, the wavelength of solar radiation, death and the look of Marianne Renoir. The Godardian art of digression here reaches its culminating point, deliberately reducing the story to an "incoherent" web (incoherent in the customary meaning of the word) by a single-minded will to capture the event under a multitude of simultaneous lightings, an enterprise scarcely easier than photographing the other side of the nebula of Andromeda. Nothing astonishing, then, if this itinerary in the form of free fall offers us only episodic pulsations corresponding to the instants of calm. Clearly it is to paint life that Godard chooses to film the dead times, deliberately chopping the rare moments of action, conjuring them away, reducing them to the rhythm of the thought which does away with itself suddenly to concentrate itself into gesture, like an unforeseeable airpocket, to press a trigger, to plunge a blade into an absurd nape.

After having crossed a France changed for them to a tropical forest, Ferdinand and Marianne (or else it is Franz and Odile) recapture their own distances from which an artificial trajectory had removed them, the interval of one revolution. Marianne killed by his hand, all that remains for Ferdinand is to pursue this fall, suspended a moment, and now deliberate like that of Nicholas de Stael from the ramparts of Antibes. With a frenzy that we carefully civilized Occidentals will have difficulty understanding, mad Ferdinand—Ferdinand le Fou—dynamites himself, masked in blue, like the sea or that moon whose last inhabitant had run away to love Marianne, and wearing a tragically grotesque helmet of TNT. Perhaps all the film is contained in that last second when Ferdinand decides too late to extinguish the fuse. Perhaps *Pierrot* is this fraction of eternity before the explosion, these last visions that file past, they say, at 186,000 miles per second. Perhaps this hesitation sums up the entire work and gives new meaning to the sea, to this improvised ballet or to that electric blue set on flat white. In the end, to life, which, in the space of a deflagration, will have worn the horrible mask of a death in a day.

Michel CAEN

Restrictive Satire

NOTHING BUT THE BEST. English film in Technicolor by Clive Donner. *Scenario:* Frederic Raphael, from a story by Stanley Ellin. *Photography:* Nick Roeg. *Music:* Ron Grainer. *Decors:* Reece Pemberton. *Editor:* Fergus Mc-

Editor's Eyrie

Andrew Sarris

The first issue of *Cahiers du Cinéma* in English was intended primarily as an introduction to cinephilia on the Seine. Now the hard work begins. It is still too early to assess the reactions to this enterprise, but I will seek to answer two of the more interesting queries received in the mail. First, Mr. Edgar F. Daniels of the English Department of Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio: "Some reactions to CdCiE No. 1:

1. I wish the flashback articles had been dated. I gather that Truffaut's article precedes his film-making, but surely it would be relevant to have that fact indicated boldly at the outset.

2. From the ads for CdCiE, I assumed it would be an English-language edition of CdC, and from your opening editorial I'm still not sure whether subsequent issues will contain (a) the precise contents of the current French CdC, (b) articles written expressly for CdCiE, or (c) both. (But the ad on p. 74 seems to make that clear.)

3. Having been puzzled by the term *mise en scène*, which I have seen tossed around w/o definition, I eagerly applied myself to Astruc's article. I am still no wiser about *mise en scène*, but I now know that gobbledegook is not exclusively an American vice.

4. I am grateful for the chance to read these things, which might otherwise have never become available here in English. Best of luck with your magazine."

1. Henceforth, Mr. Daniels, all *Cahiers* articles will be dated. For the record, Francois Truffaut's "A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema" appeared in January 1954. The other dates for the flashback articles are as follows: "Fire and Ice" by Alexandre Astruc: December 1952. "On the Politique des Auteurs" by André Bazin: April 1957. "My Experience" by Max Ophüls: March 1958. "Bergmanorama" by Jean-Luc Godard: July 1958. "Ambiguity of the Cinema" by Roger Leenhardt and "What is *Mise en Scène*" by Alexandre Astruc: October 1959. "Night, Eclipse, Dawn . . ." An interview with Michelangelo Antonioni by Jean-Luc Godard: November 1964.

