No. 3



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# *cahiers du* CINEMA *in english*

*Satyajit Ray*
*Blake Edwards*
*Roman Polanski*
*S. M. Eisenstein*

# *cahiers du*

# CINEMA

## *in english*

Roman Polanski: *Repulsion*, Catherine Deneuve

Number 3




CAHIERS DU CINEMA IN ENGLISH
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# LE CONSEIL DES DIX (Council of ten)

COTATIONS (Ratings) ● Inutile de se deranger (No use bothering) ★ à voir à la rigeur (see if necessary)
★★ à voir (see) ★★★ à voir absolument (see absolutely) ★★★★ chef-d'oeuvre (masterpiece)

| | Michel Aubriant (Candide) | Robert Benayoun (Positif) | Jacques Bontemps (Cahiers) | Jean-Louis Bory (Arts) | Albert Cervoni (France Nouvelle) | Jean Collet (Telerama) | Michel Cournot (Le Nouvel Observateur) | Michel Delahaye (Cahiers) | Jean-Andre Fieschi (Cahiers) | George Sadoul (Les Lettres francaises) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **The Family Jewels** (Jerry Lewis) | ★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★ |
| **On a volé un tram** (Louis Buñuel) | | ★★ | ★★★ | | | ★★ | ★★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★ |
| **Repulsion** (Roman Polanski) | ★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★★ | ● | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★ |
| **Le Rio de la mort** (Luis Buñuel) | | ★★★ | ★★ | | | ★★★ | ★ | ★★★ | ★★ | |
| **Un homme comme tant d'tautres** (Nothing But a Man) (Michael Roemer) | | ★★ | ★★ | ★★ | | ★★ | ★★ | ★★★ | ★★ | ★★★ |
| **Don Quintin l'amer** (Luis Buñuel) | | ★★ | ★★ | | | ★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★★ | |
| **Les Camarades** (Mario Monicelli) | ★★★ | ★★★ | ★★ | ★ | ★★ | | ★ | ★★ | ★★ | ★★★ |
| **Le Grand Noceur** (Louis Buñuel) | | ★★ | ★★ | | | ★★★ | ★ | ★★ | ★★ | ★ |
| **The Caretaker** (Clive Donner) | | ★★★ | ★ | ★★★★ | ★ | ★ | ★ | ★★ | ★ | |
| **Grand Casino** (Louis Buñuel) | | | ★ | | | | | ★★ | ★★ | |
| **Graine sauvage** (Wild Seed) (Brian G. Hutton) | | ★★ | ★ | ★ | | | | ★★ | | ★★ |
| **A.B.C. contre Hercule Poirot** (The Alphabet Murders) (Frank Tashlin) | ★★ | ★ | ★ | ● | | | ● | ● | ★ | ★ |
| **Un Caid** (King Rat) (Bryan Forbes) | ★★ | ★ | ● | ★★ | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ★★ |
| **Sur la piste de la grande caravane** (The Hallelujah Trail) (John Sturges) | ● | ★ | ● | ★★ | ★ | ● | ● | ★ | ● | ● |
| **Black Fox** (Luis Clyde Stoumen) | ● | ★ | | | | | | ● | | |
| **Passeport pour l'oubli** (Where the Spies Are) (Val Guest) | | ★ | | | | | | ● | ● | |
| **La Dame de pique** (Léonard Keigel) | ★ | ● | ● | ● | ★ | ★★ | ● | ● | | ★ |
| **Paris au mois d'auût** (Pierre Granier-Deferre) | ★ | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| **Lady L** (Peter Ustinov) | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ★ |
| **Call Girls 66** (Roberto Mauri) | | | ● | | | | | | ● | ● |
| **Jerry Cotton agent F.B.I.** (Fritz Umgelter) | | ● | | | | | | | ● | ● |
| **Opération Lotus Bleu** (Terence Hathaway) | | ● | | | | ● | | | ● | |
| **Baraka sur X-13** (Maurice Cloche) | | ● | ● | | | | | | ● | ● |
| **Les Maitresses du Dr Jekyll** (Jess Frank) | | | ● | ● | ● | | | | ● | |
| **Situation désespérée, mais pas sérieuse** (Situation Hopeless, But Not Serious) (G. Reinhardt) | ● | ● | | | | | | ● | ● | |
| **La Sentinelle endormie** (Jean Dréville) | ● | ● | ● | | | | | ● | ● | |
| **Deux heures a tuer** (Ivan Govar) | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | |

# *Jottings From Other Publications*

One would like all the articles prompted by the work of Jean-Luc Godard to have the sense and style of that by Bernard Dort: *Godard ou le romantique abusif* in *Les Temps Modernes* (December). But as soon as he has established—therefore, seriously—the romanticism of Godard, the author stops, as if the excess *(abus)* indicated by the title went without saying, as if condemnation followed from that. We think it revealing that the rare intelligent analyses hostile to Godard exalt in spite of their authors' grudge what the analyses mean to denounce. So the article should be read; but even more, in the preceding issue of the same review, the article by Kassagi, the illusionist technical adviser for *Pickpocket*.

In *Le Soir* of Marseilles (December 1) Michèle Grandjean reports in a showing of *Paris vu par . . .* in her city, which appears to have been rather gay.

*"Douchet dreams of a film over a meal. A communion-meal, a poem meal. But he prepares another over the "fantastique."*

*— I will make it, but I will not go to see it. I am too agraid. . . .*

*Then the conversation becomes very* Cahiers du Cinema. *The new wave of yesterday vituperates against the new new wave.*

*— No, protests Douchet, "they" have not the right to diminish Minnelli in favor of some auteurs who have not yet proved themselves. One would say that the more formless a film, the more it lacks construction, the more worthy of interest it is. . . .*

*— Yes, accedes Chabrol, it is the boom of Zoom. They must have "zoomed" films. The more it is zoomed, the better it is.*

*And then a beautiful exchange of points of view on the compared art of Minnelli (Le Chevalier des sables) and the Japanese Mizoguchi (L'Intendant Sansho.) Ah! One knows the subject, around that table. . . ."*

So be it. But if a proof were necessary it would be all the same rather in *Arts* (December 15) that one would find it and more precisely in an article by Chabrol on *L'As de pique (Black Peter)*.

*"It would not come into my mind to want to explain a film so clear, but how not to stress the perfect rigor of thought in a cinéaste who, for his first film, suddenly offers us the completely precise vision of a milieu, then of a class, then, without appearing to touch on it, of a country, in its psychological, social, and —what is often dodged—moral reality, and, by dint of precision, precisely, justifies his realistic subject with a poetic almost futile, but touching and cruel, a true poetic which very quickly reaches universality. I have always thought it was better to express the grandeur of little things than to blow up balloons which resemble waterskins — L'As de pique brings water to this mill of mental health.*

*But here is what is still better. This Forman, whose first film it is, has found the secret of the how. The opposite of impotence is the most enriching thing in the world, and our cinéaste is a hot guy with the camera. Not a salon Don Juan of the suave mobility, the dream dollyings, the linked furbelows; nor a conciergerie Lovelace, with his fields, emotional counterfields, and the movements of his crane for weeping willows. Nothing of all that: the strong man, forman, plants his set of tools where it is necessary, does not stir more than is necessary, knows the beast and so does not need flatter it, attentive to its precise reaction, to the quality of its gait, to the drollery of its gesture.*

*Nothing of what is cinematographically right is foreign to him. Sometimes everything is simple: the people are in front of us and do what they have to do exactly as they should do it. Sometimes it has a touch of the miraculous: you no longer know what is reportage and what is acting."*

Let us quietly round the horizon of some foreign reviews. *Skoop*, one of the newest, is surely not the least remarkable. It is since the month of July that it has been appearing in the country of tulips, in the city Polanski sketched so brilliantly last year—Amsterdam. (precisely: De Bezige Bij Van Miereveldstraat 1, Amsterdam Z1). In the December issue one will find a remarkable collection Pasolini-Bertolucci. That is because *Prima della rivoluzione* has been released in Holland, as moreover it has been in the United States, in Sweden, in Bulgaria and in Afghanistan where it is breaking all records for receipts—something the exhibitors of the Latin quarter do not seem to be very aware of. Besides it appears at the head of the counsel of *Skoop*, where, decidedly, they have good taste, before *Il deserto rosso* and *Il vangelo secondo Matteo*.

In connection with the two Italians in question, *Filmcritica* (October) publishes the synopsis of *La Comare Secca*. Pasolinien point of departure of the scenario, then of the first film, of Bertolucci.

*Chaplin* devotes an entire issue (December) to the Swedish cinema alone, and we couldn't congratulate them too much on it. Texts, interviews, questionnaires, filmographies, etc., make it indispensable if one wants to gather material on one of the livest cinemas of today.

To note, too—a very agreeable cover on which a completely unclothed cinéaste manoeuvres her Mitchell. Varda? Chytilova? Zetterling? A Swedish model? What the cover shows us of her (everything but the face) does not permit me —personally—to reply. Still it can not be a question of Shirley Clarke nor . . . Jacqueline Audry.

All the photographic documents of *Movies International* are in the tonality of that agreeable cover. That is to say that James R. Silke's new review is the worthy daughter of the late *Cinema*. Since Michael Caen is its Paris correspondent, there could not fail to be a scramble for it.

After having observed that the most annoying thing about *Paris vu par . . .* is the fact that *"the friends of the producer really liked the film,"* the critic and renowned sub-titler Pierre Billard maintains in *Cinema 66* (January) that the first imperative of a critic *"for moral tranquillity and not to be influenced by friendship is not to know anyone."*

Few of our readers have had the luck to see the masterpiece of Jean Rouch *La Chasse au lion à l'arc*. Since Fieschi and Téchiné have given a very precise and enticing idea of it from Venice *(Cahiers no. 171)*, *Science et Vie* (January) thanks to a text of Hug. Arthur Bertrand and to abundant illustration, will help them have patience until the release of the film, which is said to be imminent.

*"The story takes place in this Songhay country in the north of Nigeria, on the Mali frontier — which it even crosses in the course of the hunt — in this brush which "is farther than far" in the country* "Gandji Kangamorou Gamorou," *past the last villages, past the dune of Eksam, past the "mountains of moon and of crystal," in "the country of nowhere" where live the "men farther on."* This short quotation from a long text, actually very close to the commentary of the film (admirably spoken by Rouch) — does it not lead one to think that if somewhere in contemporary sciences and arts one can still divine the muffled echo of the Homeric poems, it is in the direction of Rouch's singular enterprise?

And the odyssey in pursuit of the absent lion named *"L'Américain"* ends in a return to the country. *"Wangari mocks the lioness, tells horrors about her, and makes his audience laugh. All day long, he will tell the story of the hunt in the village, to the women who clap their hands, but who after all should not know everything. Wangari recounts the hunt to the women, on an ironic mode and "in mockery," a thing that lets him give it less weight, to take some distance from a serious thing and keep a part of it secret; then he will mime it to the little boys."*—Jacques BONTEMPS.

# *Notes On French Film Societies*

Before opening this journal of the *ciné-clubs,* I will quote from Jacques Robert, the assistant director of the *Fédération Francais des Ciné-clubs.* Here is what he said in the *petit journal* in November: "If I edited a review, I would go on a tour. It would be good for the critics to get themselves bawled out. The problem, yes, it is that, it is giving the virus to some people in each ciné-club . . . If a review wanted to be really active, it would have to enter the arena."

In the arena, we are there. Ciné-clubs — if I am counting accurately, I have enlivened more than seventy-five of them in three months. I shall keep myself from recounting them all. First, not enough space. And then, there are encounters without incident. Evenings when there are more than five people in the theater who liked the film. People feel that they are in agreement. They have not so much need to explain themselves. The film is shown, it has been received. A certain quality of silence during the projection is not deceptive. In that case, an exceptional case indeed, people do not talk much after the film. And that is hardly the worst response. More frequently an entire theater will reject the film. That, obviously, I will talk about.

One last remark, before coming to the heart of the matter: French *ciné-clubs* belong to several competing federations (FFCC, FLECC, Inter-film, etc.). It matters little to me to know to which federation a *ciné-club* that I address belongs. On the other hand, I choose all the films that I present. And they are the films I like. A critic is not a lawyer. It seems to me abnormal that a critic should play-act and plead the cause of a cinema that does not interest him. If certain ciné-clubs want to see *Les Visiteurs du soir* or *Brief Encounter* again, that is their right. As for me, it does not seem interesting to me to explain to people who have not so many evenings to lose, why they have just lost one.

September 21. *A bout de souffle* at the Ciné-club of Montrouge. With this film, reactions are rarely hostile. Today it is a classic. And it affects all audiences. But the game is not won for all that. That evening, I had to fight to keep the discussion from bogging down in psychology and morals. For lack of an adequate cinematographic education, people catch hold of the characters. And these characters are only a pretext for them to express their little personal philosophies. Why did Patricia denounce Michael, why did he kill the cop? There, one must start again from zero, explain the cinema of Godard, reply to questions with questions. Why does Godard film occurrences, moments which are not important, instants which live their own life, etc.? Then I long to be able to follow this same discussion incognito from the back of the theater. To measure how far people would move away from the film — and from life — to run after concepts.

Wednesday 29. *Touch of Evil,* at the hospital of Garches. All the spectators are paraplegics. They are brought on wheelchairs or on rolling beds. Most of them are young. There are quite a few victims of automobile accidents. I expect much from this encounter. But the projection is execrable, and in spite of all my efforts the discussion goes badly. People unwilling to admit that Welles is a moralist. People lose themselves in the details of the plot with a pitiless and misplaced critical spirit. Why this general bitterness? I have thought a great deal about that evening. I believe that one must be happy to love the cinema. Or at least be able to accept oneself, to recognize oneself, to make peace with oneself. Obviously, here the discussion is the opportunity for expressing one's revolt. One is prepared to admire Quinlan because he is strong and efficacious. One holds it against Welles, man in good health, for expressing a painful lucidity. It is a terrible point of view. It is a point of view of sick people. Leaving the hôpital Raymond-Poincaré that evening, I found it made sense that a certain number of licensed critics were, obviously, sick people.

October 6. *Les Carabiniers,* at the *ciné-club* of Melun. Stormy discussion. A woman stands up: "I saw a very lovely film about the war the other day on television. It was *La Grande Illusion.* At least they showed in it that war gives rise to great human sentiments: friendship, solidarity, courage and even love. Why has Godard shown nothing of all that?

October 12. *Le Diabolique Dr. Mabuse.* Ciné-club of the Studio du Val-de-Grace in Paris. It is an audience of *lycéens* of the Latin Quarter. Reception 90% favorable. In the theater two enthusiasts who know the work of Fritz Lang thoroughly charge themselves with convincing the recalcitrants. People speak at length about the morals of the look, about Godard and *Le Mépris.*

October 19. *Tirez sur le pianiste* at the Cinée-club of Saint-Mandé. There, it is the conflict of the generations. In the first five rows, young cinéphiles who were superbly sensitive to the work and speak about it lyrically. Twenty rows in back, a middle-aged audience that protests feebly, tries to clutch at sacrosanct laws (dramatic construction, probability) to console themselves for having taken no pleasure in the showing. I try to translate the language of the first five rows into that of the fifteen last.

October 20. *Pierrot le fou.* Showing at Montpellier. I warn people, I try to prepare them. But during the projection some go away, furious. Those who remain for the discussion are enthusiastic. One girl says: "It is the most beautiful love film that I have seen. But I don't want to talk about it. I want to see it again."

Oct. 27. *La 317e Section.* Commercial showing at Montargis. Pierre Schoendoerfer with me. Full theater. Triumphal success. People want to know everything about the shooting of the film. Schoendoerffer recounts, speaks of the brush, of Coutard, of the actors, of the war, of the mise en scène, of truth and lie, in short of the cinema. After this start on the ciné-forum, the film went off wonderfully at Montargis.

.....*November 4. The Servant* at the Ciné-club "Film and culture" at Tours. Rapid, effective discussion, with an alert audience, enthusiasts. Some severe criticisms of the symbolism of Losey. But people were sensitive to a great work.

November 9. *La Règle du jeu,* commercial showing at Saint-Germaine-en-Laye. Audience very bourgeois. I expect the worst. The reactions are beyond everything one can anticipate. I pin down the prettiest. A spectator addresses me: "You will grant me that neither you nor I live like the lamentable characters of this film. Happily, humanity is not only that. Renoir is dishonest not to have shown it." You can guess what followed. It was fierce. Hopeless.

November 18. *Les Carabiniers,* at the Ciné-club Gérard-Philipe, at Montpellier. Long, excited discussion. There are readers of Positif in the theater, who recite me some litanies of insults about, precisely, the litany of post cards. By the way, the 35 mm print of this film that is shown in the ciné-clubs has been cut some five minutes in that sequence. One would like to ask the distributor-carabinier the reason for this massacre?

November 23. *Pierrot le fou,* shown at Tours. Discussion extremely violent. The theatre cuts itself into two factions. A majority of young people who loved the film, but do not want, are not able, to talk about it. A certain number of furious adults who attack with conspicuous awkwardness: "What idea do you see in that, what message?" Two weeks afterwards, at Nimes, people will ask me the same question. I reply to them maliciously: "Go see the films of Cayatte. You do not know what poetry is." I knew today, after four presentations of this film, that there is nothing else to reply. You have to present *Pierrot le fou* to realize that the population of *Alphaville* is increasing every day.

November 26. *Rêves de femmes (Dreams),* at Eaubonne. A little ciné-club full of young people, true enthusiasts, who forget the shabby theater in

which you freeze, for sheer joy at discovering a very fine neglected Bergman.

November 27, 28. *Session Nouvelle Vague,* at Péage-de-Roussillon, Isère. Cinéphiles came from Valence, from Vienne, from Lyon, from Grenoble, to see, or to see again, *Adieu Philippine, Hiroshima, Les Carabiniers.* Here, unanimity is accustomed. People question me at length about *Pierrot le fou,* about the other cinéastes of the *nouvelle vague.* People are waiting for their films. If necessary they will argue with the local exhibitor so that he will bring them. A parenthesis: Roussillon is a little *commune,* charming, in the Rhone valley. Nothing special, except a dynamic, cultivated mayor, a ciné-club president who does not miss a session, at Marty or elsewhere, who reads *Cahiers* and who does a splendid job. You begin to dream: if a third only of the communes of France had a ciné-club like Roussillon, the crisis of the cinema. . . .

December 1 to 3. *Session Demy, Godard, Hitchcock,* with the Jesuits of Lyon. *Lola, Alphaville, Marnie.* Here too they read *Cahiers* and they know cinema better than everywhere else. It is true. As a whole the future Jesuits love the cinema. And in saying that, I do nothing but express the impossibility of giving in a few lines an account of the richness of the discussions that we had on these films. As proof: 1. One of these students of Fourvièère has just written a thesis on Bresson. 2. To open this session, they asked me to give a lecture on "criticism." 3. Many of these cinéphiles attend ciné-clubs in the region about Lyon.

December 5. *La Fièvre monte à El Pao.* On this Sunday afternoon of the election, I chose to show this film to an audience for those who like labels. Because *El Pao,* which is far from being the best Bunuel, speaks rather precisely to my taste for politics. The discussion proved it.

December 9. *A travers le miroir (Through a Glass Darkly),* at Montpellier. The film leaves people silent, turned to stone. The discussion does not start. In the end they ask me questions. They are waiting for me to explain. What? Then little by little, the voice of these South of France students makes itself heard (cf. December 18).

December 10. *Pickpocket,* at the ciné-club of Nimes. This ciné-club has more than 1,000 adherents. A schedule of notable quality does not dishearten the 800 to 900 people who attend each session. It is a magnificant, paradoxical outcome. You judge—. In the same hall, *Première Victoire* was being shown that week, with a few rare spectators lost among rows of empty seats. In the evenin, *Pickpocket* filled the theatre. . . . Of course, at the discussion, many protested: it is dry, it is cold, it is abstract. Strange experience: to reply to them there was a young man who obviously knew pickpocketing well and who cast light on the film from his experience without the slightest hesitation. It was wonderful to hear him take up again on his own account the words of Michel and fling them again into the theatre: "Prison, what do you know about it?" In the end, he went out, noble and solitary.

December 13. *Madame de . . .,* at the Collège Massillon in Paris. Once more I observe the radical impossibility of making this film liked by a student audience, girls as well as boys. Rare are those under 21 who enter into this work. They should prohibit Racine and Ophuls to those under 21.

December 15. *Citizen Kane,* at the Cinée-club of Clamart. Middle-aged audience, generally rather severe towards good films. But today it went off admirably. The theater is won. The welcome is without reserve.

December 16. *Singin' in the Rain,* at the *Ciné-club des jeunes* of Mans. Same remarks as for *Madame de . . .* But this time one does see the reasons. The student audience does not like *Singin' in the Rain,* or *Stagecoach,* or many other American films because it lives under a terrible rule that people are imposing on it every day: the distinction between the futile and the serious. This distinction between *divertissement* and Work, which has nourished generations of bourgeois, still rages, more than people think, through all our education. Young people do not like *Singin' in the Rain,* because people who dance and sing, for pleasure—that cannot be serious. And the thrifty Frenchman reappears in this formula, which is an entire program, "One is wasting one's time." Alas!

December 18. *Le Silence.* Commercial showing at Nimes. A considerable Saturday night audience, I present the trilogy rather at length. I sense that the audience is being caught. During the entire showing you could have heard a pin drop in the theater. The films of Bergman have a strange power of enchantment. At first, as at Montpellier, the discussion has a terrible time getting started. Afterwards it will bring us to one o'clock in the morning. Not a single "moralizing" reaction. People have felt the sincerity, the truth of the work, and they respect it. A spectator dismisses symbolic, psychoanalytic interpretation. "That is useful, but it is more complicated than that," he adds. Another dismisses the pathological interpretation. "It is not Bergman who is sick, it is the world, and Bergman is lucid." Again people want me to explain, people bombard me with questions. Which permits me to speak at length about *Toutes ses femmes,* which I like above all.

December 21. *Men at War,* at the studio of Val-de-Grace in Paris. Proof that the real spectacle of war is unbearable, proof in support of *Les Carabiniers:* the audience laughs at the most powerful moments, at the moment when the fellows are afraid of the mines, when they run like rabbits in the smoke. I explain to them that Mann is trying precisely to avoid all taking of one's distance. People justify this point of view. People say to me that they prefer the film of Schoendoerffer. And then they hasten to speak about the war: Aldo Ray is without scruples. He is perfectly adjusted to the war. He prevails.

The theater is divided, and that is frightening: There are those who accept: "Well, that is war!" Sheep all ready for the next. There are those who protest (a minority that knows Anthony Mann well and has caught on perfectly). With most of these young people, no revolt. They are smothered in the egg. They know themselves, they accept themselves, powerless, resigned. I say to them that Mann is not resigned, and that therefore fundamentally he believes in a moral progress of humanity. But they are afraid to believe it. Afraid of being disappointed. They almost find Mann too young.

Jean COLLET

Jean-Luc Godard: *Les Carabiniers.*

# *Small Talk*

## Pasolini's Birds

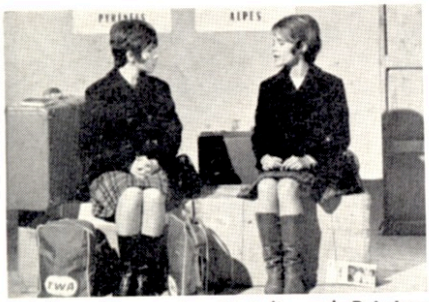
Settecamini (Seven-roads) is a few kilometers from Rome. There Pier Paolo Pasolini shot the third and last espisode of his collection of filmic fables: *Uccellacci e uccellini* (bad birds and good birds).

Each story will bear a French title: *L'Aigle, Les Moineaux et le faucon, Le Corbeau.* Unlike Aesop and his descendant La Fontaine, to both of whom he refers, Pasolini uses birds to represent, not temperaments but ideologies. Thus, in the third fable, the *corbeau,* the crow, endowed with speech—is the Marxist philosopher who tries to waken the conscience of the proletariat. The latter, represented by Toto and Nino-called-Ninetto Davdli (a father and his son) pass through the outskirts of Rome and the surrounding countryside and arrive at a magnificent seventeenth century mansion. It is there that one morning I was present at the shooting.

*Uccellacci E Uccellini,* Toto and Ninetto.

Two dogs—under the command of a trainer—are to lick the hands of the master of the house. Pieces of meat are glued between the actor's fingers to compel the affection of the animals. But one minute they all but devour his fingers, now and the next they appear indifferent. Another awkward shot: the master, in order to claim the money that is owed him, looses his dogs on Toto and Ninetto, who fall down in mortal fear. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to get the dogs to trample the actors. In the afternoon, elegant people invade the mansion. I assume a reception is being held simultaneously with the shooting. These are the extras who take the roles of the *dentisti-dantisti,* we mean: dentists specializing in Dante! (whose 600th anniversary, you know, is being celebrated this year —an event present in the film. And the play on words makes fun of an especially Roman (but perhaps not solely Roman) phenomenon: the frequent coexistence in the upper *bourgeoisie* of two antithetical specialties. So they film the intrusion of the proletarians in the very midst of the reception, the blasé air of the congress delegates confronting Toto, peasant in his Sunday clothes, and Ninetto, in his overshirt with a Hawaiian landscape embroidered on the back. In the evening, I will not have seen the crow of the fable who accompanies our proletarians. I learn that he is really made to speak and that he comes to his end eaten by his famished pupils. Two days after the shooting of Le Corbeau in a circus setting, Pasolini begins *L'Aigle,* still with Toto and Ninetto, no longer proleterians but the one a tamer, the other assistant tamer. Monsieur Cournot (Toto) is the spokesman for French rationalism and Gallic culture. He wants to indoctrinate and subjugate the eagle, *l'aigle* (wild thought and its chill reason). Pasolini films the first sermon (in Gallo-Roman) to the eagle, punctuated by the professional grimaces worked out at length by Toto. But Monsieur Cornot does not succeed in getting the best of the eagle, who takes flight in all his magnificence. *Uccellacci e uccellini* seems to seek after a certain simplicity in speech, while appealing to the most visual and most burlesque forms. I ask Pasolini whether this will be *cinema de prose* or *de poésie.* He observes that in spite of his intention to work in prose, the film is transforming itself into *cinema de poésie.*—J.-C.B.

## Moullet, Brigitte And Brigitte




Brigitte (Francoise Vatel) and Brigitte (Colette Descombs).

Before long Luc Moullet will finish shooting his first full-length film, which will be the epilogue of his next-before-last short film, *Terres noires.* It is the story of two girls: the one Brigitte (pronounced with the final i short), native of Mariaud, Alps; the other (final i long), native of Mantet, Pyrenees; who descend on Paris and become acquainted there. The film is entitled *Brigitte et Brigitte.* It is interpreted by Francoise Vatel and Colette Descombs, brigittes, and Claude Melki and Albert Juross, men. Some "guest-stars" pass through it, Jacques Bontemps, Claude Chabrol, Michel Delahaye, Samuel Fuller, Eric Rohmer.

*Brigitte* links with *Terres* so much the better that in the latter, Moullet examines the case of an undeveloped and deserted country and that in the former, he examines the case of an overdeveloped and overpopulated country, which, beyond a beautiful effect of symmetry, permits him to lead into problems exactly as serious. Thus, for example, those of students (spatio-vital, economic, students' unions). Some others, too, are met in passing, such as pharmaceutical dietetics and racism. But the paradoxical aspect of these problems (since they arise in a country supposedly civilized) is happily corrected by the antithetically paradoxical form in which Moullet sets them, which reestablishes them in perspectives at once precise and comic that will make the film highly competitive on the world market. The more so because in the end the film links again with the country, when the girls go up the Meuse. This (added to some little thats) make me think that this film might well be somewhat in the style of Vidor, although it is not so Biblical, after all.—M.D.

# *Small Talk*

## Natalie Kalmus And Technicolor

"Technicolor consultant: Natalie Kalmus." Anyone who saw that phrase on the credits of color movies produced before 1950 cannot have forgotten it. Those four magic words brusquely symbolized a whole vari-colored, warm, enchanting world, which brought to cinema a new dimension, that of color. To evoke the most beautiful sequences in color of the American cinema—the apparition of Lana Turner, surrounded with a green halo in the remarkable *Three Musketeers* of George Sidney (1946), the number *Beauty* from *Ziegfeld Follies* of Minnelli (1945), the first shots of Tyrone Power in *Jesse James* of Henry King (1939) or Henry Fonda's long journey in *Drums Along the Mohawk* of John Ford (1939)—is to evoke Natalie Kalmus. If, often, she did not directly control the color of the films, still she was the creator of the marvelous tones of Technicolor that she had worked out to a final precision with her husband.

Born in 1887 at Norfolk, Natalie M. Dunfee met, at the University of Zurich, Herbert Thomas Kalmus, specialist in physics, metallurgy and chemistry. With C. A. Hight, and thanks to the work of Daniel Frist Comstock and W. Burton Comstock, Kalmus completed the organization of the Technicolor Motion Picture Company (1915). Technicolor then followed a triple evolution: additive two-color subtractive and finally three-color subtractive.

The first film was shot in 1917 in Florida: *The Gulf Between,* with the additive system which was quickly abandoned in favor of the two-color subtractive system brought to precision for *Toll of the Sea* (1922) of Franklin. The process having a considerable success, certain sequences in color were then introduced into films in black and white. Thus De Mille filmed in Technicolor the exodus of his *Ten Commandments* (1923), Fitzmaurice the dream sequences of *Cytherea* (1924), Stroheim the coronation of *The Merry Widow,* the Corpus Christi procession and the scenes in the interior of the Cathedral of Saint Stephen in Vienna in *The Wedding March* (1927/28); Rupert Julian the sequence of the masked ball in *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925); De Mille, again, the resurrection of the Christ in *The King of Kings* (1927).

Parallel with this introduction of Technicolor into the American film industry, the two Kalmus' produced many short subjects of which they were often the scenarists, and which were designed to show their process to advantage. *Last Fight, Cleopatra, The Virgin Queen, Madame du Barry, The Czarina's Secret* (all dating from 1926-28).

Some months after *Lonesome* of Paul Fejos, whose sequence on the beach was already two-color, *The Viking* of Roy William Neill (1929) and *On with the Show* of Alan Crosland (1929) marked the introduction of Technicolor into talking or partly talking films. Let us note for recollection that the first films entirely in Technicolor and full length were *Wanderer of the Wasteland* of Irwin Willat (1924) and *The Black Pirate* of Albert Parker (1926), with Douglas Fairbanks.

The two-color subtractive process which had been employed for all these films was abandoned in favor of a new system, three-color subtractive, which became the definitive Technicolor. (blue being added to the first two colors, green and red).

*La Cucaracha* of Lloyd Corrigan (1935) and *Becky Sharp* of Rouben Mamoulian (1935) quickly revealed the perfection of the system, which then permitted each American firm excellent results, of which the most noted and the best are:

—for Selznick (who became excited over Technicolor immediately): *Garden of Allah* (1936), *A Star is Born* (1937), *Nothing Sacred* (1937), of which the last two were films of Wellman, the first of Boleslavski. *Gone With the Wind* (1939) and *Duel in the Sun,* for which Josef von Sternberg supervised all the color researches;

—for Paramount: *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* of Hathaway (1936), *Lady in the Dark* of Mitchell Leisen (1944), *Samson and Delilah* of De Mille (1949);

—for Warner Brothers: *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and *Night and Day* of 1938 and 1947 respectively, both films of Michael Curtiz;

—for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer: *The Wizard of Oz* (1938) of Fleming, *Ziegfeld Follies, The Three Musketeers,* the fashion show of *The Women* (1939) of Cukor;

—for Universal: *Cobra Woman* (1943) of Siodmak, *Arabian Nights* (1943) of Rawlins, *White Savage* (1943) of Lubin and *Salome Where She Danced* of Lamont;

—and last, for Fox, some of the most beautiful successes of Technicolor: *Black Swan* (1942) of King, *Blood and Sand* (1941) of Mamoulian, *Forever Amber* (1947 of Preminger, *Jesse James; Western Union* and *The Return of Frank James* of Fritz Lang, *Captain of Castille* (1947) of King.

At Columbia, Technicolor was used particularly for musicals *(Cover Girl, Down to Earth,* etc.), but rarely with great artistic success.

With respect to animated cartoons, Disney filmed the first cartoons in three-color Technicolor (the *Silly Symphonies),* then the first full length animated cartoon in color, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).

Last of all, in England, after the *plastique* success of *Wings of the Morning* (1937) of Harold Schuster for which Natalie Kalmus had been present to help with the entire shooting, Alexander Korda used the Technicolor process in the majority of his London Films productions: *Drums* (1938), *The Divorce of Lady X* (1937), *An Ideal Husband* (1947), *I Claudius* (1937), the unfinished film of von Sternberg; *The Thief of Bagdad* (1939), *Four Feathers* (1938). In 1921, Natalie Kalmus had divorced her husband, while continuing to work

*(Continued on page 70)*

George Sidney: *The Three Musketeers,* Lana Turner, Vincent Price.

# *The best fi*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Patrick Brion* | 1 The Collector. 2 Viva Las Vegas. 3 Sylvia. 4 The Sons of Katie Elder. 5 In Harm's Way. Lord 7 The Thin Red Line. 8 Lilith. 9 The Unsinkable Molly Brown. 10 Major Dundee. |
| *Henry Chapier* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Les Communiants (Winter Light). Lilith. 4 The Greatest Story Ever Told, Vaghe s dell'Orsa (Sandra). 6 Paris vu par... (Paris Seen by...). The Family Jewels. 8 A High Winc Jaamaica, Alphaville. 10 Baby the Rain Must Fall. |
| *Michel Ciment* | In alphabetical order: L'As de pique (Black Peter). Les Communiants. Desna. A High Wind in Jama King and Country. Kiss Me Stupid. Lord Jim. Il momento della verita (The Moment of Truth). Va stelle dell'Orsa. La Vieille Dame indigne. |
| *Serge Daney* | In alphabetical order: The Family Jewels. In Harm's Way. Marie-Chantal contre le Dr Kah. Pierre fou. A Shot in the Dark. Young Cassidy. |
| *Anatole Dauman* | In alphabetical order: Alphaville. L'As de pique. Les Communiants. Goodbye Charlie. The Hill. Li The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. Pierrot le fou. Shock Corridor. Vidas Secas. |
| *Claude Depêche* | In alphabetical order: Alphaville. Desna. In Harm's Way. Major Dundee. Paris vu par Chabrol et Re Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. La Vieille Dame indigne. |
| *Claude Gauteur* | 1 Le Bonheur. 2 Desna. 3 King and Country. 4 A High Wind in Jamaica. 5 Vaghe stelle dell'( 6 Yoyo. 7 Kiss Me Stupid. 8 West of Montana. |
| *René Gilson* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Alphaville. 3 The Disorderly Orderly. 4 Le Bonheur. 5 Vaghe stelle dell'Ors Il vangelo secondo Matteo (The Gospel According to Saint Matthew). 7 Shock Corridor. 8 Les ( muniants. 9 Thomas l'imposteur. 10 Kiss Me Stupid. |
| *Claude de Givray* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Paris vu par Rouch et Rohmer. 3 Shock Corridor. 4 De l'Amour. 5 The Sandp 6 The Family Jewels. 7 Kiss Me Stupid. 8 A High Wind in Jamaica. 9 Les Communiants. 10 L'A pique. |
| *Sylvain Godet* | In alphabetical order: Alphaville. Les Communiants. The Family Jewels. Marie-Chantal contre le Dr Monsieur Albert prophete. Paris vu par Rouch. Pierrot le fou. The Sandpiper. Shock Corridor. V stelle dell'Orsa. |

The bulk of the ten-best lists will be found in *Cahiers du Cinema in English* number two. Those published ab too late for the last issue. The composite results below were tabulated on the "*Cahiers*" side only from the lists

## *cahiers*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Pierrot le fou** |
| 2 | **Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa (Sandra)** |
| 3 | **Les Communiants (Winter Light)** |
| 4 | **Paris vu par Rouch (Paris Seen by Rouch)** |
| 5 | **Alphaville** |
| 6 | **Lilith** |
| 7 | **Shock Corridor** |
| 8 | **The Family Jewels** |
| 9 | **Il vangelo secondo Matteo (The Gospel according Saint Matthew)** |
| 10 | **Le Bonheur** |
| 11 | L'Amour a la chaine |
| 12 | L'As de pique (Black Peter) |
| 13 | Desna |
| 14 | La Vieille Dame indigne |
| 15 | Kiss Me Stupid |

## *readers*

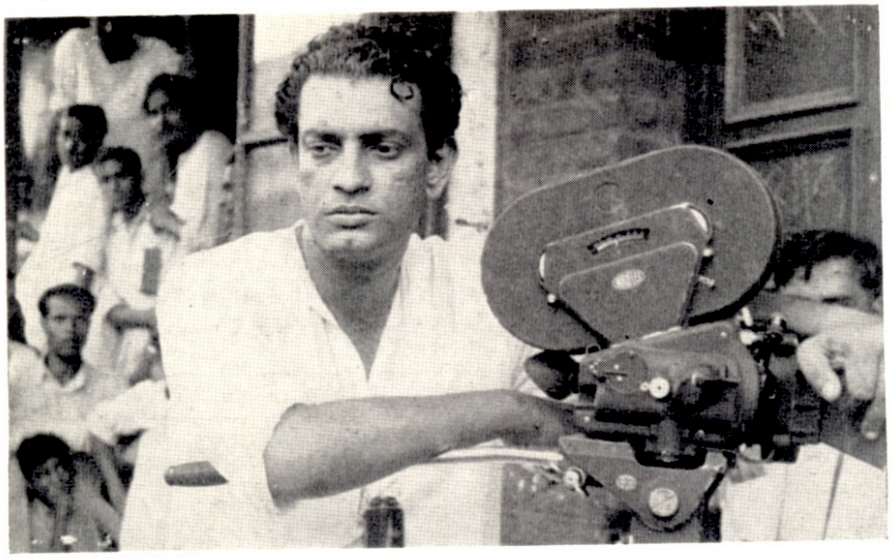
| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | **Pierrot le fou** |
| 2 | **Alphaville** |
| 3 | **Les Communiants** |
| 4 | **Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa** |
| 5 | **L'As de pique** |
| 6 | **King and County** |
| 7 | **La 317e Section** |
| 8 | **Shock Corridor** |
| 9 | **The Family Jewels** |
| 10 | **The Sandpiper** |
| 11 | La Vieille Dame indigne |
| 12 | Le Bonheur |
| 13 | The Disorderly Orderly |
| 14 | Yoyo |
| 15 | Lilith |

# *of the year 1965*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Jean-Pierre Léonardini* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 Alphaville. 3 Major Dundee. 4 La Bourrasque. 5 La 317e Section. 6 Paris vu par Rouch et Chabrol. 7 El Verdugo. 8 Il vangelo secondo Matteo. 9 The Girl with Green Eyes. 10 Desna. |
| *François Mars* | 1 Viva Maria. 2 Alphaville. 3 Une Fille et des fusils. 4 Shock Corridor. 5 Giulietta degli spiriti (Juliet of the Spirits). 6 The Family Jewels. 7 Le Bonheur. 8 De l'Amour. 9 Trois Chambres a Manhattan. 10 Help! |
| *Jean-Louis Noames* | 1 The Family Jewels. 2 In Harm's Way. 3 A Shot in the Dark. 4 Paris vu par... 5 Shock Corridor. |
| *Michel Pétris* | 1 The Brig. Kiss Me Stupid. Marie-Chantal contre le Dr Kah. Le ore dell'amore. Paris vu par Chabrol, Godard et Rouch. Pierrot le fou. La 317e Section. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 10 Vidas Secas. |
| *Jean Rouch* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 A High Wind in Jamaica. 3 Alphaville. Une fille et des fusils. Vidas Secas. La Vieille Dame indigne. 7 The Girl With Green Eyes. The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. Paris vu par Godard. Scorpio Rising. |
| *Bertrand Tavernier* | 1 Les Communiants. 2 Shock Corridor. 3 L'As de Pique. 4 La 317e Section. 5 A Shot in the Dark. 6 West of Montana. 7 The Collector. Guns at Batasi. Gun Hawk. Il magnifico avventuriero. |
| *Roger Thérond* | In alphabetical order: Alphaville. L'As de Pique. Le Bonheur. The Collector. Giulietta degli spiriti. Kiss Me Stupid. The Knack. Sandra. Shock Corridor. La 317e Section. |
| *Paul Vecchiali* | 1 Pierrot le fou. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. 3 Lilith. Les Communiants. 5 A High Wind in Jamaica. 6 Alphaville. Le Bonheur. 8 Shock Corridor. 9 Paris vu par Rohmer. 10 Journal d'une femme en blanc. |
| *François Weyergans* | In alphabetical order: Le Bonheur. The Disorderly Orderly. Giulietta degli spiriti. A High Wind in Jamaica. Kwaidan. Pierrot le fou. Shock Corridor. Tokyo Olympiades. I tre volti della paura. Vaghe stelle dell'Orsa. |
| *Yamada Koichi* | 1 Pierrot le fou. 2 The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner. 3 Les Communiants. 4 Alphaville. 5 Il vangelo secondo Matteo. 6 Giuliette degli spiriti. 7 Paris vu par... 8 Le Bonheur. 9 La 317e Section. 10 Le Vieille Dame indigne. |

contributors to the magazine in order to convey an authentic *Cahiers* flavor to the proceedings. All in all, the lists should provide some clues to French idiosyncrasies. English-speaking Cahierists will have their inning next year.

| | *cahiers* | | *readers* |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Paris vu par Rohmer (Paris Seen by Rohmer) | 16 | Il vangelo secondo Matteo |
| 17 | A High Wind in Jamaica | 17 | A High Wind in Jamaica |
| 18 | La 317e Section | 18 | Paris vu par Rouch |
| 19 | Young Cassidy | 19 | The Knack |
| 20 | Disorderly Orderly | 20 | The Collector |
| 21 | Paris vu par Chabrol (Paris Seen by Chabrol) | 21 | In Harm's Way |
| 22 | In Harm's Way | 22 | Giulietta degli spiriti |
| 23 | Giulietta degli spiriti (Juliet of the Spirits) | 23 | Vidas Secas |
| 24 | La Bourrasque | 24 | Kiss Me Stupid |
| 25 | Vidas Secas | 25 | The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner |
| 26 | The Sandpiper | 26 | Kwaidan |
| 27 | King And Country | 27 | Desna |
| 28 | Paris vu par Godard (Paris seen by Godard) | 28 | Marie-Chantal contre le Dr Kah |
| 29 | Le journal d'une femme en blanc | 29 | L'Amour a la chaine |
| 30 | A Shot in the Dark | 30 | A Shot in the Dark |



# *From Film To Film*

## *By Satyajit Ray*

One forms ideas about people. In the end one makes a legend and one spreads it. I had met Satyajit Ray several times in Paris. I knew his principal films and thus had I imagined his personality and his career:

This commercial artist of Calcutta had been struck by cinematic lightning the day he met Jean and Claude Renoir, come to Bengal to film *Le Fleuve (The River)*. Immediately afterwards he had cried out "I too am a cinéaste!" and had begun to film *Pather Panchali*. This film had been ignored by everyone, and especially in India, until the moment of its presentation at Cannes. It would have passed unnoticed even there without André Bazin, who succeeded in obtaining for it a minor prize for a "human document." Without this European award, Satyajit Ray might have stopped making films.