2. I hope our second issue will answer some of the questions raised by the first. *Cahiers* has a rich tradition which we do not wish to abandon entirely. On the other hand, *Cahiers* is on the firing line each month, and we will try to keep up with current events as closely as possible. *Cahiers du Cinéma* will therefore represent a fusion of the classical and dynamic elements of *Cahiers*, the past and the future. How much past and how much future? Who can tell? We can

only scan the cinematic horizon each month to see what articles seem most timely.

3. I beg to differ with your appraisal of Astruc's article on *mise en scène* as "gobbledegook." It is about the best piece of cinematic criticism I know. It renders the intangible tangible and the invisible visible. Yet it is as compact as it is complex, and hence difficult on first reading.

4. We are all grateful here for your kindness and forbearance during these first months of infancy. We value your advice and felicitations, and we hope to hold your interest and gain your respect.

Mr. Philip J. Zemanek of 5370 Lee Road, Number 202, Maple Heights, Ohio, raises some pertinent questions on *Cahiers* vocabulary:

"I wish to take this opportunity to say that *Cahiers du Cinéma* is the very finest film magazine I have yet had the pleasure of reading.

I would be very grateful for the transliterations of the following French terms of which I have only a vague literary concept since some of the celluloid terminology differs from the direct definitions:

- A. Cinéaste.
- B. Metteur en scène.
- C. Politique des auteurs.
- D. *Mise en scène*.

I am grateful for your time and efforts and will be looking forward to perusing through the forthcoming editions of your magazine."

I would like to discuss this "celluloid terminology" less as a polemicist than as a lexicographer. What do these words convey in current usage? In English, particularly, they have a certain ring, a certain charge, that is far from being transliteral. Volumes and volumes could be written on the implications and connotations, the shadings and the nuances, the ambiguities and the ironies lurking in this terminology. Obviously my definitions must be shorter and more tentative than those of the Messrs. Astruc and Bazin. At first glance, "cinéaste" seems the least ambiguous of the terms under discussion. Stuart Byron, the lucid American Cahierist of Pathe-Contemporary, insists that "cinéaste" should be defined plainly and simply as "filmmaker" and withdrawn from the English language. I am not so sure. "Cinéaste" does not happen to be one of my favorite words, and I have never been quite sure what it meant. It seems to connote a fancy film-maker, or perhaps, a film-maker the writer happens to admire. Also, a secondary definition has emerged from English-language film periodicals, that of the cultivated film

enthusiast. Ultimately, "cinéaste" seems to suggest some complicity between the critic and the creator as if they were on the same level or, perhaps, even the same person. *Cahiers du Cinéma* in English will continue to translate "cinéaste" as "cinéaste" and let the context take care of itself.

"Metteur en scène" can be translated quite simply as "director." In certain contexts, however, the term serves as a critical diminutive. A mere "metteur en scène" limits himself to the technical tasks assigned to him by producers, writers, players and technicians. He is nominally in command, but he fails to impose his personality on his films. Unfortunately, even Truffaut and Godard have different conceptions of what is implied by the term. In our very first issue, Truffaut painted a picture of the mere metteur en scène with the features of Jean Dellanoy and Yves Allegret. For Godard, the mere metteur en scène was no less a personage than Luchino Visconti.

We will continue to define "metteur en scène" as "director" unless there is a pejorative connotation involved. In the latter instance, "metteur en scène" will be rendered simply and sneeringly as "metteur en scène."