The Golden Lion of Venice for *Aparajito* failed to enhance his reputation in India. He did indeed continue to produce a few films from time to time, because they recouped their costs, not in the national market, but by their success in Great Britain and in the United States. To sum up, this Eastern filmmaker must have been and would continue to be completely dependent on the West . . .

From a few authentic facts, I had drawn inaccurate conclusions. Little remains of these legends, after a long stay in New Delhi, then at Calcutta, and several hours of conversation with Satyajit Ray. It is false that he is almost unknown in India, he who was president of the Festival at New Delhi. In this capital as in his birthplace, Calcutta, whenever we went out into the street together, he was swallowed up by hordes of autograph hunters. In the press, his interviews hit the front page. He was received in private audience by several ministers and by the President of the Republic—who will confer on him an exceptional distinction, never accorded to an Indian cinéaste before him.

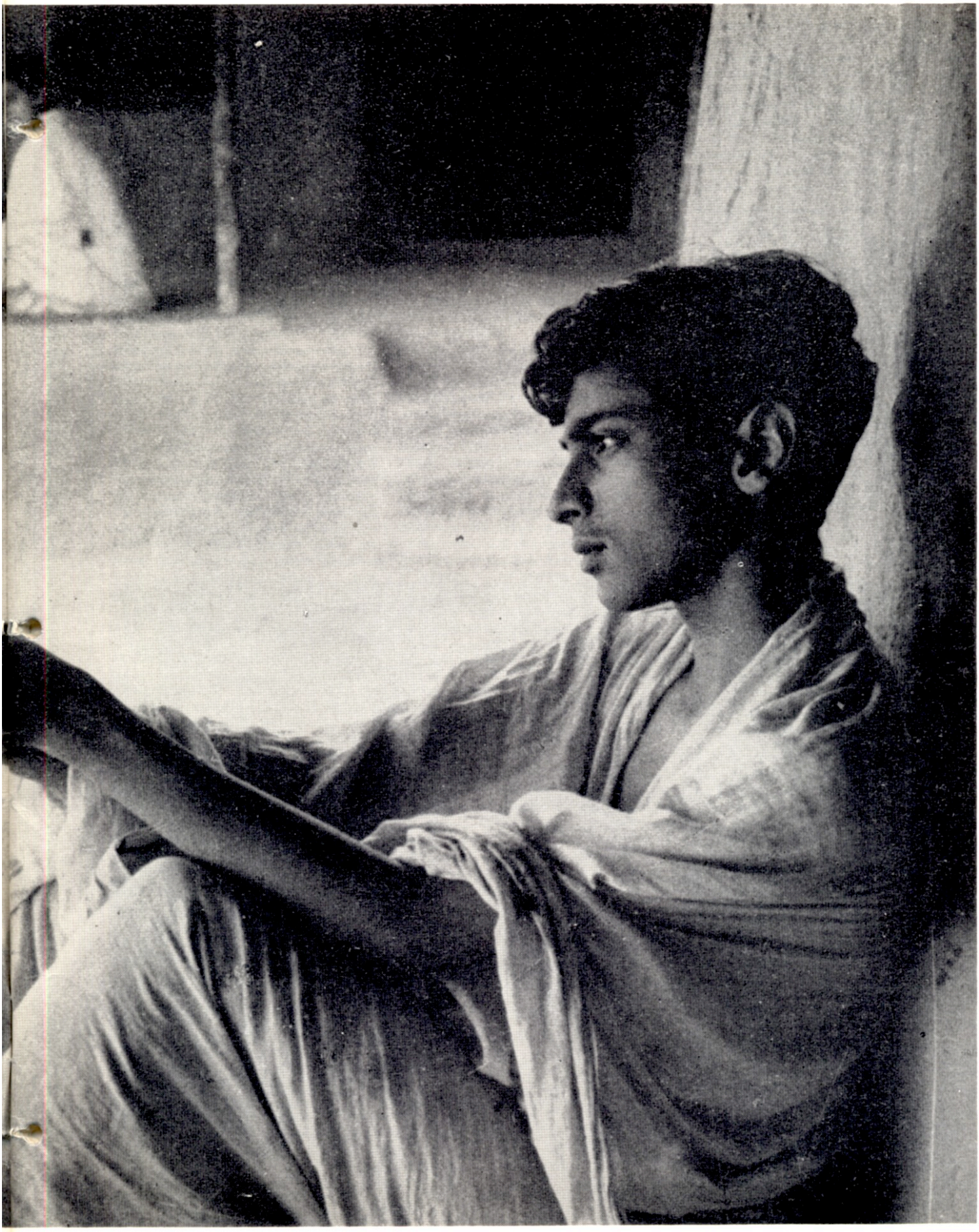
Having witnessed so many honors, I began to manufacture another image of Satyajit Ray. Passing from slight to excessive glory, had he not become a kind of poet laureate, too official for my liking?

I had to meet him in his native city, Calcutta, to correct this new error of perspective. While other Indian cinéastes lead an ostentatious life, live in palaces, have become new maharajahs, Satyajit, his wife and little boy occupy a small apartment of three or four rooms, on the third floor of a modest building in the suburbs.

In Bombay and in Madras I had seen Indian directors, surrounded by an entire staff, direct their films in studios and in gaudy décors. In Calcutta I saw Satyajit Ray work on a humble stage which resembled a dilapidated barn. He had his eye fixed at the sight of a camera, and he was moving with it on a dolly. Although he was in the midst of work on his new film *The Coward and the Saint*, Ray had found the time to come to give a hand to one of his assistants. He was helping the assistant make his first long film . . . We went to have dinner and to talk in a little suburban restaurant, that in no way resembled the banquet rooms where other Indian cinéastes had entertained me lavishly . . .

These notes seem to me to have some point as an introduction to Satyajit Ray's talk about his life, his career, his works. I am letting him speak, without claiming to transcribe a strict recording. I had not brought my Japanese tape recorder to India. I took notes on a pad,

*Aparajito*



as in the last century—of a conversation in English, that I rewrote in French.

Returning to these sheets of paper after several weeks, coordinating them, proceeding sometimes to a *"remontage,"* I had to let my imagination move freely at times. Yet whatever the "copyist's errors," I think that this interview can serve to make the personality of Satyajit Ray better known in France.

Georges SADOUL

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I was born in Calcutta in 1921. My grandfather Hire Ray was a scholar, a writer, a musician. He had never gone to Europe. He had founded the best printing-house then in existence in India, had perfected the processes of stereotyping, and established children's periodicals, some of which still appear. His presses occupied part of his house, where I was born.

My father Sekumar Ray had written books and poems very well-known in Bengal. Me had become the director of the printing-house after my grandfather. When he died at thirty-nine, I was two years old. The family enterprise fell to ruin. I was six years old when it went into bankruptcy. My mother had to leave our house to go to live with me, her only son, in the home of her older brother. She had been educated. She became a school-mistress and, in order to bring me up, she earned a little money doing embroidery. I grew up in my maternal uncle's house. After having obtained by "matriculation," the equivalent of your baccalaureate, I continued my studies at the Presidency College, the best in Bengal. In 1940 I received my degree in Economics. I had been encouraged on that path by one of my father's friends, a statistician.

From childhood I loved to draw and to paint. Once I had my degree, I went to study fine arts at "Tagore University," founded by the great writer, who was still living. This well-known institution is 150 kilometers from Calcutta. I spent two and a half years there. In 1942 the Japanese approached the frontiers of Bengal and even bombed my native city. Worried about my family, I returned to Calcutta in December. There I continued to study fine arts for some time, but I had to earn a living.

In 1943, at 22, I entered an advertising agency as an artist. I was to work there for ten years and to become its art director. I created book jackets, posters, illustrations for children's books. I introduced Indian forms in a very Westernized typography and style of drawing.

Cinema had become my "hobby." It had excited me since my childhood. In 1947 I was one of the founders of the Calcutta Film Society, to which I devoted much time. I saw the same film again three, four, five times, if it was good, meanwhile taking notes. We were able to get a print of *Potemkin*. I saw it and saw it again, several dozen times.

At the same time I was excited by theoretical works published in English—Pudovkin, Paul Rotha, Wladimir Nielsen, Eisenstein, whose *Film Sense* was a great revelation to me in 1947. The films that struck me the most at that time? Those of Fritz Lang (American period and also *Metropolis, Dr. Mabuse),* of John Ford, and Frank Capra, of John Huston (*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*), of Lubitsch, of William Wellman *(The Ox-Bow Incident),* of Billy Wilder *(Ace in the Hole).*

Of the French, Jacques Becker's *Goupi mains rouges,* shown in Calcutta in a version dubbed in English, made a deep impression on me. I valued highly the silent films of René Clair, *Le Chapeau de paille d'Italie (The Italian Straw Hat), Les Deux Timides,* and the films of Marcel Carné, *Le Jour se lève* and *Les Visiteurs du soir (The Devil's Envoys).*

Before the war I had been able to see various productions of Abel Gance. *Les Misérables* of Raymond Bernard made a strong impression on me as a child, and I considered Harry Baur the best actor in the world. After the war, European films became very rare, aside from some Soviet productions that affected me deeply: *Ivan the Terrible, Alexander Nevsky, Storm over Asia, Professor Mamlock.* Later I was to meet Pudovkin, and contact was immediately established between us.

The film *The Southerner* of Jean Renoir had impressed me very much by its entirely fresh approach to an American subject, very different from many other Hollywood productions. Then in 1949, reading the advertisements of a Calcutta newspaper, *The Statesman,* I discovered the following classified advertisement: "Wanted, young Indian girl to appear in a film. Telephone M. Jean Renoir, Great Eastern Hotel." It was thus that I learned that he had come to Bengal to film *The River* here.

I went to see him at the Great Eastern; I introduced myself as a *cinéphile,* organizer of the local Film Society. He received me with much kindness and generosity. I helped him a little when he shot tests with some young Bengal girls. Then he asked me to help him find exteriors in the environs of Calcutta. We talked a great deal. He said he was surprised by the number of films and cinéastes that I knew. We became rather friendly, and I also made friends with his nephew, the cameraman Claude Renoir.

When he came to Calcutta, Renoir had already written the scenario of *The River,* drawn up in Hollywood. Das Gupta, who became his assistant, had given it to me to read, and some things jarred me. I went to his hotel to tell him that. He replied to me that he was not surprised at some improbabilities. He did not know India when he had had to draw up that scenario for his producer. In Calcutta, Renoir changed his first *découpage* a great deal. I was happy about that because in many points that work did not please me. I should have liked to have followed the shooting of *The River* from beginning to end. But it took place 25 kilometers from Calcutta, at Berhapur, on the Ganges, and my work kept me in my advertising agency. At the time of my meetings with Jean Renoir, I told him the idea of *Pather Panchali,* of which I already dreamed of making into a film. He encouraged me to make it. But in 1950, my agency sent me to England, and I worked in their London office. Very quickly I came into conflict with its art director because he had tried to pass my designs for posters as his own with clients. I went to work in another agency.

That was the first time I stayed in Europe. In five months I saw ninety-five films, for we were deprived of them in Calcutta. The first evening of my arrival in London, I saw at the Curzon Cinema a double bill that very strongly impressed me: *A Night at the Opera* of the Marx Brothers, and *The Bicycle Thief.* That film, about which one can think what one wants today, exercised a decisive influence on me. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that one could work exclusively, in exterior settings, with non-professional actors, and I thought that what one could do in Italy, one could do in Bengal as well, in spite of the difficulties of the sound recording. Then I saw *Miracle in Milan,* the beginning of which I liked very much, with its character of Toto, the stream of milk, etc. It was very much later, in Paris, after *Pather Panchali,* that I discovered Rossellini and *La Terra Trema* of Visconti.

Among the other films that I discovered in London, I had no taste for the films of Cocteau, but I was captivated by *La Règle du jeu (The Rules of the Game).* For me it was like a fugue of Mozart, a variation on his *Marriage of Figaro.* In London I also discovered *Nanook of the North* and *Louisiana Story,* which made me understand the importance of Robert Flaherty. But I had to wait until 1958 to know the sum of his work.

Of the Soviets, I was fortunate to discover Dovjenko *(Earth, Shors).* He is a director of genius, a great lyric poet, whom people do not know well enough. I enjoyed very much *The Childhood of Maxim Gorky* of Donskoi. People said to me later that *Pather Panchali* must have been influenced by that film. Frankly I do not think so. In any case I never intended to make a film in the manner of Donskoi. Did they not formerly tell Bibhuti Bannerji, the writer, that his book *Pather Panchali* had been deeply influenced by *Jean Christophe?* Well, at that time he did not know even the name of Romain Rolland, and he read *Jean Christophe* only after having published his novel.

As I told you, it was after having

seen *The Bicycle Thief* in London, that I decided to film *Pather Panchali* according to neo-realistic methods. I wrote my first treatment immediately upon my return to Calcutta in October 1950. I went to present my idea to several producers. The better to lure them, my scenario was illustrated with about 500 drawings. It was in vain. Nobody paid the least attention to my project, not even the people at "New Theaters Limited," who had supported the best Bengal cinema in the thirties.

Then I began to work on the film with two friends, who, like me, were still amateurs: Subrata Mitra, who became my cameraman, and Bansi Chandragupta, who since then has been my set designer for all my films. The three of us began to shoot tests all over the place with a 16 mm camera, solely to determine whether we were capable of putting something on film. We shot in the streets or in the country, in good weather and in bad, to train ourselves.

When we were somewhat satisfied, we sought the means to produce *Pather Panchali* in 16mm or 35mm. In the end it became clear to us that the film would cost us a minimum of twenty thousand rupees (20,000 F- $4000). We had no money. We gave up temporarily.

But in 1952 I decided to make the film at any cost. I had a life insurance policy. I negotiated it for seven thousand rupees and we began the shooting with non-professional actors. I found the little girl in a school, and the woman in a store where she was employed. I had not left my job and we could work only Saturdays and Sundays. It was not even possible for us to edit what we had shot; so we could show it to no one.

To be able to continue, I sold my library, my art books, my mother's jewelry and my wife's. That way I was able to find four thousand rupees more. We were able to make a first cut, silent, that ran forty minutes. It was possible for us to show what we had succeeded in filming without décors, without actors, without makeup, and without much money.

This little film did not enable us to find a backer. We had to interrupt our work for about a year. I was completely discouraged, almost ready to give up, when my mother arranged to have me meet Dr. B. C. Roy, Prime Minister of Bengal, with whom she had a mutual friend. He saw our film, and he obtained a subsidy for us to finish it. They gave us ten thousand rupees, then little sums in rather widely separated payments. The film was not yet finished when one of my employers, D. R. Nicholson, saw a few sequences. He liked *Pather Panchali* so much that he gave me a long leave of absence to work on it, and he even put money into the production.

After seven months, the members of the government saw the almost completed film; they found its dénouement too pessimistic and asked me to add a concluding sequence showing the present day development of the countryside in Bengal. I refused, saying the ending was not in the widely read novel of Bisbhuti Bannerji, and that I refused to change a novel published well before the independence of India. In the end I won my point, and the government, my producer, finally decided to authorize the first showing of *Pather Panchali* in 1955.

We managed to obtain a first run showing for six weeks in a large cinema of Calcutta. At first the film did hardly any business, but after the third week the box-office sales jumped sharply, and people were standing in line for seats. The manager of the theater would have been willing to continue the showings. But he had signed a contract for a spectacle film of Madras, produced by S. Vasan, who refused to delay his opening. So *Pather Panchali* was taken off the bill, and the film of Madras began its run in the presence of the producer. The next day, at six o'clock

*Charulata*

in the morning, there was a ring at my door. It was the producer, E. Vasan, who had been determined to see *Pather Panchali.* He spoke to me about it with so much enthusiasm and emotion that tears flowed from his eyes. He told me that he would have put off the opening of his super-production if he had known about my film. *Pather Panchali* was taken up by another cinema in Calcutta where its first run continued for seven weeks. The film was successful in all Bengal, then in various Indian cities, and the government found itself generously repaid for its investment. As for me, I understood that I could henceforth devote myself to cinema, and I left my advertising agency.

My first film had as sources European-American cinema, and Bengali literature. It owed something to cinéastes like Flaherty and Donskoi, but its style was that of the adapted novel. For me, in cinema, the style is determined by the matter, by the subject treated. Do not take me for a theoretician. I work by instinct. Let no one believe that I draw all my films shot by shot before directing them. If I did that for *Pather Panchali,* it was that I had time to spare. Now I write *découpages,* with dialogues, from time to time adding sketches in the margin; I am an artist, I have a tendency to visualize things immediately. If *Pather Panchali* had not brought me money, it proved that people could trust me, and I was able to undertake *Aparajito.* We filmed it with a second-hand Arriflex that did not work very well and caused us serious trouble, notably at Benares. We had only a very small budget, we were not able to reshoot some scenes, and I had to change the scenario. Moreover, I was rather sick after having shot in Benares, with one leg in a plaster cast, and I had to stay in bed for some time. *Aparajito* was not nearly as popular as *Pather Panchali.* The general audience was offended by the relations between the mother and the son, although I had done nothing but transpose very faithfully a well known book. After this half-failure I was very afraid of being compelled to return to work in advertising. Yet I wanted to set out on other paths.

My third film, *Jalsaghar (The Music Room)* adapted a short story of Tarashankar Bannerji — no relation except homonomy to the other writer; the name Bannerji, like Ray or Roy, is extremely common in Bengal. For me this was the opportunity for a serious study of feudal traditions in the process of disappearing. I also wanted to reach a wider audience, especially in Bengal. It was a success, but much less considerable than *Pather Panchali.*

Then I switched to comedy by adapting a satirical short story of the Bengali writer Parasuram, *Parash Pather.* I gave the leading role in it to Tulsi Chakravarty, a very fine comedian and very popular, who has died since. It was really *his* film. Its success in Calcutta was enormous, but its critical reception abroad was unfavorable. This response did not encourage me to direct other comic films.

When *Aparajito* had won the Golden Lion at Venice, some journalists had asked me if this film was the second of a trilogy; I replied yes to them mechanically, without my reply really corresponding to my intentions at the time; indeed quite the contrary. Later, Nehru said to me "I would like to know what became of your Apu." I replied to him quite bluntly: "Really, two films with him are enough for me." He insisted, and advised me to write a scenario from *The World of Apu,* which I had just reread . . .

It was thus that I found myself obliged to finish this trilogy. For the first time I was my own producer, with enough means to do precisely what I wanted. In India the film had a success that went still beyond that of *Pather Panchali:* fourteen weeks' first run in Calcutta, after which the film made a fine showing in Bengal, even in the small settlements.