"Politique des auteurs" refers to the policy at *Cahiers* to be for some directors and against others. That takes care of "politique." "Auteur" is more perplexing, as I should be the first to recognize after all the controversies the term has caused me. Strictly speaking, "auteur" means "author," and we so define it whenever the critic is speaking of literary figures. When Truffaut talks of Gide or Giraudoux, and refers to them incidentally as "auteurs," there is no special point being made, and "author" is both an adequate and accurate translation. It is another matter, entirely, when Truffaut describes Hitchcock and Hawks as "auteurs." "Author" is neither adequate nor accurate as a translation into English mainly because of the inherent literary bias of the Anglo-American cultural establishment. In terms of this bias, Ingmar Bergman did not become an author until his screenplays were published in cold print. The notion that a non-literary director can be the "author" of his films is difficult to grasp in America. Since most American film critics are either literary or journalistic types with no aspirations or even fantasies of becoming film directors, the so-called "auteur" theory has had rough sledding indeed. Truffaut's greatest heresy, however, was not in his ennobling direction as a form of creation, but in ascribing authorship

to Hollywood directors hitherto tagged with the deadly epithets of commercialism. Whenever, we translate "auteur" as "auteur," the reader may be sure that we are describing a "metteur en scène" with an expressive style and an emotionally meaningful personality. When we translate "auteur" as "author," we are merely describing a scribe like Scribe, or for that matter, the Shakespeare that is inscribed in cold print.

As for "mise en scène," it will be translated as is, and the reader must simply work along with it as we have been doing ourselves. I certainly can't

improve Astruc's essay, and I won't try. There is no point. "Mise en scène" is what *Cabiers* is all about, what the cinema is all about, and it will take more than one life-time to tag this transcendental term with a finite definition. If I sound mystical, it is probably because I am intoxicated by the impreciseness surrounding the term, but if I were compelled to take a stab at a definition, it would go something like this: "Mise en scène" is what an inspired "metteur en scène" (or "auteur") places before us on the screen. It is that which eludes most film critics as they listen to

the script being read aloud. Hence, the specialization of *Cabiers*.

Errata: The still on page 72 should have been captioned *Tabu* rather than *Nosferatu*. The error is so obvious, it is obviously inadvertent, but is the still on page 70 from *Tartuffe* or *Faust* or what? For that matter, is it Camilla Horn? Finally, Orson Welles should have been described by Roger Leenhardt on page 50 as "a man of the word" and not as "a man of the world," though, of course, Welles is eminently qualified in both spheres.

Paris Openings

From Nov. 24 to Dec. 21, 1965

8 French films

Les Baratiniers, film of Francis Rigaud, with Francis Blanche, Darry Cowl, Jean Poiret, Michel Serrault, Pascale Roberts, Hélène Duc, Bénédicte Lacoste. — The bone structure is beautifully pure: Serrault-Poiret, swindlers in the second hand trade, try to extort a XVIIth century retable from Francis Blanche, worldly fishmonger and vague heir of the *Bourgeoise Gentilhomme*. About it, alas, not the least flesh. Someone should project for the students of I.D.H.E.C. this anthology of failures, or the art of not coming off successfully: 1) the actors' numbers (Darry Cowl, Galabru, Roger-Pierre and Jean-Marc Thibault); 2) the mistaken identities of American comedy; 3) the chase-pursuits of the slapstick style. — M.M.

Dis-moi qui tuer, film in color of Etienne Périer, with Michèle Morgan, Paul Hubschmidt, Dario Moreno, Germaine Montero, Daniel Emilfork, Jean-Roger Caussimon. — Pitiful attempt to reconcile the taste for detective fantasies English style and pro-yéyé demagoguery. A treasure to recover, a German and a band of young people seeking it out, serve as pretext for one of those "witty comedies" in which every gag falls flat. Michèle Morgan plays the madcap, in pants *dernier cri* no doubt because she finds that really funny. She is the only one. — M.M.

Fantomas se déchaîne, film in scope and in color by André Hunebelle, with Jean Marais, Louis de Funès, Mylène Demongeot, Jacques Dynam, Robert Dalban, Olivier de Funès. — No effort at the scenario, but the proud announcement of "entirely original new adventures." Fantomas needles a savant, Fandor and Juve run after him, mocking James Bond, and find the means to descend still lower. Only one gag is amusing—since in our days, so it seems, one must laugh at *Fantomas*. Max Douy has composed for it his most consequential and ugliest décor since *Margurite de la*

nuît.—M.M.