My sixth film *Devi* was much more controversial. It is not true that it had difficulties with censorship, but immediately after its first showings it was attacked by the orthodox Hindus, who interpreted it as a *"Brahmu"* film. *Brahmu* is the name given those who profess a reformed unitarian religion, the *Brahmu Samaj,* founded about 1800 in Calcutta by Ram Mohan Rai. During the last century its very liberal doctrine, won the intellectual milieux of Calcutta, the Tagore family and my own. It is true that the idea of the adapted short story belonged to the *Brahmu* Rabindranath Tagore, but it had been written by a Hindu, Prabhat Mukherji. It is not false that this work, like my film, agitated against certain religious superstitions. *Devi* was not very popular, but I have never regretted handling a subject so full of grandeur, nobility, and dignity.

In 1960 the centenary of Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated. I joyfully accepted the direction of a documentary which was dedicated to him, and which was produced by the government of Bengal. At the same time I was filming *Teen Kanya (Les Trois Filles; Three Daughters)* which adapted three of Tagore's short stories. And I was very happy, as a painter, to have been able to design the postage stamp commemorating his centenary.

My documentary on Tagore cost me two or three times as much time as any of my feature films. I did research everywhere to recover old newsreels in which our great writer appeared. Since it was not a matter of a political figure, they were very rare and difficult to discover. I was helped very much, in France, by my friend Lotte Eisner, who spent infinite time rummaging through the Pathé and Gaumont archives for me. This film, which had been asked of me by Nehru, occupied me almost eighteen months. Then in India it formed a commemorative program with *Teen Kanya.*

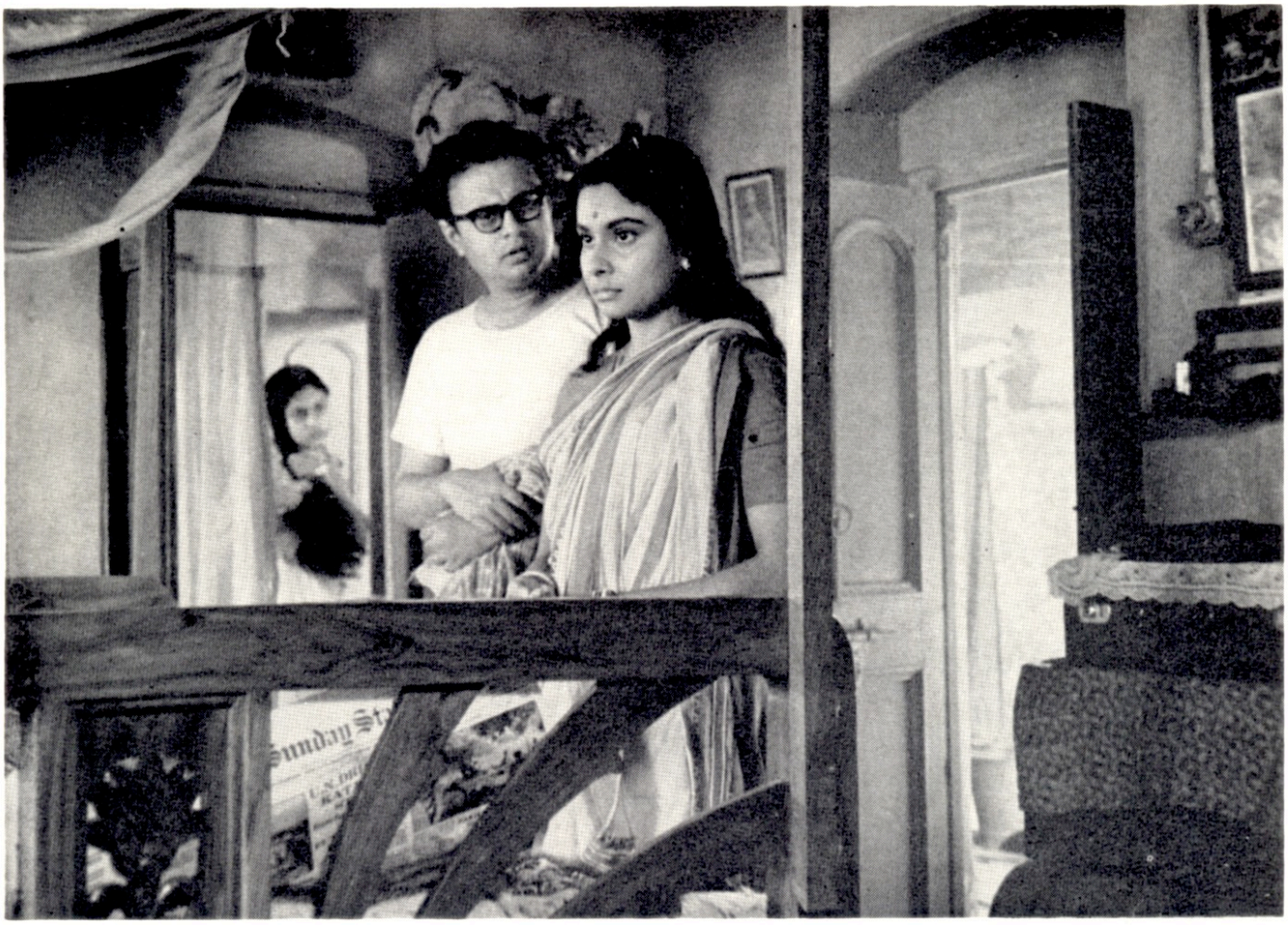
And after that, I was able to direct *Kanchenjungha,* my first original scenario, my first film in color, my first really contemporary subject since it took place in our day, and no longer in years intentionally rather vaguely specified, in the time when India was a British colony.

Some people had said that my first films formed a tableau of the different social classes of Bengal. That is true, although this general line did not correspond to any premeditated intention. I had not yet dealt with my country's rich *bourgeoisie,* a class I know rather well. It is in this milieu that I situated my film. It takes place at Darjeeling, a mountain station, for Bengal a little what Megève is for France. In clear weather you can see from there one of the high peaks of the Himalayas, Kanchenjungha.

The duration of the action almost corresponds with the running time. It takes place one afternoon, between two and four o'clock, in a hotel and on the promenades of Darjeeling. At the center of the action a rich family of Calcutta, spending their last day of vacation. The father is an authoritarian business man, who has completely crushed the personality of his wife, already resigned to his tyranny. Their elder daughter, mother of a family, is with her husband, to whom she is going to confess that for a long time she has had a lover. The second daughter, intelligent, sensitive, is considered as promised to a rich and vulgar young man by her father, who expects to announce the engagement this last day of vacation. After a series of conflicts among the different characters, the girl finds her suitor an idiot, and rejects him for a rebellious young man without money, arrived by chance from Calcutta. The real subject of the film is the struggle between the old and the new, the fall of a family tyrant, consummated at the end of the day, when the fog is disspelled and for the first time during the vacation allows Kanchenjungha to be seen.

I do not know whether people will like this film in Europe and in America. Maybe it is too talky. In India people liked it in the large cities and the criticism was on the whole excellent. But the film was a failure in the small settlements, perhaps because of its unaccustomed structure, of the emotional problems evoked, and especially because of its milieu: a rather sophisticated upper middle-class . . .

After *Kanchenjungha,* I found myself very hesitant. What to do? What subject to choose? It was then that a friend asked me to write for him a scenario adapting a book of Tarashankar Bannerji, author of *Jalsaghar — Abhijan (Expedition),* which has as its hero a taxi-cab driver, as did *Ajaantrik (Pa*



*Charulata*, Jaya Bhaduri, Soumitra Chatterji and Madhabi Mukerji.

*mecanique*, 1959) of the Bengali director Ritwik Ghatak, but its theme includes fewer adventures, and it has more social significance, with its types characteristic of our small settlements.

When I had finished my scenario, my friends asked me to help them select exteriors. I found myself fascinated by the extraordinary landscape of rocks described in the novel and which has given rise to various popular legends. The boy who wanted to direct the film, for lack of confidence in himself, withdrew from the enterprise, and I took his place, after having changed the scenario so that it would fit my own style. For the first time I had to direct a very well known actor of Bombay, Waheeda Rehman. He is a Moslem, a native of Kerala, where they speak Malayalam, a Dravidian language. He was to interpret the role of a character native to Bihar. With my assistants, he learned with no difficulty the language of this state bordering on Bengal, many of whose inhabitants emigrate to Calcutta, where they are generally servants. I had not chosen this subject, but I had been won over by its picturesque tone, its sympathetic portrayal of simple people, the simplicity of its plot, the scenes of life in a little town with its streets, its shops, its little restaurants. It was a big success in Calcutta and in Bengal.

For a long time I had had the idea of filming *Mahanagar* from a short story by a young Bengali writer Ivarendra Mitra. But for that I needed a talented actress of a certain type, whom I had not succeeded in discovering. I found her in Madhabi Mukerji, principal actress of *L'Anniversaire*, directed by the Bengali Mrinal Sen. I had to wait some time still to find the Anglo-Indian woman who plays an important role in this story, and whom I found in a night club where she was a singer.

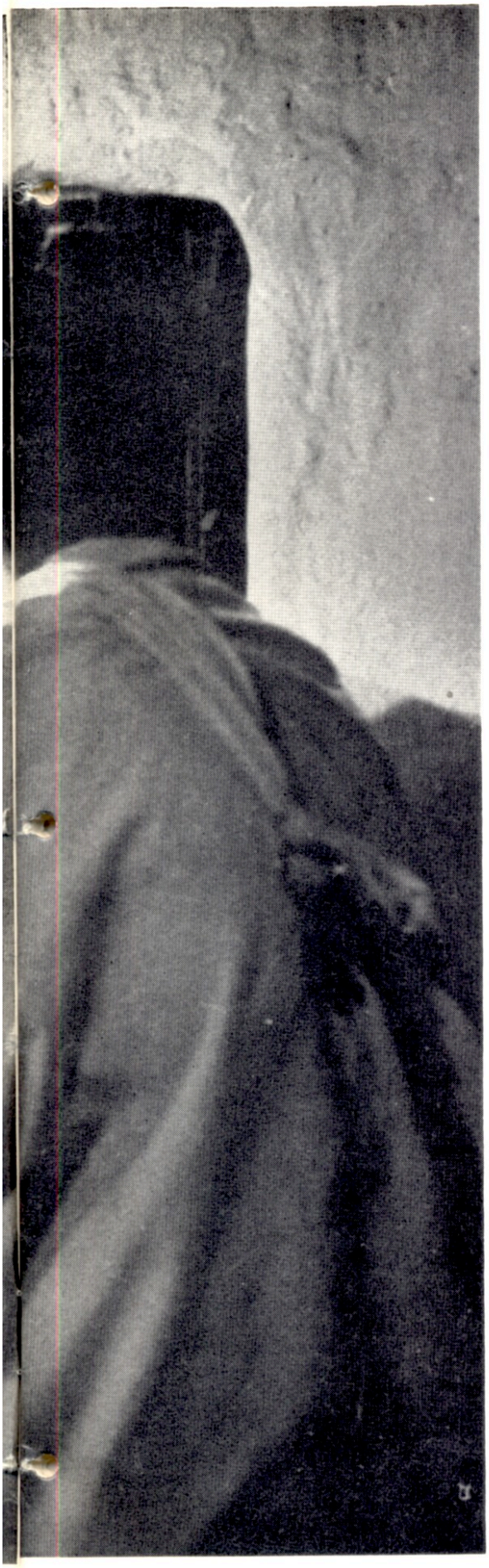
*Mahanagar* was very successful. Its subject was the story of a woman, the wife of a minor civil servant, who starts to work; this provokes various social and family conflicts, since with us, in the past, a woman of that social class could pursue almost no occupation, except that of nurse or school teacher. Of all my films it is the most contemporary; the Apu trilogy, which I intentionally situated a little outside time, in fact took place during the twenties.

In 1963, I filmed *Charulata* from a novel of Rabindranath Tagore. This was an old project, to which people had made many objections. In it the heroine is in love with her brother-in-law and people told me that the Indian audience would not accept a situation so offensive. I thought on the contrary that it would sympathize with the woman. I was right. The film was moderately successful and nobody spoke of its immorality.

At present, I am finishing the shooting, and I am writing the music, on my latest film *The Coward and the Saint*, which is an adaptation of two Bengali short stories: the first by Premen Mitra, the second by Parasuram, the author of *Parash Pathar*. *The Coward* takes place on a tea plantation, in a bungalow of the English variety, in a society in which a very colonial caste system still exists. The second short story has as its hero an impostor, after the fashion of Tartuffe, who claims to be a *Guru* (Saint), and who in the end is unmasked. Maybe this subject is too regional and I wonder whether it will be understood in the West. But ultimately I work first of all and particularly for my country, Bengal, whose language is spoken in all my films.

I am already preparing my next film *Goupi Gyne Bacha Byne*. I will shoot it to please my son, who is eleven. He found his papa's films too tragic and so asked me to adapt a story written by his grandfather, for children, a kind of fairy tale. It will be a musical fantasy with gods, demons, singers and comic actors trying to prevent war between two nations. I will use many technical effects in this experimental film in which there will be a good king and a bad king, both of whom an epidemic has made mute, and who speak an unknown language. All India will be travelled in

*Aparajito*



it, thanks to a pair of flying slippers. Part of the film will be shot in helicopters which will land the heroes in mogul palaces, the castles of Maharajahs, old historic forts, and of course the Taj Mahal, — to which I prefer the dead city of Fathepur Sikri. I have already marked out my exteriors, obtained authorizations to film in historic monuments.

You ask me what I think of the Bengali directors of the 1930's, P. C. Barua, Debaki Bose, Kumar Bose, whose films represented something for the cinema and for the India of that time. I do not much like the Bengali films of the years 1930-45, too influenced by the West in their photography, their dramatic structure, their costumes, even their décors.

I had not yet seen any film of Prince P. C. Barua when I made *Pather Panchali.* Now that I know several of them, I dislike them very much for their *style Ufa,* their overwrought photographic style, imitating Europe. It is not surprising that this son of a maharajah studied cinema in Berlin. I dislike P. C. Barua supremely as an actor, with his exhibitionist side, narcissist, his excessive makeup, his way of speaking Bengali with an Oxford accent. His best film, *Devadas,* has the merit of being really Bengali, but is botched by his presence and by a plot spoiled with sentimentality.

To Barua I much prefer Debaki Bose. He is deeply Bengali, and his emotion is always sincere. Of his work you have seen *The Poet* and you found in it a relationship, by its theme of the train, with my trilogy. Now this theme is found again in many Bengali books, and *The Poet* is an adaptation of a novel by Tarashankar Bannerji, who supplied the subjects of two of my films, *Jalsaghar* and *Abhijan.* My affinities with Debaki Bose, if they exist, derive from the literature of our country, not from the cinema. I have much respect for this director and his work, which is often "devotional," a word that you can if absolutely necessary translate as "mystical," but particularly as "religious" or "devout." Debaki Bose encouraged me a great deal when he told me once: "For a long time I dreamed of adapting *Pather Panchali,* but my film would not have been so good as yours."

I have much respect, too, for his contemporary and homonym Nitin Bose. He began by being a cameraman, and he always remained particularly a technician. People assigned him pseudo-social subjects, or romantic, or musical. From them he drew successful films, never deep but very well made and with an undeniable personal feeling.

He too is more Bengali than P. C. Barua, and, technically, he has the merit of being the first to introduce in India song in playback for musical films. Nitin Bose is a first cousin of my father, and he wanted to have me start out in cinema as a set designer. He liked *Pather Panchali* so much that he saw it eleven times. This modest and very kind man is now continuing his career in Bombay, where he has directed some films of Delip Kumar, one of our most popular actors, whom he originally discovered.

Without denying the importance of these Bengali old masters, I am determined to repeat that I have never been influenced by them, and that when I started out I judged their films very critically. I began by writing scenarios, adapting novels or short stories, to learn the métier, by myself, following the American technique of *découpage.* At first that helped me. Then I soon understood that the construction of the scenario derived from the chosen subject, that the matter determined the manner. I was always mad about theory, but practice has taught me much. With *Pather Panchali* I found myself on exterior locations with actors, a natural decor, landscapes, and I had to determine, for example, the kind of dollying to adopt. For that my knowledge of the methods of Hollywood helped me not at all.

The cinematic material dictated a style to me, a very slow rhythm determined by nature, the landscape, the country people, their customs, their gestures, their way of speaking. To express all that I could neither have recourse to rapid American *montage,* nor place my camera as one would have done in Hollywood.

In exterior settings, the details, the light, bring essential cinematic ideas. One is in contact with life, which one is not, on the stage of a studio. The people and the landscape dictate to you elements which have nothing to do with theories, be they even of Eisenstein. He, Eisenstein, was right in noting that analogous elements can be found again in the best books. I discovered many cinematographic elements reading Tagore or Kalidasa. I quote from memory a passage from a poem of the latter, which says more or less:

> "The retinue of the Maharajah arrives in the street, the people leave their work to come running on the terraces. A woman who is nursing her baby runs to the window. The milk flows from her breast that has remained bare. Another woman drops a garland of flowers. A woman who was painting the soles of her feet with ochre begins to run, and leaves red footsteps on the ground."

Is that not a succession of cinematographic miniatures, a series of visual notations, of images which form the real material of cinema — as Eisenstein could remark on the other hand from a story of Dickens.

Besides Indian literature, I owe much to Western music. When I went to Europe for the first time, I was determined to stay at Salzburg for a Mozart festival. Music, like cinema, is a time art, since a film unfolds in time in a strict manner. Now traditional Indian music, which is

*(Continued on page 62)*

Tony Curtis, Blake Edwards and Natalie Wood during the shooting of *The Great Race*.

# *Sophisticated Naturalism*

## *Interview With Blake Edwards By Jean-Francois Hauduroy*

I don't remember ever having any great desire to follow in my family's footsteps. It was never part of my life but I didn't know anything else so it was either that or be a thief. I took the most convenient. I began as an actor and again, convenience, because it was simple. I could get odd jobs and make considerable money for a young man of that age. But I didn't care for it much. As I got involved, I became more interested and fascinated.

CAHIERS—Were you, at least, a movie fan.

BLAKE EDWARDS—I don't really think so, at least, no more than the average person would be, maybe less because I was raised with it. I was on the sets as a youngster. I just took it as a matter of course really.

CAHIERS—You began your career as an actor.

EDWARDS—I didn't do any important roles. I did a second lead in a small movie, in fact, the first film that Richard Quine directed. I did various odd small parts of no real consequence and I was happy to get the work.

CAHIERS—You acted in a film of Preminger's *In the Meantime, Darling* in 1944.

EDWARDS—Yes, and it's rather an interesting story. Whenever I see Mr. Preminger now, I think about a time when, on the set, Mr. Preminger really went after me. He really chewed me out, as we say. I remember calling him some rather bad names and it's just as well that I didn't go on in the acting profession after that.

CAHIERS—Actors say that it's very pleasant working with you. Isn't this due in part to your own experience as an actor?

EDWARDS—I'm sure that that it did influence me a great deal. Having been an actor and having been interviewed for all of those endless successions of parts you don't get—it's a tough, tough life. Having been chewed out on the set and having worked for some very difficult directors—tough, sarcastic, miserable people—I probably said to myself, rather than get a performance out of somebody that way, I'd look in another direction because I know how I felt about them. I don't think that I'd want anybody feeling that way about me.

CAHIERS—In 1948, you co-authored, produced and acted in a western called *Panhandle*. You acted a role inspired by the character of Billy the Kid.

EDWARDS—Yes, a young gunman of the West. I've always loved the West and that part of our culture. I think that it particularly inspires the younger mind in terms of dramatics, etc. . . . It just happens at that point, that I decided we'd write a western. We were reasonably young at that time and impressionable and the West had great magic for us. The next year, with the same boy, we made *Stampede*. We made it partly because we'd had a certain success with the first one and the studio that put up the money decided that we should do the same thing again. I didn't have too much difficulty in starting as a producer as I was fortunate enough to have a father in the business who helped us get the script around. I had a partner who had a little money and we did, in all honesty, have a pretty good script. We were able to persuade a few minor personalities to do the thing. It was more difficult to write it than to produce it.

CAHIERS—After these two films, you began to work in the radio as author and director?

EDWARDS—After these two films, my partnership with this other boy came to an end and I found myself a producer looking for a film to produce. I was just kind of sitting back expecting somebody to hire this bright young fellow who'd produced a couple of minor films. Because I'd become rather stimulated in the area of writing and enjoyed it, I began to write in my spare time. I knew someone who was working in radio, and I took one of their scripts and I decided for fun to write a radio show. I followed the form and made up a story to fit in it. I gave it to this party who took it to a producer in radio who read it and called me. I was suddenly in radio. I stayed in radio for many years. I wrote many radio shows and originated a couple of rather popular radio shows here—"Richard Diamond" that Dick Powell did—and others. I wrote many mystery and adventure shows. About the time that I was having a great success in radio, Dick Quine began to direct again and called me up and asked me if I'd like to write a script with him. I was suddenly back in the motion picture business.

CAHIERS—From then on you worked with Richard Quine as a screen writer for quite a few years.

EDWARDS—We did seven films together either writing together or my writing and his directing. It's difficult to say who does what when you're collaborating on a screenplay. I would say that probably I contributed more in the dialogue area than he did but not in the beginning.

CAHIERS—With Quine you wrote four films for Mickey Rooney.

EDMARDS—Yes, they were especially written for him. It interested me to exploit the different possibilities of Mickey particularly toward the end when I knew that we only had one more picture to do. We did a thing called *Drive a Crooked Road*—an involved character study of an ugly little man. Knowing Mickey as well as I did, I was able to draw on ce tain facets of his character and then exploit the through Mickey.

CAHIERS—Did Mickey Rooney collaborate at all the making of the film other than as an actor?

EDWARDS—Very little. Mickey, under the best conditions, is a very impatient individual. You mig tell him what the idea is and he gets enthused for moment but then he's either off playing golf or writi a song, etc. . . .

CAHIERS—In this series of films that you made wi Quine, do you attach a particular importance to *M Sister Eileen?*

EDWARDS—That's one film that I don't particular care for. It had been done so often and in so ma different versions. Richard Quine had played in t original stage and movie version of it. There was that much invention in terms of screenwriting on r part.

CAHIERS—To finish with your period of scriptwrit with Quine you wrote *The Notorious Landlady*.

EDWARDS—That had a rather strange story becau I had actually written the script to that some fo years prior to the film being made. It just laid arou Columbia Sudios. I tried to get it actually, tried to b it on several occasions. Suddenly, Richard resurrect it and they brought in another writer and they r wrote it in order to accommodate Miss Novak. It w never the woman's role; it couldn't be the woma role. Suddenly, I found out that my name was on t script with the other writer. I don't really take mu credit for that script. There are certainly some sir larities, and the characters were basically mine whi entitled me to screen-play credit, but there is a gr discrepancy between my script and the final one. T original conception was of a film in the Hitchcock ma ner with great tongue-in-cheek too. It was the ma role in the original—the Jack Lemmon role—throug out; it was all from his point of view. The empha was completely changed in the film.

CAHIERS—When in 1955, you directed your fi film *Bring Your Smile Along*, did you feel that y were arriving at a decisive stage in your career?

EDWARDS—I did have the desire to direct at t point. As a matter of fact, I had begun directing T.V. through Dick Powell, and wangled assignme in the early days of "Four-Star Playhouse," wher used my ability to write to say, "If you want t script, then I get to direct it." So, I had really d several T.V. shows prior to switching to the mot picture field. I had definitely made up my mind t that was going to be part of my life.

CAHIERS—*Mr. Corey* was the film that brought y to the attention of the French cinéphiles.

EDWARDS—It was the third film I directed but first film of any consequence. It was a step up. It v with Tony Curtis, it had a fairly good budget, it v

in color and it had a reasonably good schedule. I'm pleased that it had some acceptance.

CAHIERS—You directed *The Perfect Furlough* which is one of your favorite films.

EDWARDS—Well in a way. It was kind of a milestone for me; I got the feeling of comedy. Everything seemed to work. It didn't have any great screenplay, we shot it in thirty days, and I look at it now and I say, "How could I have done some of those things?" But, all in all, in its own strange way, it is one of my favorite films because it was one of the most satisfying things I did. I was happy on it; I felt that things happened and I was stimulated by it. The audience reaction was exceptional here. I did work on the scenario, Stanley Shapiro did it.

CAHIERS—After that, you did *Operation Petticoat*.

EDWARDS—That was, from the standpoint of making money, the most successful film that I've made. It was one of the biggest grossing films that Universal has ever had. It had some moments in it that I thought were very good and as a picture, I thought it was a pleasant, fairly good film. I'm not that proud of it; I don't think that it was any great effort. I had some bad experiences on it but I learned a great deal — about personalities and politics and how far I felt I should go in standing up for something I believe in. Right in the beginning, there were many things I didn't like about it, that I thought were wrong. I began improvising, ordering up planes and a lot of things that I got in trouble for. I locked horns with Mr. Grant immediately. I was there by virtue of the fact that Cary Grant had agreed to give this newcomer a break. I was really in great jeopardy of being off the film before I got started and I had to, at one point, sit down and really examine myself and say, "Alright, how much diplomacy do I employ here and how much do I really stand up for what I believe in?" I don't mean to sound sanctimonious or anything like that. I just decided that I could play his game and not know what I'm doing and I'm liable to make a picture that's no good. What difference does it make if I'm fired or not? The end result is the same. I was determined that I was going to do it my way as much as possible without too many compromises. I learned that I was right in one respect to do what I believed in; I also learned that you can be diplomatic with some people and not necessarily give away the store. I learned something about myself — that I didn't have to go quite that hard to prove my point. Although I'm still very determined, I'm more objecive about it now.

CAHIERS—We haven't seen *High Time* in France.

EDWARDS—Well, it's just as well. It was a very unfortunate occurrence. I felt that I wanted to get out of it half way through. Out of a certain loyalty to Bing and to myself, I stuck it out. I'm not really proud of it. I'm proud of what went on behind the scenes; what I was able to bring out of what it originally was. The end result is nothing that I'm particularly proud of.

CAHIERS—Up to this point in your career, how do you consider the subjects that you worked on?

EDWARDS—Those were the jobs that I was fortunate enough to get. That was the turning point in my career. At that time, suddenly I became "hot"—everybody was trying to get me but not necessarily for very big films but for semi-important movies. I was active in a particular area and not much time to sit back and say, "No, I won't do this, I won't do that." I needed experience and each picture seemed to be a bit better. I turned down many things but I did these and enjoyed them.

CAHIERS—You were approtching what you really wanted to do?

EDWARDS—Yes, I was but I wasn't quite sure.

CAHIERS—How did it come about that you did *Breakfast at Tiffany's?*

EDWARDS—I really don't know but I think that it was as simple as this—Audrey Hepburn's agent recommended me to Audrey because Audrey could not get one of the few directors that she would be willing to work with — Billy Wilder, William Wyler . . . I don't know, maybe there was one other. But the few directors that Audrey would have done that picture with, weren't available. So now, somebody said "Who do we get?" Her agent said "There is one fellow that I would go with" based on *Petticoat* and the other pictures that you've named. I don't really know too much of behind the scenes because I've heard a lot of people take credit for getting me that job and maybe they are right; it may have been an accumulation of a lot of efforts. I do know that the producer was very much in my corner and very strong for me based on my job on *Petticoat*. But I think that the thing that really did it was Audrey and the recommendation of her agent.

CAHIERS—Did the subject particularly appeal to you?

EDWARDS—Yes. I had a good time with it. Again it was one of those things, in retrospect if I had it to do all over agtin, I would do it a lot closer to the original Capote story. But today, you could do it a lot closer. In those days, it frightened many people. It was too cynical; you touched on subjects that I believe people would be afraid to dramatize — the homosexual influence of the leading man, the sexual relationships of Holly that were so amoral, — she lived with lesbians because they're good housekeepers — and things like that that have great wonderful sardonic humor to them. You couldn't say things like that on the screen but you could take greater liberties today than you could then. I was in no position even to suggest that Audrey Hepburn play the Capote Holly Golighty. It would have been wrong casting, I believe. I think that she came as close to Holly as Audrey could. I think

that the characterization for Audrey was perfect.

CAHIERS—Did you collaborate with Axelrod on the scenario?

EDWARDS—No. When I was chosen for the film, I read the next to final screenplay. The thing I do take credit for was the party. He didn't write that, I did that. It was indicated in the screenplay; there were certain things written down such as a couple of speeches. But the general party was only indicated and I had to improvise it on the set and I had a good time doing it. I asked the casting office to hire only actors — no extras. I said that there must be a lot of unemployed actors around — not important names, not the usual background faces that you see in films. I wanted real actors because I didn't know who I was going to give things to and I wanted to be sure that they could handle it. I wanted people who could really act for me even though they're only in the background and it isn't just that usual thing you see in films. The studio said that I was out of my mind — very expensive. It was an expensive party but I think that it was well worth it.

CAHIERS—In *Breakfast at Tiffany's* you reached an equilibrium between what was sophisticated and what was natural. Was that your aim?

EDWARDS—It's difficult to answer but I think that I can. I think that Axelrod brought the sophistication into it. I think that I felt the need to bring the naturalness to it and still keep the top level of sophistication. To answer your question more precisely, I think that based on some of the things I've done, I had a knack for that. If you ask me how I arrived at it, I'm not quite sure. I enjoy that area tremendously. That applies more to comedy. I prefer to express whatever I'm intending to express through comedy in that way. In drama, I wouldn't say so necessarily. I think that comedy is more comfortable in that area at least for me because I'm dealing so much with a kind of basic slapstick. To think that slapstick and sophistication are insoluble is not true at all. I think that there's a wonderful kind of thing that happens with the two. It takes slapstick a step up and it takes sophistication a step down and they kind of meet. There's a great element of humor that takes place. It isn't the basic destructiveness of humor but all these things are prevalent. When presented in a sophisticated way the sort of onus is taken off. But the more I try to describe what I do, the more inarticulate I become.

CAHIERS—After the experience of *Breakfast at Tiffany's, Experiment in Terror* was, above all, the desire to do something completely different?

EDWARDS—Very definitely. The experiment was exactly that. It was an experiment for me. It was not an area with which I was unfamiliar because my career for a long time was based on exactly that kind of thing. In radio, that's the thing I wrote. In television, that's also the kind of thing I wrote. It's the kind of thing I enjoyed. I felt that at that I wanted to try somethin that was much more experimental and was away fro the things that I was suddenly finding myself involve with. I just did it. I'm a person who is a very impu sive-compulsive person and I got a hold of this thin and I thought, well, I'll do something like this becaus it's a very mechanical, technical movie that doesn't g that involved with real emotions. There are certai character motivations but it's a trick that I'm going t do now. I'm going to use my camera and I'm going t have fun experimenting with that.

CAHIERS—It was your ninth film and the first i black and white.

EDWARDS—Yes. The photography was all pre-pla ned, all pre-designed. The way I was going to proje it dramatically to my audience was all thought o mostly before I started shooting.

CAHIERS—*Days of Wine and Roses* unfortunate has not been shown in France.

EDWARDS—Evidently, there seems to be some r striction in France against showing the movie becau of the subject matter . . . alcoholism. Maybe the A erican problem is not indigenous to France; it's ma be not the same sort of a thing. Yet I know that the is a considerable problem in France. It may not be a proached in the same way.

CAHIERS—You attach a great deal of importance this film?

EDWARDS—Yes, because there again everybody w sitting back and saying "Blake Edwards, the come director" and suddenly we came out with the sort "drama of the year" — the really deep character stu of the people about as involved as they could be. T characters interested me more than in the other fil because they were obsessive-compulsive types. I thi we're all interested by people who seemingly can't co trol certain areas. In the case of these people it w "why do I keep literally destroying me and everybo around me by the inability to cope with a very serio problem in the world today?" It's amazing the persp tive it's given me in my life now, the view that I ha of other people and their problems in terms of alcoh I learned so much by that film; I became deeply volved with the script and with the people and deep involved with the problem. I went to Alcoholics A onymous Meetings and down to the local hospital watched them and I listened to them and I felt beyo that. I'm a kind of obsessive-compulsive type mys I've seen people almost be sick after seeing the pictu — not because they necessarily have an alcoholic pr lem, but because they relate so sharply to that obs sive-compulsive type. One or two alcoholics I kn went to see it and immediately were belting th down afterwards. It was like a reprieve; we took people into the pit of hell, about as much degradati as you could experience on the screen and so these

coholics would unconsciously say "that isn't me so I'm safe."

CAHIERS—Was it a subject that you chose?

EDWARDS—No. I was chosen by Jack Lemmon. Jack felt that I was the likely director for it because it was a subject that was so deeply heavy and so ponderous and involved. He felt that I could bring to it a naturalness and humor along with that terrible side of it. He felt that was what was important in the picture. Jack Lemmon and Lee Remick gave great performances. If I could work with Lee Remick, Jack Lemmon and Audrey Hepburn for the rest of my life, I wouldn't care if I worked with anybody else.

CAHIERS—*Pink Panther* was also an experiment for you?

EDWARDS—Yes it was. For the same reason I wanted to do *Experiment in Terror*. Again I was trying something. I didn't feel that it was the definitive anything except that it encouraged me. I felt that I wanted to do a comedy. I felt that I wanted to do something wild and insane without too much guts to it. I wanted to lose myself in that sophisticated frivolity and yet I wanted to bring something to it that I'd only touched on before and I wanted to try a little more of — that was the element of slapstick, of the basic humor of Inspector Clouseau.

CAHIERS—*Shot in the Dark* was taken from the American adaptation of Marcel Achard's play?

EDWARDS—It's nothing like Achard's play, that's for a start. I was asked to save the situation. The Mirisch Co. had quite a bit of money involved in this project. Peter Sellers was threatening to pull out because he didn't like the screenplay. He said that the only way he would continue with the project would be if I took it over. I said that the only way I could possibly take it over, under such emergency conditions, would be that I would not be obliged to do anything like Achard's play because a) I didn't like it, b) I thought it was not a motion picture and c) I wasn't ready to make a movie at that point. So they asked me what I


*The Great Race*, Natalie Wood.

wanted to do because the picture had to start in something like 4 weeks. I said that if they wanted me to save them, I'd have to take something with which I was familiar to begin with. I was familiar with the character of Clouseau. I needed a detective, somebody to solve a murder. I couldn't throw the whole thing out. I had to use the idea that the maid was accused of killing the chauffeur and this had to be solved. So I thought that Peter Sellers was just the natural thing and that now I was going to try to be as broad with the character as I could be. "How far can I go now in terms of Inspecteur Clouseau?" I wrote the screenplay and was on the stage in 4 weeks with it. Fortunately, it turned out to be a reasonably funny movie. It proved something for me — that if the gag is well-designed you can pull it off.

CAHIERS—Do you consider *The Great Race* a new experience in the field of comedy?

EDWARDS—It's an extension of the other comedies; yet you won't find that there is much to compare. It's true that there is slapstick humor inherent in it but there's a style that I haven't heretofore touched on. The style is a consequence of the period — 1900. There's a kind of traditional humor that we know in this country — the mustachioed villain who is out to get the hero. The hero is a definitive hero. He wears white, his hair is always combed and he can't do anything wrong. He's a real bore. He smiles and his teeth flash, he's terribly elegant. The villain is the definitive villain. He wears black and he's so obsessed with villainy that in his obsessiveness, in his villainous inventions, the energy is always turned around on himself and it blows up in his face. It's always a consequence of his own misdeeds.

This is a kind of cartoon I've presented with real-live people. There is a humor in this now that was somewhat inherent in *Pink Panther* and certainly in *Shot in the Dark* but there is almost an unbelievable humor in that you allow things to happen to people that they could not survive in a million years for the sake of a laugh. You never explain it. You simply go back and they're alright and you start it again.

It's very styilzed and yet that's the difficulty of it — to keep that wild style and still maintain enough believability so that you become involved. I've never done anything on this scale. I found myself standing under the Eiffel Tower with 1500 extras dressed in costume. It's like Baron Frankenstein—I've made this monster and I hope that they've put the right brain in it.

CAHIERS—What are your future projects?

EDWARDS—I'm not doing *Planet of the Apes*. The studio where we were going to do it is not prepared to spend that much money. If they turned it down contractually, I'm obliged to move elsewhere. I'm going to make a film for the Mirisch Co. It is called *What did you do in the War, Daddy?* Because of my background in the war, which is a pretty hysterical one actually, I'm looking forward to the day when my son, who is only 5 now, is eventually going to say "What did you do in the war, Daddy?" I thought that this was an area that needed exploiting and I sat down with Maurice Richlin and dreamed up a story. The epoch is World War II. It will be a wild farce, we hope. It will not be a new experience but a continuation of the comic area in which I've been working.

After that, I'm going to do two pictures, one with Jack Lemmon, *The Toy Soldier*, that will be about as great a departure from comedy as I've taken, certainly as much as *Wine and Roses*. It's about a man and his little boy and the little boy is going to die. The little boy doesn't know it and the father takes him on a summer vacation. It's the relationship between a father and son. The little boy begins to realize that he's going to die and he poses some very difficult questions to the father that the father feels obliged to answer. It has a morbid side to it but also a strange beauty. It is life and these things do happen. There's a great joy in the picture and great love.

Jack and I are going to do the picture together without benefit of studios. That's the plan now. Then I'm going to do a picture called *Gettysburg* which is the 3 days of the battle as seen from the town's point of view — how it affected the town. We're going to rebuild the town. I'm very much interested in that period of our history. It won't be a film with a "message." I don't like films with a "message" and I think that "entertainment" is the necessary element. You can get across a message and entertain the public at the same time and that's what is really important.

## *Strange Bodies*

The film is disappointing enough; yet *The Great Race* is the film of which Edwards had been dreaming for a very long time, the pure animated cartoon that the earlier films foretold. Was he wrong to tend always more towards the cartoon? There was indeed at the end the absurd bet of *The Great Race*, but this road passed through *The Pink Panther* and *A Shot in the Dark*. Thus it happens that a false idea is revealed as such only after having allowed some truths to emerge. Those truths were that world that was created under our eyes, with its fauna and its logic, at the same time tender and nerves-on-edge; they were the two films with Peter Sellers. But *The Great Race*, at the same time an accomplishment and a failure, better stresses what was of value only sketched, implied, grazed, without the aid of Cinerama.

The metteur en scène is he who stretches his nets, more sure of his wait than of his catch. The films of

Blake Edwards live by one insidious little question: how do people react? A mise en scène is a mise-en-condition, a setting-in-a-state; to wait until a gentle drunkenness, a subtle derangement, will half-open the doors of the strange, perhaps even, with a little luck, of madness . . . Drunkenness plays a major role in the films of Edwards (*Breakfast at Tiffany's* and, of course, *Days of Wine and Roses*). The point is that it does not bring things on abruptly, it hurries nothing; it forms and deforms slowly. Those who give themselves up to it or who are given up to it are not lost in it, but their timidity suddenly becomes humor; their irony, lucidity; their unconstraint, choreography. The cinéaste does not treat people abruptly either; he knows that there is always a privileged moment, a privileged place, where the unthinkable becomes possible, and the impossible, familiar. Then how do people react? In the form of gags, of strange confessions and of gentle nostalgias . . . That is the famous malice of Edwards. We owe him the most tender films and the most discreet melodramas. It was enough barely to jostle the characters, glib, vulnerable, and a little weak (they are always the same, brilliant and insipid: Curtis, Lemmon, Niven . . .), and to observe their reactions. Now, there are gags too in misfortune. But it appeared more and more that there were two veins in Edwards. And always the same question: how do people react? You know that that question is at the center of the animated cartoon as well. Of course, there less tenderness, and more of the mechanical, are needed. No doubt Edwards was determined to escape from this slightly satisfied melancholy, this encumbering timidity; he had only to take up his work again, but to strengthen its drawing, to enlarge its strokes, to tighten its contours. To give to its characters, rather than a dim life to drag out, a role to play, and, in the limit, a symbol to incarnate. There was first Clouseau. But he is still too human, too near the cinéaste. The anonymity, the inconsistency, of Leslie of *The Great Race* were necessary—Leslie all clothed in white, for he represents the Good. Edwards, logical, simplifies to excess, erases and caricatures. Does cinema gain by it? The reply is at the end of a detour and the detour passes through drawing and its virtues.

Each week, for a year, from drawing to drawing, Copi presents the same character. It is a woman, bad-tempered but simple, with straight hair, sitting facing a void from which all realities come to her, one more unthinkable than another. Her mind alert, her eye fixed, she is there, but always to be more flouted, disappointed, outdone . . . At length, her mere presence, her obstinacy in "being there," are enough to make one smile. Each week, at each new ordeal, it is a little of our world that she discovers; gestures, words, reasonings, bits and pieces that in the end make up her experience, enclose her in what must indeed be called her "character," for she has one, irreducible . . .

The pleasure of the animated cartoon: the mind that knows that it will be surprised, wonders then how it will be surprised and enjoys knowing itself, for a few instants, outdone. It is always the unexpected that happens but in a landscape each day more precise and on which each adventure leaves an irrefutable mark. All this life—contradictory, complex—which seemed refused to this character so crudely formed (in a few strokes of the pen) comes to meet him. One day, the drawing no longer has to be comic, efficacious, or comprehensible, for it no longer has to prove anything, still less to establish anything; it is our complicity that makes it live and makes us, again, laugh. At the end of a year, Copi (but one might equally well have cited Jules Feiffer or Don Martin) has invented, not a drawing, but indeed, a world, entirely as opaque, mad, and obscure as our own. That is to say (and this is the moral of this digression) that in the measure in which it repeats itself, the animated cartoon (or the comic drawing) acquires what was not given to it: Density, and in that way rejoins what it had as its mission to simplify: life.