Les Fêtes galantes, film in color of René Clair, with Jean-Pierre Cassel, Philippe Avron, Jean Richard, Geneviève Casile, Marie Dubois. — It is not even a satire of the "folly of men." Face to face, a fortress and its besiegers. From one camp to the other hop a crafty mercenary and an uncomprehending bumpkin. The couple mediate to accomplish a marriage that will end the war, without victor or vanquished. Not only does René Clair not concern himself with his period, but, under form of apologue, and giving himself all the distances and all the "degrees" imaginable, he has clearly nothing to say. This diversification that strikes out in every scene (when you are the Molière of the cinema, that shows), and which poses as a model of grace, of finesse, of "French" wit, does not deny itself any stupid blunder. "Finesse," yes, as they imagine it in *France-Dimanche*. The last scenes, of an accomplished ridiculousness, give the tone. A bluestocking's epigram.—M.M.

Nick Carter et le Trefle rouge, film of Jean-Paul Savignac, with Eddie Constantine, Nicole Courcel, Jo Dassin, Jeanne Valérie, Jean Ozenne. — Badly recovered from his visit to Alphaville, Constantine has kept his terrifying and impassive mask of Martian Keaton. In this adventure that takes up again the classic Eddies (someone has stolen some rockets loaded with a deadly gas: how to recover them in four days?), this gravity surprises, chills, and, in a word, gives a tone to the film. An incoherent and pretentious narration, with "flashes" in the style of Resnais, does not prevent the discovery of a tenacious climate, made of melancholy and of poetry, in which the passion for the nonsensical is worth less than a certain tendency to the neo-Feuillade, captivating if it is sincere.—M.M.

Terreur sur la savane, film in color of Yves Allégret, with Nicole Courcel,

Roger Pigaut, Jean Lefebvre, Guy Dikolo, Sophie M'Bali, Paul Kantole, 1962. — More than four years old, this film, made in the Congo in the middle of the disturbances of decolonization, describes the tribal struggles between Lulus and Balubas. It seems to owe its release, unpublished and delayed, at Pix, more to a relatively honest treatment of the political problems envisaged than to the quality, often deficient, of a mise en scène in large part improvised depending on events. The mixture of documentary and fiction is not always happy, if it remains rather sympathetic in its heroic bareness.

Les Tribulations d'un "Chinois" en Chine, film in color of Philippe de Broca, with Jean-Paul Belmondo, Ursula Andress, Jean Rochefort, Darry Cowl, Maria Pacome. — A marvelous, splendid subject, botched by the lack of a feeling for character, *bumeur*, and for comedy, *humour*, in the group entrusted with illustrating it. The debauch of color and of complaisant exoticism furnished by the locales of the shooting (Indes, Hong Kong, Nepal) are not enough to give an account of the dream-adventure flavor of Verne's fine novel, nor to restore the enchantments of the gilt edges and illuminations of its first editions. However one sees that de Broca went to a great deal of trouble and that he believed, at least partly, in his enterprise. *Les Tribulations* is superior to *L'Homme de Rio* (That Man from Rio) and more diverting, on the whole. But how many bits of short-winded bravura (scenes in fast motion), how many futile lickings of the lips (idyllic episode at the water's edge)! The photography of Séchan, in his opinionated sub-Decae, is everywhere aggressively ugly. If Belmondo is a respectable Arthur Lempereur, Ursula Andress once more proves her marble ineptitude for comedy, and the supporting players are too often used for their quirks. As often in this genre of film, the inevitable acceleration of the

rhythm disperses and wearies the interest instead of reviving it: it is a work that will go very well, in a few years, in ten minute slices on a third chain (that in color) of French television, between a remake of Tintin and the *Magazine des explorateurs*.

Viva Maria!, film in color of Louis Malle, with Brigitte Bardot, Jeanne Moreau, George Hamilton, Gregor von Rezzori, Paulette Goddard, Claudio Brook, Carlos Lopez Moctezuma, Jose Baviera, Alberto Pedret.