Life is precisely what Leslie and Fate have *a priori*, what they will not succeed in making one forget. However Edwards, who always liked lightness and unconstraint in his characters, this time wanted them insipid and inconsistent, less important than their colors, their costumes, their machines. Docilely, they apply themselves to existing as little as possible, and their race around the world, short-winded and laborious, seems particularly destined to prove that, precisely, no surprise is possible (with the exception of a few parentheses and unexpected happy encounters, like the episode of central Europe, the duel, etc.).

At the end of the narrative Blake Edwards dreams of a world which has lost all density, of characters without weight, without bodies, escaping gravity, the dimensions of the world becoming the frame of a gigantic cartoon. This temptation that enhanced the earlier films ruins *The Great Race*, whose premise it seeks in itself. Indeed one sees the characters of Copi acquire the density they lack, but one barely sees how Leslie and Fate could deny their faces, their too-human look, their too heavy bodies. But in *The Great Race*—and this is precisely what Cinerama stresses and denounces at each moment—in spite of all their good will, Leslie and Fate are first Curtis and Lemmon, and the heroine, Natalie Wood. And so all that one should forget crops out more than ever: the wrinkles of the one, the histrionics of the other, the vulgarity of the third, each encumbered with his body, with this life, entropic, which however is the raw material of cinema.

—Serge DANEY.

Roman Polanski

# *Landscape Of A Mind*

## *Interview With Roman Polanski*
## *By Michel Delahaye and*
## *Jean-André Fieschi*

The immediate present, by bringing before us in quick succession, with *Quand les anges tombent* first, then with *Repulsion,* two poles of Polanski's poetics, invites us, a little artificially no doubt, to evaluate, to measure, the road traveled by the *auteur.* Ten years separate the short film, many-hued, very *Polish* in the Borowczyk-pictorial meaning of the word, from the long film, black and white, very English in the best meaning of the word. Ten years and an uncommon capacity for adaptation: between times there were short films, *Le Couteau dans l'eau (Knife in the Water)* and the *Amsterdam* episode of *Les plus belles escroqueries;* afterwards another English film, *Cul-de-sac;* today, Polanski is preparing a vampire story that he will shoot in the Dolomites. Would he be the latest of the major cosmopolitan cinéastes, a race that everything leads one to believe is on the way to a renaissance? But, unlike a Truffaut, who accepts only as a last resort an uprooting ultimately necessary to the existence of a beloved work, it seems that Polanski is in perfect accord with his successive exiles and makes light of them as if they were fun. One must hear him in the present conversation jumping spiritedly from one language to another, from one argot to another, or seasoning an English technical term with some Polish neologism, meanwhile deploring the syntactical rigidity of French . . . The interview that you are about to read aims above all to restore the savor of a particularly supple vocabulary and form of thought, mocking, quick to avoid the traditional snares of the interview behind a play of masks, of flights, of ironies, indeed of defiances. You will understand, then, that it is a matter, less of an interview, than of a portrait. In it you will see at your leisure how the *auteur* loves to put forward his intuition, his fantasy, one would be tempted to say his creative irresponsibility, the better to conceal, by a quip, a burst of laughter, or a short refusal, the rigor, the reflection, the quite abstract intelligence, to which all his films, and, very singularly, *Repulsion,* bear witness.

It is that the poetry of Polanski is made of ruses, rather than of abandonments. Born of extreme calculation and care, his forms ignore effusion, outpouring, the appeal to sentimentality and even to morality. Study how scrupulously pity is kept apart from the face of the old woman who occupies the center of *Quand les anges tombent.* Pathos gains in quality and in effectiveness by rising from a look intentionally cruel, in any case impartial. And imagery of Epinal* thus acquires a depth falsely naive, an attractiveness falsely old-fashioned, an elegance closely watched even in the apparent crudeness of drawing, that lead one to see and to know a world entirely dreamed, and which, in its turn, makes one dream.

The films of Polanski are *objects.* Let us understand that they mock at adhesion or criticism; they need to be *acquired,* that is to say, quite simply, to be examined, to be *seen.* A craftsman's concern for perfection has guided their making and the *auteur* can say of *Repulsion,* without false modesty, as a cabinet-maker would say of a chest: "That is damned well made."

Nothing irritates criticism so much as certainty in an *auteur.* Yet such certainty is reassuring. But *Repulsion* is not a dead star, nor an antiquarian's piece. Once the object has been made, the art of Polanski consists in giving it life: the room stirs, the walls creak, the setting is raised to the status of a character, the object rivals the spectator, substitutes itself for him. From that time certainty draws aside and disquiet acts. One must mistrust the objects of Polanski.—J.-A.F.

CAHIERS—Is *Quand les anges tombent* your first film?

ROMAN POLANSKI—No. It comes after *Deux hommes et une armoire* (and not *L'Armoire* as the *Candide* editors said). Then come *Le Gros et le maigre, Mammifères, Le Couteau dans l'eau, Les Plus Belles Escroqueries* (or *Les Escroqueries,* according to the *Candide* terminology), then *Repulsion* and *Cul-de-Sac* (and not *Le Cul-de-Sac*).

CAHIERS—Was not *Quand les anges tombent* your school diploma?

POLANSKI—Yes, but all the same before that I had made *Deux hommes et une armoire,* which was not exactly a school film, but was produced by the cinema school where I was studying. I do not know what one does now, but, at the time, if someone wanted very much to make a supplementary film, that did not enter into the program of studies but was produced by the school, he could do so, if the scenario was judged interesting. The result was that some people, in place of the three films prescribed for the five years of studies, made four or five. I was one of them.

CAHIERS—This school was somewhat the equivalent of IDHEC (Institut des hautes études cinématographiques)?

POLANSKI — Keeping proportions, after all! Our school did not cause as much of a stir as IDHEC, but people made films there. And indeed, they still make them.

CAHIERS—IDHEC makes more stir than films.

POLANSKI—That, I cannot judge. . . . In any case, we did not have annuals printed with the names of former students . . . And the studies were longer: five years. And one made films there. Then one did editing too (indeed a great deal of it) and everything that follows. One saw many films as well. There were two projection rooms. One, the production room, for looking at rushes, doing the postsynchronization and technical effects; the other, which serves solely for projection of films one needs for one's studies. When one needs films, one asks for them. Each student can ask. If I need to see, let us say *L'Age d'Or,* I make a written request, and in three days the film is there. That is very practical, in my opinion.

CAHIERS—*Quand les anges tombent* seems to have been filmed with no small technical resources. It was the school that provided them for you?

POLANSKI—The school, solely.

CAHIERS—Is it from inclination, or for financial reasons, that you are filming outside Poland? Would you like to work there again?

POLANSKI—You know, I never make plans. I make films. To say it differently, I do what I have a mind to. When I go skiing, I always take the mountains that I like, and in those mountains the slopes that I like. And I do not say to myself: in three days I will go to Courchevel or to Val d'Isère. No, I do not know what I will choose in three days. With films it is the same way. I may someday make a film in Poland. My relations with Poland are excellent and Poland would like very much for me to film there again. For *Le Couteau dans l'eau* was a success, and maybe now they believe in my

* Epinal: city known for the manufacture of religious images.—J.P.

*Repulsion,* Catherine Deneuve and Yvonne Furneaux.

Catherine Deneuv

talent . . . Only, it is very interesting to make a film in London, especially now: it has become a kind of center for European cinema, and with technical means much more exciting than elsewhere. And the actors . . . Nowhere do you find actors such as they have. And then, one cannot film every subject everywhere. Certain subjects are better suited to certain countries than to others. *Repulsion,* for example, is not a Polish subject. That is the way it is. It does not correspond to the climate of the country. I do not mean that there are no neurotics in Poland, but no doubt there are fewer of them; in any case neurosis is not expressed that way. What is the reason? Maybe the solitude is less great there than elsewhere . . . In any case, I wanted to show precisely a certain kind of disorder and not another. Therefore I had to do so where that disorder exists.

CAHIERS—Do you think of filming in America?

POLANSKI—I have had some offers. But that is hazardous . . . The Americans, you know . . . Ultimately, with them, the producer intervenes everywhere. See the scenarios: everything is marked. Absolutely everything. For example a sentence begins with "fade in." What, "fade in"? But maybe I am going to think "cut" in place of "fade in." No. All that gives me a pain in the neck ahead of time. I prefer to work from my scenario and with my ideas.

CAHIERS—Have you French projects?

POLANSKI—I do not make a project for a country. You understand: if I had an idea that suited it, I would make a film in France. Not with French money, since there is none (and even if there were, I do not know whether they would entrust any to me), but I could always have English or American capital —for I have enough credit in those countries. So, if I had a story that fitted it very closely, I would willingly film in France. But neither more nor less than elsewhere. You know: everyone, now, films just about everywhere. It has become too difficult to explain why one films here rather than there. See your people: Godard is filming in Sweden, Resnais as well, and Truffaut in England . . . Cinema has really become an international industry. It is like an architect who builds a bridge. People do not ask him why are you doing it in Yugoslavia? He does it in Yugoslavia because a certain number of reasons, and of all sorts, led to a bridge there.

CAHIERS—It seems that there are more resemblances between *Quand les anges tombent* and *Repulsion,* than there are between those films and your other films. Are you conscious of that or not? And does that answer to anything?

POLANSKI—Yes, I am very conscious of it. But I do not know to what it answers. I know only that there are two things in me. On the one hand, I am very sentimental, romantic, baroque, on the other, I am very rigorous. And when I make a film, I discipline myself a great deal. There are a great many ideas that pass through my mind and that I compel myself to reject in the name of discipline. That answers also to the work I was doing before doing cinema: in painting, in drawing, etc., what I made was very dry, very rigorous. When I filmed *Deux hommes et une armoire,* I tried my best to keep myself within a certain form that I believe proper to the short film. Strict, without dialogue. For I believe that dialogue does not really fit the short film. It is purely out of habit that people put it in. In fact, when you hear something said in a short, the film becomes the starting suggestion of a long one, and actually you expect it to last longer than the compulsory twenty minutes. So, I imposed this on myself: to make a film that would be truly short, therefore to suppress everything that belongs to the spirit of the long.

But, when one has kept oneself to a strict form for some time, one has a mind to free oneself. Would that be only to try another discipline. I had a mind to let my films talk, and for as long as I would like . . . At the same time, my deep nature, which is baroque, requires as well that I give it a free field sometimes. Thus, *Quand les anges tombent* corresponds rather more to my nature than to my discipline. And that corresponds, too, more to what I like to *see* in cinema than to what I like to *make.*

In any case, I like *cinema.* I like to see horror films, westerns, I like to be afraid, to laugh, to cry or to be moved. I like everything that is spectacle, as, too, magic or prestidigitation. So, what I adore I do not make. Since I feel the need to discipline myself, I make something other than what I would have liked to see.

Thus, one can say that *Le Couteau dans l'eau* is more what I like to make after having compelled myself to make it, while *Repulsion* is situated more on the side of what I like to see. Obviously, I had to discipline myself all the same to make it, for I did not intend to lead by any means to any form of horror.

It is normal also that I should be tempted to go in the direction of what I like to see. When one sees something that one likes very much, necessarily, one has a mind to do that. When I saw *The Nutty Professor,* I said to myself that I would like very much to make a film like that. But I know that I will never do it. For, if I begin in that way, I will say to myself at once: yes, but I can allow myself neither this, nor that . . . Discipline will paralyze me completely, and I will no longer know where to go.

CAHIERS—The common point between *Quand les anges tombent* and *Repulsion* is perhaps the enclosed world in which the characters are, and the closed settings where there are things that filmically . . .

POLANSKI — That corresponds to what I like in cinema: atmosphere. And I like too when one forgets, when one shuts oneself up . . . I like to shut myself up. I remember: when I was twelve, fourteen, I liked atmospheres that came from . . . What do I know? . . . Ultimately, enclosed interiors, stifling . . . And liked films like *Lost Weekend, Odd Man Out* . . . Especially *Odd Man Out,* that film unjustly scorned and that I find magnificent, fantastic. A film with atmosphere a little false, artificial, very studio, very "cinema" . . . all that, of course, became trite later, but it led to a fascinating world, precisely because it was not realistic. It was a world created anew.

So, what you are talking about comes first perhaps from that. Then . . . Oh Lord, I let myself be guided a little by . . . let us say instinct. And then, there, I am no judge. If you can analyze that, do so . . . Try . . . But I cannot.

What I like is an extremely realistic setting in which there is something that does not fit with the real. That is what gives an atmosphere. For an atmosphere, all things taken into account, is created with rather simple means. And no doubt it is better created with one mere fly buzzing than by calling to arms some dozens of large-sized animals.

CAHIERS—It seems that *Le Couteau dans l'eau* represents a more open world. What is disquieting in it is what one feels in the heads of the characters . . .

POLANSKI—Yes, that is what I tried to do. But I wonder precisely whether that film is not slightly too realistic for me. Anyway, whether the characters are in interior settings or not, one can always create disquiet. There are other possible devices. Clouds, rain, isolation . . . In any case, I deliberately eliminated as many things as possible in that film. In the end, there remained only three characters. Not even a walk-on in the final shot.

CAHIERS—It seems to us that *Quand les anges tombent* is your most Polish film, at once by the theme, the morbid climate, and also by the colors, the visual aspect, which reminds us of certain forms of Polish animated cinema.

POLANSKI—I knew that in fact I tried to ballast the flashbacks with certain references, among others to Polish naive painting, especially that of the nineteenth century, Jacek Machewski, for example . . . Painters who sometimes had a pre-Raphaelite side. That said, everything is not in the same style, for I pushed other scenes towards sophistication, in the nineteenth century style too.

CAHIERS—And the film was already based on solitude . . .

POLANSKI—In a sense, yes. And it resembles *Repulsion* a little, for that is the study of only one person. She is

moving, that old woman. In life too, she was moving. I found her in a home for the aged. She was ninety or ninety-two . . . I no longer know, but she was old, old . . . So old that she no longer had any wish, and when we paid her, we saw that money no longer meant anything to her. One day, I asked her what she was going to do with the money. She thought it over. She said in the end that she was going to buy sugar. I told her: "But you have much too much money for sugar!" She said: "Oh yes, wait . . ." and she thought. Then she said "All the same I am going to buy sugar." She kept to that! And that too was moving, for one said to oneself that in that institution they must not give them enough sugar for their coffee, the beasts! . . .

However, with us she had sugar. One must say that her jaws trembled enormously. Then, to get her to act, it was necessary to find a device, for one could not persuade her not to tremble, and, anyway, she did not know that she was trembling. Whence, bonbons. An idea of mine. That should give her muscles a certain tension, in any case, the trembling stopped. But at length, necessarily, it came down to stuffing her with bonbons. And at the end, she was almost weeping that one would give her no more.

Yet she was a *person,* that old woman. She had lived life, no doubt she had had lovers . . . Ultimately, there must have been joy, love, death, in her life . . . It is tragic to look that way at old people, with faces like wood, old wood, and say to oneself that there is no longer anything behind the face.

Yet there had been something, and memory returns . . . Thus she had glimmers, the old woman. Things came back, but one understood nothing of them. She saw a costume and that said something to her. She spoke then of the Russians who had come in eighteen hundred and something, but what she said had neither beginning nor end. It was pieces that came back to her. Little pieces of her life that nothing linked together, but all that moved me enormously, for she was exactly the character of the film. And she was always sitting, pensive, never saying anything . . .

CAHIERS—The pessimistic climate of the film (and of *Le Couteau dans l'eau* as well), made of derision and humor, is that not something very Polish too?

POLANSKI—Maybe that is true . . . but it is not for me to say. I am neither critic nor sociologist. Merely cinéaste. And what I want, is to make what I have a mind to, and naturally. As naturally as a fellow dances, if he is a dancer, or as he makes love if he is in love. I do it, and I do not ask myself why. I cannot at the same time do the thing and find the reason why. If I do it, it is that I believe it the right thing to do. A pilot who files from Paris to London does what he thinks is the right thing for flying from Paris to London. And now it is to remain in the clouds, now to pass over or under them. He makes the decision depending on what he thinks is right. No doubt there is a reason, but at the moment, he does not analyse. It is instinct that acts.

CAHIERS—As for us, our aim is not to get you to say whys or hows. Simply, you and your work interest us. So we ask you some questions appropriate to arouse in you some replies or some reactions. The result, whatever it is, interests us.

POLANSKI—Then nothing remains for me but to add to what I was saying a little while ago: that was my reaction.

CAHIERS—If all the people who work at cinema knew precisely the why and the how of everything they do, they would no longer be able to work at cinema.

POLANSKI—Yes. It is like painting. . . . You do not say to yourself all the time: what color to use? Where? Why? You do not say: I am a communist—so I must use red . . .

CAHIERS—On the other hand, when one says something, that necessarily has a relation with what one does. Even if it appears off to the side, it necessarily has a relation . . .

POLANSKI—That is true. Each of us has his opinions, his philosophy, even if he is not conscious of them. Then, everything that one does has a relation with what one feels. When they offered Moses, when he was a baby, the choice between gold and glowing coals . . . You remember? Well. He stretched his hand toward the gold. That corresponded to something, to his intelligence, to his soul, to what he was . . . Happily they pushed his hand toward the coals. And if someone did not push your hand sometimes, well, one would often be cheated . . .

CAHIERS—Then, when you wanted to make *Repulsion,* you pushed your goal towards something that interested you.

POLANSKI—Precisely. And the reason why is that I am sexually obsessed!

CAHIERS—You took your ideas from girls you knew?

POLANSKI—A little. I knew a girl who corresponded a little to that one. But it was not because I knew that girl that I chose that story. I know other girls who correspond to other stories, and if I did not choose to tell them, it it that they give me a pain! So, it is depending on me, not on a girl, that I choose. And then . . . I do not know: I would have to see a psychoanalyst. But after all: I did see some. I showed them my scenario, which they all liked very much, and they said too that I did not need a psychoanalyst because I am perfectly balanced . . . Which grieved me very much, for I always took myself for a madman. Then, to learn that, necessarily, that was a blow to me! . . . For balanced people, what . . . that is all the bankers, the grocers and the people with good intentions, and to be part of that!

CAHIERS—*Repulsion* and *Le Couteau dans l'eau* are original scenarios?

POLANSKI—Everything is original. Guaranteed. But *Repulsion* was written with Brach, and *Le Couteau* with Skolimowski. I like Skolimowski, but in general people barely tolerate him. He is sure of himself, insolent, provoking; people do not like that very much. People like one to be humble, and that one say that one likes Paris, or Warsaw, that one feels the better off for being there and that the people there are so nice . . . Now, Skolimowski has never said things like that. And he still does not. But I like him very much, because he has a great deal of talent. Of course he is arrogant. And so?