8 Italian films

Il compagno Don Camillo (*Don Camillo en Russie*), film of Luigi Comencini, with Fernandel, Gino Cervi. — New and painful episode of a guerilla warfare that is fizzling out, and that this time again concludes on the reciprocal recognition of the numerous merits of the peaceful coexistence of Marx and Saint Thomas. The low blows in it are more numerous and more senile than usual. The noble duel of the crucifix and the sickle concerns Gino Cervi and Fernandel as little as it does the spectator. A misplaced allusion to the admirable *Ninotchka* does not mend matters, already badly out of whack. — J.-A.F.

La cripta e l'incubo or *La Malediction de los Karnstein* (*La Crypte du Vampire*), film of Camillo Mastrocinque (Thomas Miller), with Christopher Lee, Audry Amber, Ursula Davis, Vera Valmont. — Under the pseudonym of Thomas Miller is concealed, with amply justified prudence, a Camillo Mastrocinque at the very bottom of his form and whose total indifference succeeds in ruining a rather good subject inspired by the *Carmilla* of Sheridan LeFanu. In spite of the efforts of a commendably eclectic coproduction, the ultra-reduced budget of the film does nothing but bring out the stylistic inadequacies that presided from all sides at its elaboration. Christopher Lee, in a role devoid of all interest, seems stricken with a paradoxical anemia, laid low no doubt by casting as unconvincing as uninspired. The few attempts at demonological eroticism are doomed at once by the bovine incomprehension of the participants. — M.C.

Ercole contro i tiranni di Babilonia (*Hercule contre les tyrans de Babylone*), film in scope and in color of Domenico Paolella, with Rock Stevens, Helga Lin, Livio Lorenzini. — Although one of the tyrants is revealed tyrantess, Hercules' adversaries are scarcely more attractive than he, and this Babylon makes one regret the island where not long ago the same Paolella stressed the much more convincing arguments of some lost girls. — J.B.

Johnny West il mancino (*Les Frères "Dynamite"*), film in scope and in color of Gianfranco Parolini, with the wrest-

lers André Bollet and Roger Delaporte. — French western superior to *Les Grands Chemins* and *Gueules*. No doubt you will object that that is not a recommendation, but, with André Bollet and Roger Delaporte as the starring pair, it was necessary all the same to make it. Mark a day. — J.B.

Rapina al quartiere Ovest (*Hold-up a l'aube*) film of Filippo Rati, with Lawrence Maigne, Mara Fiè, Jacqueline Rogers, 1963. — Nothing to point out except a respectably lighted shot thirteen minutes and thirty-one seconds before the final hold-up which otherwise flops lamentably. — A.J.

I sette contro Sparta (*La Révolte de Sparte*), film in color of Alberto De Martino, with Tony Russell, Massimo Serato, Helga Lin. — Milon tyrannizes Sparta, alias Lacedonia. Kyros, a deprived person, is going to set matters in order; he stirs up the school of the gladiators and removes from office the dictator, who is killed by the javelin of his friend Basso. And then, there are many detours, a temple, a vestal and the god Arès: nothing laconic. — J.-P.B.

I spie uccidono a Beirut (*Les Espions meurent a Beyrouth*), film in scope and in color by Georges Combret, Nino Loy, Sergio Martino, with Richard Harrison, Dominique Boschero, Wandisa Guida. — Doubtless we go to Lebanon for some reason of coproduction. Then it happens that the place glues itself to the subject, Beirut being the door between the Orient and the Occident. So it is here that the spies of the world meet and struggle as formerly at Tangier. The Occident (Americans siding with Russians) will ward off again this time the yellow Orient and its blonde woman spy. It took three directors to film this slapdash job. — J.-P.B.

Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa (*Sandra*), see, in *Cahiers* no. 161-2 *Lettre de Rome* (Morandini), p. 141; in no. 171, Visconti interview p. 44, report (Fieschi-Téchiné), p. 50; and texts in this issue, p. 12.

6 American films

Arizona Raiders (*Représailles en Arizona*), film in scope and in color of William Witney, with Audie Murphy, Michael Dante, Ben Cooper, Buster Crabbe. — After the sorry *Enfants du Diable*, return in rather good form of William Witney, veteran of the serial, always hard at it. The originality of the script which makes Murphy, by turns, one of the looters of Quantrill, a convict, then an Arizona Ranger; the introduction of unusual characters (the young Indian girl who wants to be a nun); and the efficacy of the mise en scène, violent and rapid, connect this little Western with the minor successes of the genre. On the other hand, Indians resort to an unaccustomed weapon, cactus. — P.M.

The Big Night (*La Grande Nuit*), film of Joseph Losey, 1951. — See in *Cahiers* no. 102 *Billet Londonien* (Mourlet), p. 41; no. 111, *Special Losey*; and review in the next issue.

Blood on the Arrow (1000 dollars pour une Winchester), film in color of Sidney Salkow, with Dale Robertson, Martha Hyer, Wendell Corey, Dandy Curran, Paul Mantey, Robert Carricart, Ted de Corsia. — If the point of departure is rather amusing (the bandits steal weapons from the soldiers to give them to the Indians in exchange for a young boy), it is, alas, to give rise to down at the heel situations. Only the appearances of the microphone (numerous), of the perch, and of the entire technical crew, camera and cameramen in the lead, sharpen the attention, somewhat somnolent, of the spectator. — P.B.

Cat Ballou (*Cat Ballou*), film in color of Elliot Silverstein, with Jane Fonda, Lee Marvin, Michael Callan, Nat King Cole, Dwayne Hickman. — See *Cahiers* no. 171, *Berlin* (Delahaye), p. 11. — If it were necessary again to demonstrate that the saga of the West supports parody with difficulty, *Cat Ballou* is exemplary proof. Where the satire and boundless verve of a comic strip signed Jack Davis or Will Elder was needed, Silverstein systematically scuttles all the possibilities offered him and gives birth to a syrupy and anaemic worklet. The resurrection of the Kid—the most acceptable moment of the film—shows clearly enough what are the limits of a continually muscular burlesque. Lee Marvin, as a fallen gunfighter, in spite of shameless histrionics, does not succeed in making us forget the aged killers of *Guns in the Afternoon*. Jane Fonda, who no doubt would have preferred Peckinpah to Silverstein, seems to dissociate herself totally from the affair. It is not we who will say she is in the wrong. — M.C.

Sandy the Reluctant Nature Girl or *The Reluctant Nudist* (*Le Cri des nudistes*), film in color of Stanley Gelec, with Annette Briand, Jeremy Howes, 1963. — *Nu*: very old word of the French language, already in *La Chanson de Roland* in the twelfth century. It comes from the Latin *nudus* and means "which is not clothed." Everything is so ugly that one understands that phrase of Fénelon: "Have a horror of nudities of the throat and all other immodesties." — J.-P.B.

Shell Shock (*Groupe de choc*), film of John Patrick Hayes, with Beach Dickerson, Carl Crow. The odyssey, henceforth classic, of some G.I.'s in Italy during the Second World War. The wealth of precise notations; a more than usually honest study of character (the traumatized soldier, the sergeant with murderous intentions towards his own men) and finally a violence at (almost) every moment make one overlook the dead-

broke side of an enterprise that does not have the strength of *War Hero* or of *Paratroop Command*.—P.B.

1 English films

The Naked Brigade (*La Brigade sans peur*), film of Maury Dexter, with Shirley Eaton, Ken Scott.—Nth grinding out to the glory of the Greek resistance in face of the Nazis. Staying away becomes a duty here.—P.B.

No Road Back (*Les Criminels de Londres*), film of Montgomery Pully, with Skip Homeier, Margaret Rawlings, Sean Connery, 1958.—Put no trust in the soliciting drawings or photographs of James Bond which scarcely invite one to enter the theater. In fact one can go there. It is a matter of a touching English botch, a *navet* (turnip), in which 007 is very convincing as a stuttering burglar eighteen and three quarters years old who quickly participates in a shabby doublecross. The rest of the time, some unsavory grannies, one of whom is deaf, dumb and blind, communicate by tapping the hollows of one another's hands. See it to believe it.—J.B.