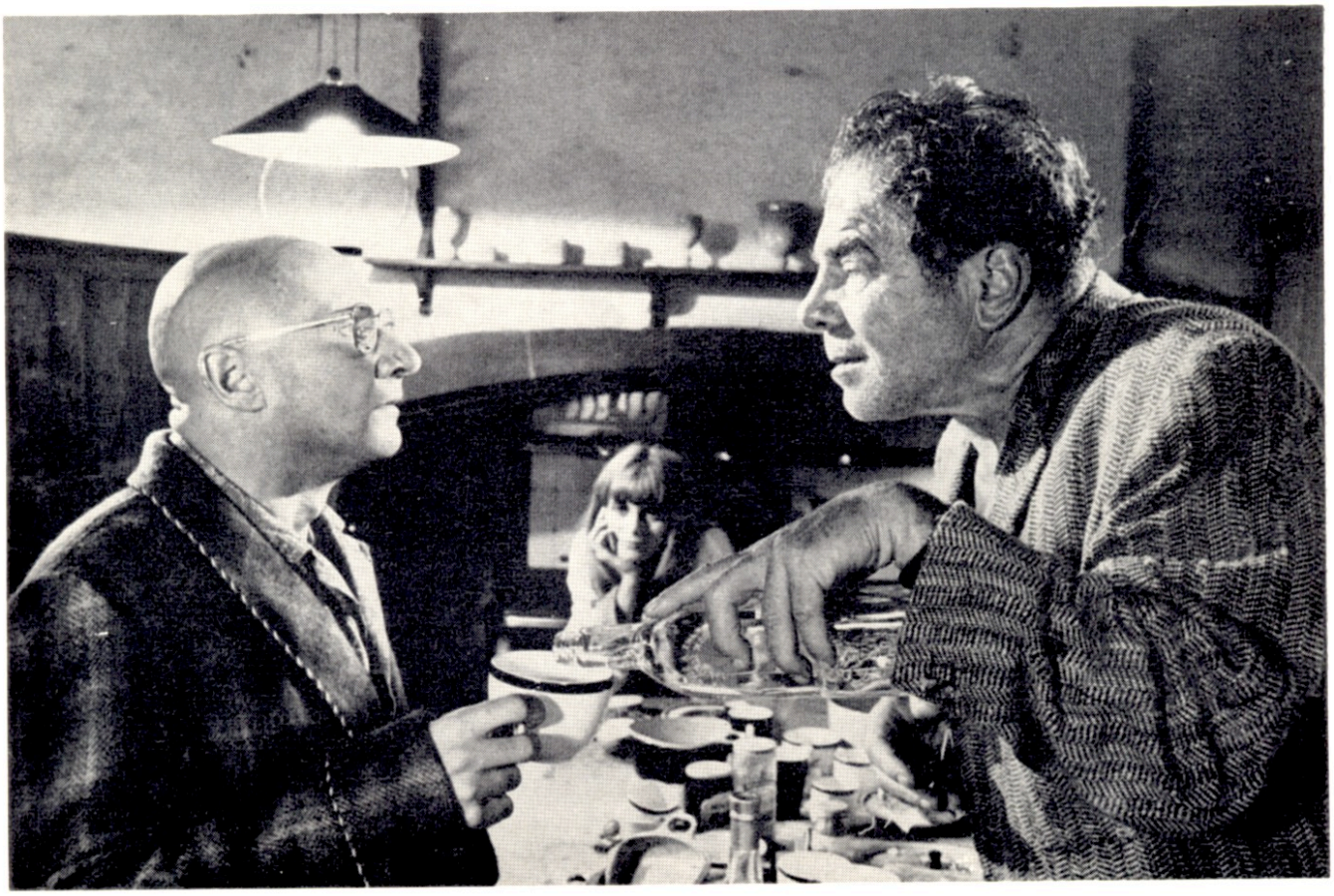
I met him a very long time ago. He had done nothing as yet. And when I say "nothing," it is precisely that he was doing not one damned thing. At that time, he began to write poetry . . . everyone made a joke of it, but it was very good. He succeeded in getting some pamphlets of it published. After that he began to write a play—less good than his poems; then he worked with Andrzejewski—the *auteur* of *Ceindres et Diamants (Ashes and Diamonds)*—with whom he made *Les Innocents charmants.* Everybody says that it was Andrzejewski who dominated him, who did everything, but that is false. Merely by seeing *Le Couteau dans l'eau* you can become conscious of themes characteristic of Skolimowski, of his manner, if you compare it with *Les Innocents.* And Andrzejewski himself, who is my friend, told me that most of the dialogue was Skolimowski's. Obviously, Skolimowski's talent does not please film people, but from the beginning, I was sure that he would do something. For he has nerve, he has . . . Ultimately he has some, what! And in this field, you need it. In every field, besides. And the "shoe-shine" in the *Champs-Elysées?* It is because he has some that he does his work. While the people here . . .— You have only to look at the shoes . . .

For *Le Couteau,* first I wrote the short story—you would say the synopsis—and I showed it to Jerzy Bossak, artistic director of the Kamera Group—where Munk worked; I was his assistant then —he took it and told me to construct a scenario on it. But I needed a writer, someone with whom to elaborate a common language. So I took Skolimowski, and we worked for two weeks. There were people who liked the result very much, but, unhappily, not the people at the Ministry of Culture, who refused it. I almost gave it up, but Bossak said to me: "Why not go back to it? Rewrite it and submit it again. And try to take out all the crap there is in it!" That is what one did.

CAHIERS—Did Skolimowski contribute more on the characters or on the dialogues?

*Knife In The Water*, Zygmunt Malanowicz.

*Cul-De-Sac*, Donald Pleasance, Francoise Dorleac and Lionel Stander.



POLANSKI—Both. I contributed my idea: the three characters. He worked out the dialogues. And worked well. For he is very severe, very organized, and he taught me a great deal. He could spend hours crossing out the unnecessary letters in a dialogue. I tell you: the letters! . . . And it was really then that I saw that, in a dialogue, the "ahs," "but's," "well's," all that, this is really crap. Devices of false dialogues that claim to imitate spoken language. And "but then," and "you said it." A good dialogue does without that kind of clutter. Skolimowski compelled me to organize myself very strictly for the construction, at the same time that he compelled me to give up some ideas that appeared interesting, brilliant, wildly funny, in favor of perfecting that construction. For *Le Couteau,* the construction was very hard. One had to heap up, break to fragments, connect the fragments again. But I saw very quickly that if one did not impose that form on it, the film would be only bla bla . . .

CAHIERS—The dialogues of *Walk-Over* are among the most elliptical and allusive that have ever been heard. Thus, the characters never speak directly about what they are doing . . .

POLANSKI — Obviously, but why would they speak directly, since one does not do that in life?—Except in an interview. For example, you are with a girl with whom you want to make love. Well, you will say to her dodges like "Do you want something to drink yet?" (And the girl replies: "No, I do not want anything to drink.") Good, but what is that? A way of talking about something else. About anything else. For it is always about something else that one speaks.

But Skolimowski does not work only by calculation. He has an enormous verbal memory as well. If someone is to express the wish to go to the cinema, the first thing that one thinks of having him say is: "I would like to go to the cinema this evening." That is precisely the kind of thing that makes Skolimowski jump out of his skin. And he will jump out of his skin saying: he would never talk like that! . . . He would say "What are they playing tonight?" Or: "Are they playing something interesting tonight?" Skolimowski stores up subconsciously the precise way in which people say things. All the difference between a good and a bad dialogist lies in that. A good dialogist remembers these things. A bad does not.

A bad dialogist will *write* the thing. And then he will add, to make it "spoken," some "ohs," some sighs, some "hmm's, plus a "my God" or a "damn" . . . But it is not with "damn's" that one recreates life. It is by a little twist in the order of words, or their meaning, or by a little break, precisely when it is necessary.

Moreover, in life, one is economical of words. Only listen to people talking. You ask for example: "Do you want water or coffee?" The reply is not: "I should like coffee" or "Give me rather some coffee." The reply is "coffee!" That is enough: coffee! And besides, when one reflects on the question, one would hear instead "Tell me, you want water or coffee?" . . . Exact spoken language is that.

CAHIERS—Do you not care more about the realism of the dialogue than about that of the image?

POLANSKI—I care about the realism of everything. True, the more I tell myself unbelievable stories, the more conscious I am that I must render them in a realistic manner. That is what I did in *Repulsion.* And that is the most difficult thing, for it is, at the start, the tritest, the stupidest. I have made a *tour de force,* and I had a mind to make it. But this *tour de force* consisted essentially in that: to render the story plausible, realistic. And I succeeded. For I made it, and it is well made. Damned well made, even! . . . You will say what you please: everything is gross, silly, stupid, and anyone could tell the story in a grotesque manner. That is easy. Only, I told it in a plausible manner, and with a surprising psychological motivation. The result is that it has become true. That was less easy! And I would have liked very much to see the result if it had been made by someone I know . . . Moreover, all the psychiatrists find it true, that film, and are surprised by it. That too is why I am proud of it.

In *Le Couteau,* the realism was different. Everything is based on ambiguity, on little ironies, on a kind of cynicism in half-tones. But it is easy to do that. Made by an amateur, or made on the commercial pattern, in any case, the film would have pleased people. They would still have said that it was simple, remote, discreet . . . With *Repulsion,* at least, they cannot say that, and that is what pleases me. With *Le Couteau,* what was I risking? At worst, boring people. That is not serious. It is usual, it is even respectable. While with *Repulsion,* what I was facing, was the risk of the ridiculous. And that was hard, yes, damnably hard to surmount. And, of course, some French critics found that I *was* ridiculous. Let us not talk about it any more. In any case, the film has left me exhausted.

CAHIERS—What bothers people is the break in the tone. The film begins in the realistic manner, and, abruptly, one plunges into the mental universe of the girl, one meets her phantasms. That is what disconcerts or scandalizes people. For them, the film goes too far.

POLANSKI—Precisely! If I had made the whole film in the tone of the beginning, people would have said that it was a psychological study and entirely . . . With objectivity, with attention to detail, with restraint, and that the *auteur* had denied himself this or that . . . But I do not want to deny myself anything at all . . . And then maybe people would have been bored like wretches at that film, but they would have respected it.

CAHIERS—That is perhaps what the film has in common with other major fantastic films, that way of toppling you suddenly into another universe.

POLANSKI—Yes. One enters another landscape. The landscape of a mind.

CAHIERS—Does it not seem to you that your film has some small things in common with the films of Hitchcock?

POLANSKI—I do not know. That is not for me to judge. I am not so fanatical about Hitchcock as you are. And, anyway, I did not try to work in his way. The film it might perhaps resemble is *Psycho,* but that is not a film I like to such an extent. What I prefer of Hitchcock is *Rear Window* or *Strangers on a Train.* Having said that, maybe there are resemblances . . . And indeed, it must necessarily resemble Hitchcock slightly, even if I did not intend it and had nothing to do with it, for it starts from a case a little like some of those he has dealt with.

CAHIERS—What do you like in fantastic cinema?

POLANSKI—I like all the horror films. They make me laugh like crazy. I like especially *Peeping Tom* and *The Haunting* of Wise.

CAHIERS—And apart from the fantastic?

POLANSKI—I see many things. I like all cinema. What I like least, is blabla and pseudo-intellectual gimmickery. Let us say that I like action, and that I like particularly Orson Welles, Kurosawa, Fellini, who are my three favorites. To be specific I especially like *Citizen Kane, The Seven Samurai, Throne of Blood, The Hidden Fortress* —extraordinary!— and *8 ½.* There is another Japanese film as well that I like tremendously. I came out from it exhausted, on my hands and knees! It is *Fires on the Plain* of Ichikawa. Among French films, I especially liked *Les Carabiniers*—which is what I prefer of Godard. How could the French critics drop such a film? And, too, *A bout de souffle, Alphaville, Les Quatre Cents Coups, Jules et Jim, Tirez sur le pianiste.* I also like what Bresson does very much Not everything but almost. Especially *Pickpocket* and *Jeanne d'Arc.*

CAHIERS—Have you often been the assistant of anyone else than Munk, and did that teach you much?

POLANSKI—I have worked most in short films. And I do not think that I was a good assistant. As to learning . . . Everything teaches you something. And that does not depend on the teacher but on the learner.

CAHIERS — That is not very French.** One can say "That does not depend on the master but on the stu-

** The *Cahiers* interviewers and Polanski had been using the verb apprendre, which means both "to teach" and "to learn." Polanski played on the ambiguity by constructing his own words, *appreneur,* for teacher, and *apprentisseur,* for learner.—J.P.

dent . . ." After all, in French one does not have the right to form words like that.

POLANSKI—But if I want to use the word *apprendre?* That is what I wanted to do. And I said it just as I wanted to say it.

CAHIERS—One does not have the right. It is not in the provisions of the Academies . . .

POLANSKI—However it is very practical . . . After all, nothing is in the provisions of the Academies . . .

CAHIERS—And your next film?

POLANSKI — After *Repulsion,* already there has been *Cul-de-Sac,* which has not yet been shown.

CAHIERS—Is that in the line of *Repulsion?*

POLANSKI—Have I a line? If so, it must be rather . . . It is Einstein who said that there was no straight line. Then, I believe that mine is completely curved.

CAHIERS—What is the story of *Cul-de-Sac?*

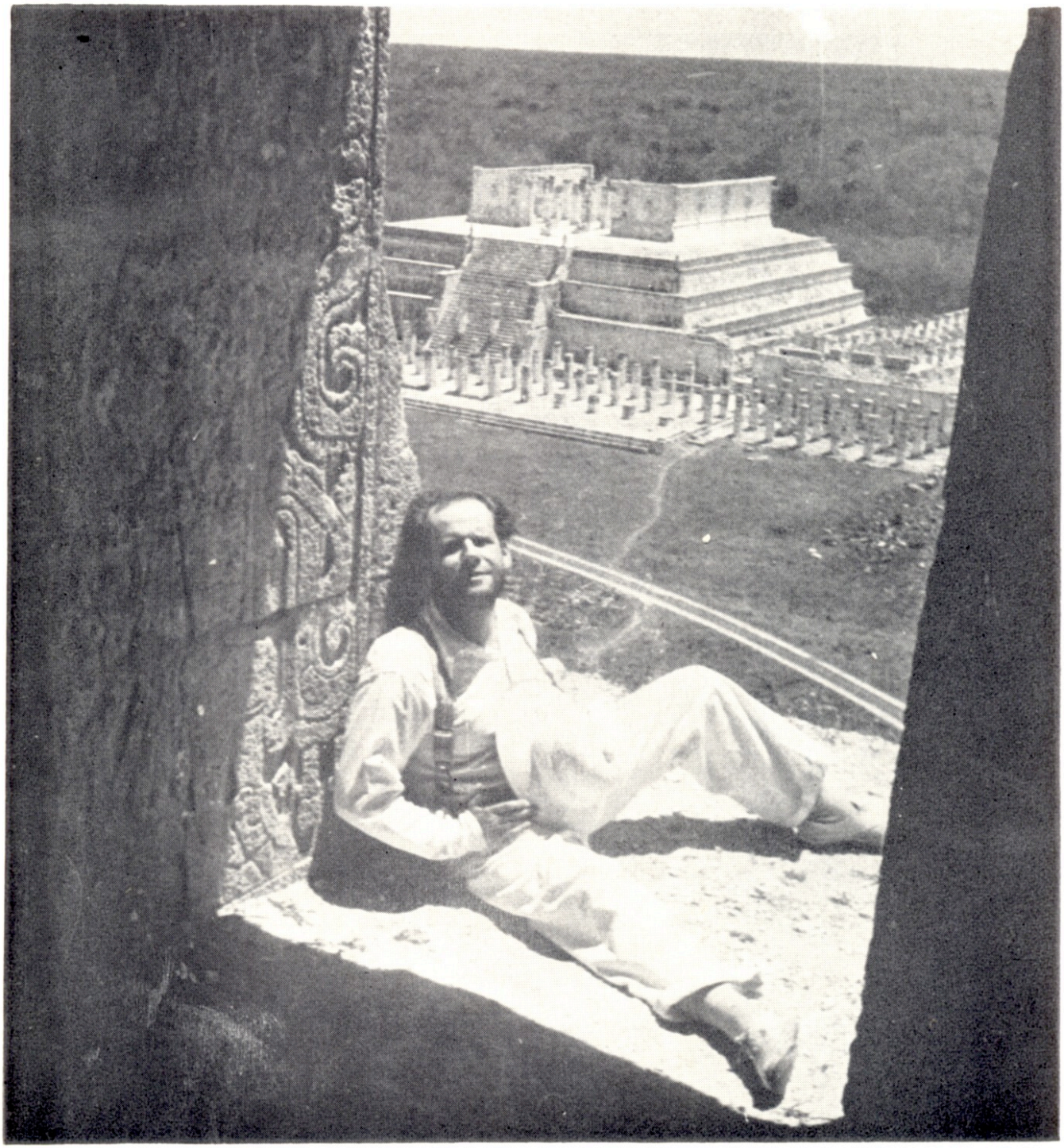
POLANSKI—There is a couple—again!—a man about forty-five (Donald Pleasance, who acts in *The Caretaker*) and his wife, Francoise Dorleac. They live in a kind of chateau, on a little island. Thereupon, an old gangster arrives, wounded; he enters their house to telephone. He calls someone who is to come for him, and he remains in the house about twenty-four hours, waiting for the character in question. The film describes the relations between the couple and the guest. A triangle, if you wish, but not based on love. There is love all the same, but between the husband and the wife. But it is difficult to tell a story apart from its film.

CAHIERS—After that, February 15th to be exact, I begin a film entitled *Le Tueur de vampires.* A comedy that I have written with Brach. I am going to shoot the exteriors in a chateau in the Dolomites. I believe that it will be wildly funny. (Interview taped.)

Donald Pleasance, Francoise Dorleac, Roman Polanski during the shooting of *Cul-De-Sac.*

# *Organic Unity And Pathos In The Composition Of Potemkin*

*By S. M. Eisenstein*



Eisenstein in Mexico

When one speaks of *Potemkin*, one generally notes two qualities: the organic harmony of the composition as a whole and the pathos.

Organic *unity* and *pathos*.

Let us take these two most striking qualities of *Potemkin* and endeavor to show by what means they have been achieved, above all in the realm of composition. We shall examine the organic unity of the composition of the film as a whole. We shall study pathos in the episode in which it attains its maximum tragic intensity, in the "Odessa Steps" sequence, in order to derive thereby analogous conclusions about the remainder of the work.

Our study shall be devoted also to determining how the processes of composition have contributed to the organic unity and pathos of the theme. We could as well study, chapter by chapter, how these elements are realized in the play of the actors, in the development of the subject, in the gamut of lights and colors, in the treatment of the landscape, in the treatment of crowd scenes, etc. However, we are concerned here only with the specifically delineated problem of the *structure of the work;* we would hardly pretend that what follows is an exhaustive analysis of the film.

But in a work that is organically one, the elements that nourish the whole penetrate each detail. One and the same law pervades, not only the ensemble and all of its elements, but each sphere called upon to participate in the creation of the whole. The same basic principles give life to all the spheres, coloring each one of their own qualitative particularities. And it is in this sense alone that one may speak of the work's organic unity, for organism is understood here, as Engels defined it in the "Dialectic of Nature," as *superior unity*.

These considerations lead us, at the outset, to the first theme of our study: the question of organic unity of structure in *Potemkin*.

Let us try to approach the question starting from the hypothesis that the work's organic unity, as well as the sensation of organic unity given by the work, must be apparent where the compositional law of the work conforms to the structural laws of natural organic phenomena as presented by Lenin: *"The specific exists only as a function of the general. The general does not exist except in the specific, for the specific."*

In a first example, we shall examine this law from a static point of view and, in a second example, from a dynamic point of view. In the first example, we shall speak of the terms and of the *proportions* of the film's order. In the second, of the *development* of its construction.

*Potemkin* is offered as a chronicle of happenings, and it operates as a drama.

The secret of this resides also in the fact that the development of that chronicle is ruled by the laws of tragic composition in its most strictly codified form, that of the tragedy in five acts.

Taken as naked facts, the events develop in five acts of tragedy. And these facts were chosen and logically assorted in such a way as to correspond to the exigency of classical tragedy that Act III differ from Act II, Act V differ from Act I, etc.

This form of composition, which has proven itself in the course of the centuries, is found to be underlined again in our drama in which each act has its title.

Let us briefly recall these five acts.

Act I: Men and Verses

Exposition. Situation on the battleship. The rotten meat. Fermentation of spirits in the crew.

Act II: The Drama of the Quarter deck

"Everyone on the bridge!" The sailors refuse to eat the soup. The tarpaulin scene. "Brothers!" Refusal to shoot. The revolt. The officers over-board.

Act III: The Blood Cries Vengeance

The fog. Vakoulintchouk's body at the Port of Odessa. Funeral Lamentation. Meeting. The red flag is raised.

Act IV: The Odessa Steps

The population fraternizes with the battleship. The yawls filled with provisions. The fusillade on the Odessa steps.

Act V: The Passing of the Fleet

Night of waiting. The fleet in view. In the engine room. "Brothers!" The fleet refuses to fire.

From the point of view of the action, the episodes of each part of the drama differ absolutely, but a double refrain runs through them and, so to speak, cements them.

In "the drama of the Quarterdeck," the little group of rebel sailors, a miniscule part of the battleship, cries "Brothers!" when faced with the rifles of the firing squad. The rifles are lowered. Organically, the whole battleship is with them, it is with the rebel sailors.

In "the passing of the fleet," the whole rebel battleship, a miniscule part of the fleet, hurls the same apostrophe, "Brothers!", faced with the maws of the cannons of the fleet that has been sent out against the mutinous vessel. The cannons are lowered. Organically, the whole fleet is with the *Potemkin*.

From an organic cell of the battleship to the organic whole of the battleship; from an organic cell of the fleet to the organic whole of the fleet; thus the sentiment of revolutionary brotherhood is developed as a crescendo in the theme. And we find it again in the order of the work, which has for its theme the brotherhood of workers and the revolution.

Just as, in the interior of the film, this sentiment of brotherhood flies from the rebel battleship to the coast, in the same way the work, above the head of bourgeois

for the first part and 6.18 for the second). And the caesuras are found to be placed according to an analogous rule in the interior of each part.