Nothing But the Best (*Tout ou rien*), film of Clive Donner. See *Cabiers* no. 159; *Locarno* p. 38 and critique in this issue page 72.

Thunderball (*Operation tonnerre*), film in scope and in color of Terence Young, with Sean Conery, Claudine Auger, Luciana Paluzzi, Martine Beswick, Molly Peters. — In spite of the return of Terence Young, who formerly showed a certain sense of the baroque, in spite of the 5,500,000 dollars and the use of Panavision, this fourth panel will appear more than ever false Bond, and 007, taking on age, finds himself reduced to the dimension of one of the most

mediocre gadgets. Bond is just barely still capable of throwing a punch. For the rest, a lethargy verging on helplessness destines the film to the agonies of the diverse mechanisms that, after a fashion, supply its inadequacies: fantacoptery, faked DB-5, submarine scooter, etc. If they were not so rigorously bent on working for grown-up good little boys and girls, perhaps the gadget-men of Eon Films would disclose to us the erotic accessories of Bond, whose personal merits lessen from film to film.—M.C.

2 German films

Werfuhung am Meer on Ostrva (*L'île du désir*), film of Jovan Zinanic, with Peter van Eyck, Elke Sommer, Blazanka Katalinic, Tori Jankovic. — New geographic variation on a well known theme. The subject (a Robinson seduced by a little student, amoral and greedy, who is caught in her own game) lacks ambition, and the *mise en scène* suffers from the most widespread malady in German cinema, pretentiousness. — P.B.

Witwer mit Fünf Töchtern (*Veuf avec cinq filles*), film of Erich Engels, with Susanne Cramer, Elke Aberle, Christine Kaufmann, 1957. — A tidal wave of worthy sentiments and the histrionics of Heinz Ehrhardt prove (but is there still need of it) that German comedy has only one rival, that of perfidious Albion. That said, and adding the ugliness of the five girls, you ask yourself—Why, for ten years, have we been seeing only the dregs of German production?—P.B.

2 Czech films

Az prisde Kocour (*Un jour un chat*), film in scope and in color of Vojtech Jasny, with Emilia Vasaryova, Vlastimil Brodsky, Jiri Sovak, Jan Werich, Jaroslav Mares, 1963.—See *Cabiers* no. 144,

Cannes (Douchet), p. 57 — Like three out of four films of the East *Un jour un chat* is a satire, would you believe it, on bureaucracy. But, also a fable danced, sung, and mimed, on the freshness of simple feelings, the horror of hypocrisy, of wickedness, etc. In short, provincial and pastoral East Side Story. Jasny has conviction and graciousness, but all that somewhat lacks a real freedom, a real aptitude for dreaming aloud. Nevertheless one will appreciate the cleverness of the title (One day a cat), some very successful passages, and especially the wonderful setting of the little town with pointed roofs, a true invitation to travel.

Cerny Petr (*L'as de pique*). See *Cabiers* no. 159; *Locarno* (Bontemps), p. 38; no. 166-7: *Contingent 65 I A* (Mollet), p. 60; no. 174, French edition, critique, p. 61.

1 Russian film

Don Quichotte, film in scope and in color by Grigori Kozintsev, with Nicholas Tcherkassov, Y. Tolubeyev, 1963.—See *Cabiers* no. 160 *San Sebastian* (Piesse), p. 65.—The print shown last year on French television had allowed us to see that this very, very flat illustration, in spite of Tcherkassov's remarkable looks, was far from being the best film of Kozintsev. At least it spared us the color, if you can give that name to the insane smudge that Kinopanorama dares to exhibit. The treatment of the theme suffers thereby from a blurred and imprecise aspect that harmonizes badly with the literary and visual richness of Cervantes, monstrously conjured away by these hollow and vulgar images.—J.-A.F.

These notes were drawn up by Jean-Pierre Biesse, Jacques Bontemps, Patrick Brion, Michel Caen, Jean-André Fieschi, Albert Juross and Michel Mardore.

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