But, without a doubt, the most curious thing is that in *Potemkin* the golden section is observed not only when the movement is at zero, when the action reached its lowest point, but we find it again at the point of apogee as well. This point of apogee is the moment when the red flag is hoisted on the ship. And the red flag is placed at the exact point determined by the golden section! But, this time, you must calculate *starting from the end*, using the ratio 3:2, going towards the cleavage shot that separates the first three parts from the last wo, *at the end of the third act*, the red flag figuring in this way at the beginning of the fourth part.

Thus, not only each part considered separately, but the film as a whole with its two points of culmination, that of the total cessation of movement and that of the most frenzied flight, rigorously follows the rue of proportionality, the rule of the golden section.

Now let us study the second key element in *Potemkin*: pathos and the compositional processes by which the pathos of the theme becomes the pathos of the film.

We shall not be stopped here by the nature of what constitutes pathos "as such." We shall restrain ourselves and consider the work's pathos in terms of its perception by the spectator, more exactly its effect on the spectator.

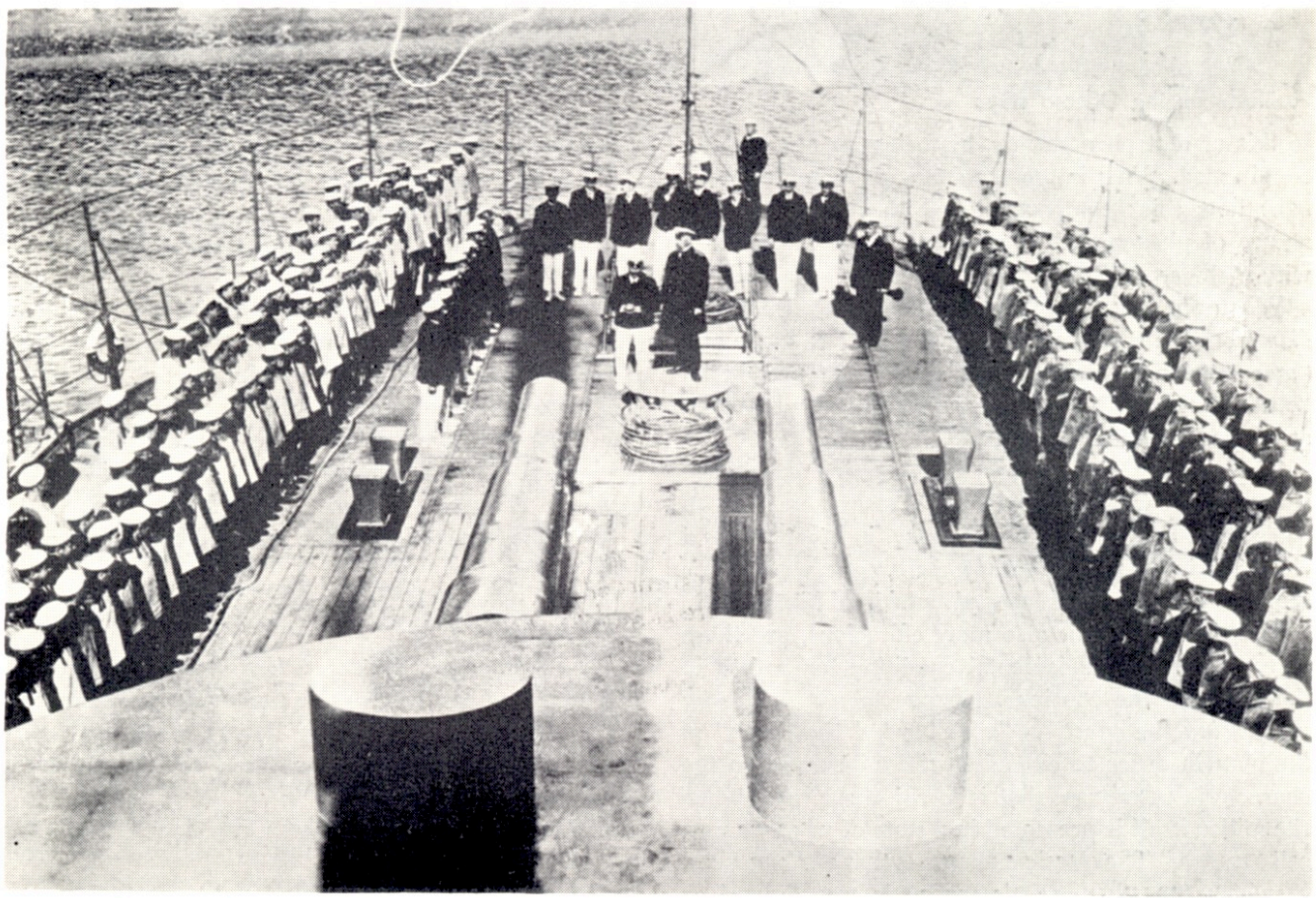
Pathos is what most profoundly awakes in the spectator a sentiment of impassioned enthusiasm.

A work of pathos must observe throughout in the way it is ordered, the condition of violent explosions of action and that of continuous passage to new qualities.

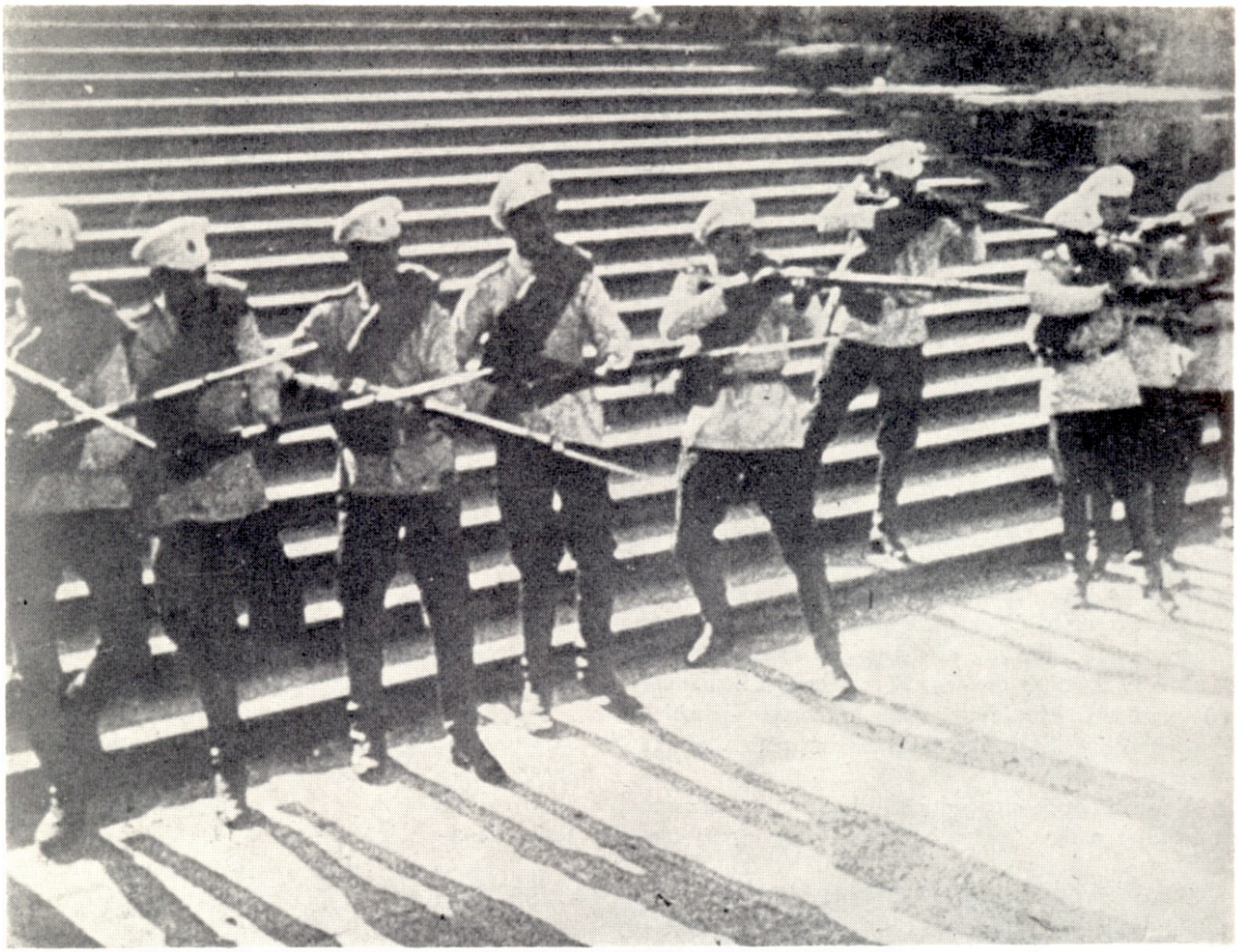
It is self-evident that, in a work of art, one and the same fact may be treated in all manner of forms: from the cold official report to the authentic hymn of pathos. What interests us here is the particularities of the processes that allow an event to be raised to the level of pathos.

Incontestably, this is conditioned at the beginning by the comportment of the *auteur* with regard to the material to be treated. But the composition, in the sense that we understand it, is an architecture that equally defines the comportment of the auteur with respect to the material treated and the degree of the work's effect on the spectator.

Also, in the present article, we shall not interest ourselves in the "nature" of pathos in this or that phenomenon "in itself," nature being always socially relative. And no more shall we stop at the nature of pathos *in the comportment of the auteur* in relation



The Battleship *Potemkin*



**Fusillade on the Odessa steps**

to this or that phenomenon, his being no less socially conditioned. What interests us is a very limited problem: how this "comportment" with respect to "the nature of phenomena" is realized by the composition within the conditions of an architecture of pathos.

When one wants to obtain the maximum emotional *élan* from the spectator, when one wants to make him "step outside of himself," the work must present an "outline" that he has only to follow in order to arrive at the desired state.

The simplest "prototype" for obtaining this imitative reaction will be, of course, a character who, on the screen, acts in a state of ecstasy, in other words a character in the grip of pathos, a character who, in one sense or another, "has stepped outside of himself."

More complex, but also more efficacious, are those cases where the fundamental condition for pathos in the work — the continual passage to a new quality *reinforcing* the *effect* — "goes beyond the limits" of the man in order to extend to the milieu and to the character's entourage, that is to say those cases when the milieu itself is presented in a state of what we may call "trance." The classic example is that of *King Lear*, in which the protagonist's frenzy is transfigured as the frenzy of nature.

Let us come back, however, to our example, to the "Odessa steps" sequence.

How are the events presented and grouped in this scene?

Leaving aside the exaltation of the masses and the beings represented, we are going to study the development of pathos in one particular aspect, that of the structure and composition: the curve *of the movement*.

First you have a chaos (close-up) of bodies rushing forward. Then a *general shot* of bodies still rushing about chaotically. Then this *chaos* becomes the *rhythmic* hammering of the soldiers' boots as they descend the steps.

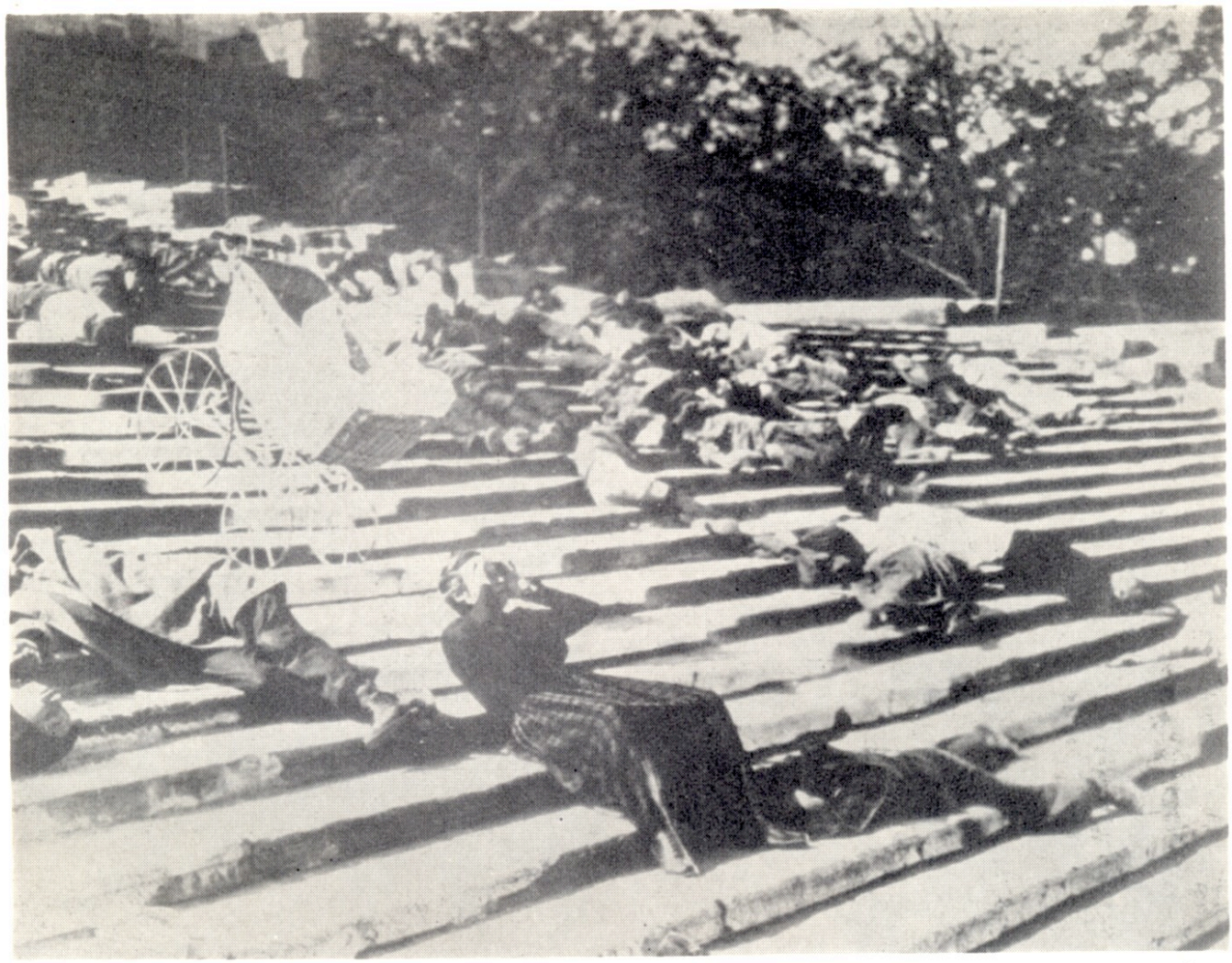
The movement accelerates. The rhythm becomes precipitous!

At the apogee, the *descending* movement is suddenly reversed and becomes an *ascending* movement: the rush of the masses (going down) gives way to the *slow solemn* walk of the mother, *all alone*, carrying her dead child (going up).

*The mass*. The rushing of a lava flow. *Going down*.

And, suddenly:

A figure, *all alone*. Solemn slowness. *Going up*.



**The rolling baby carriage as "a new mode of exposition."**

This lasts only a second. And, again, an *inverse leap of decent.*

The rhythm is precipitious. The movement accelerates.

Abruptly, *the flight of the crowd* gives way to the falling baby carriage. It is not only an acceleration of movement. *We jump to a new mode of exposition*: from the figurative, we pass to the physical, which modifies the representation of snowballing.

Also, from *close-ups* we jump to *general shots.* From one form of movement (men who run, who fall, who gallop) to the following stage of this theme of movement (the rolling baby carriage). From *descending* movement to *ascending* movement. From *numerous* rifles to *one* shot from *one* of the battleship's guns.

We leap continuously from one dimension to another, from on quality to another, and, in the final analysis, it is not an isolated episode (the baby carriage) but the method as a whole of showing the complete event that changes all in all: from a *narrative style,* we leap with the roaring (bounding) lions to an allegorical mode of composition.

These passages by successive bounds from one quality to another, that mount in intensity as well as dimension, rigorously reproduce the angle of the steps on which the action is carried by successive rebounds towards the bottom.

The theme of pathos that is developed impetuously on the steps gives pathos to the fusillade, also inspires the ordering of the plastic composition and the rhythm of events from end to end.

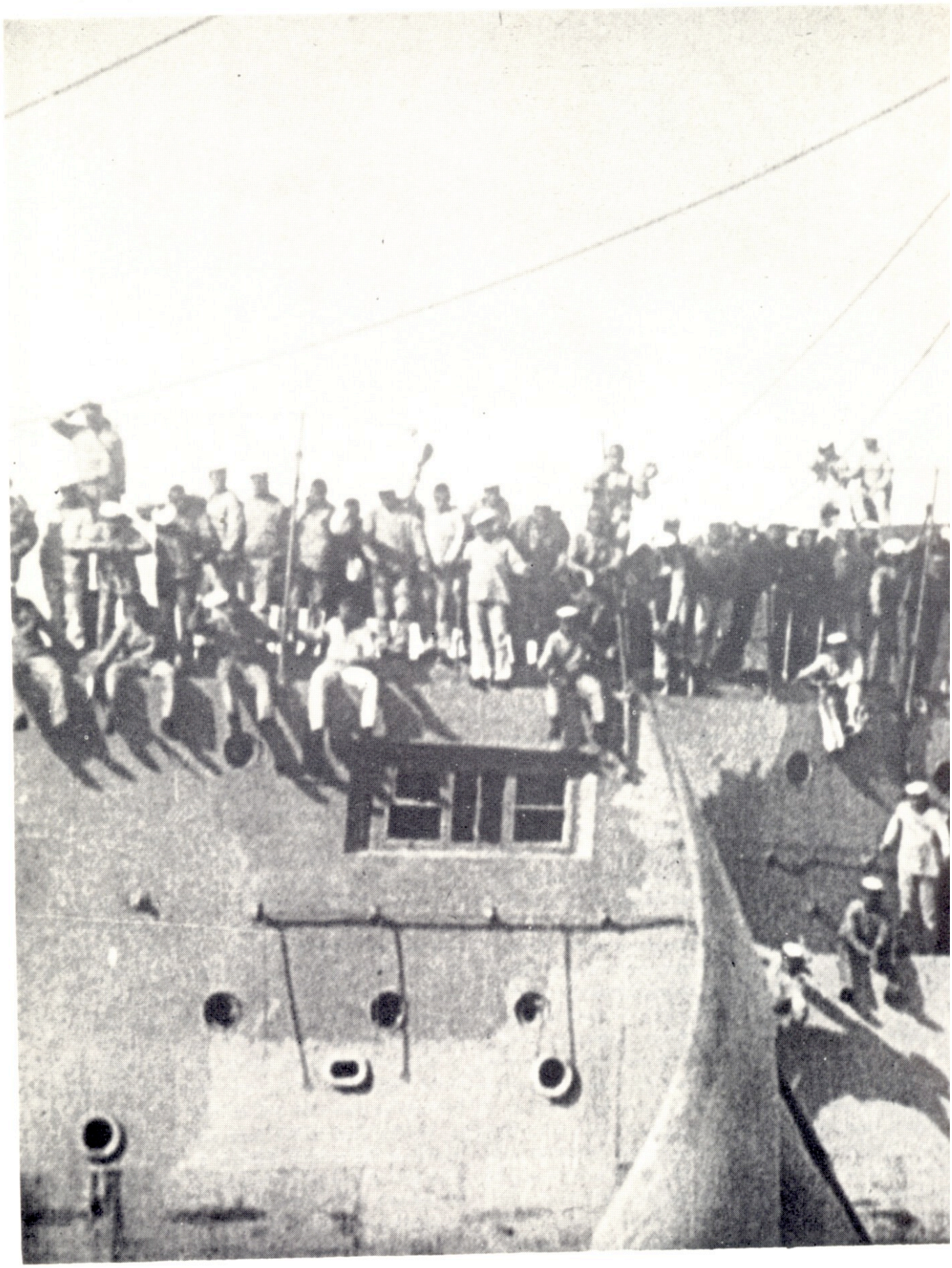
Is the "Odessa steps" sequence in this respect organic? Doesn't it clash with the general style of the architecture? Not at all. The characteristic traits of the work of pathos are here merely carried to their point of culmination; the episode as well, with its tragic aspect, constitutes a point of culmination of the film as a whole.

This is the place to recall what we have just said about the nature of the two sections into which the five acts of *Potemkin* are divided, in conformity with the golden section. We have noted that, throughout, once past the caesura there is a "rebounding" of the once past the caesura there is a "rebounding" of the change to a new quality is, in each case, the maximum *of possible change*: it is, in each case *an inverse leap.*

Thus it becomes apparent that in all of the key elements of the composition we continually meet the

fundamental formula of ecstasy: a leap of the action "*outside of itself,*" which is a change of quality and, most often, an inverse leap.

Here too—as with our recent discussion of the



Brothers!

golden section, of the establishment of proportions—it is in the *movement* itself of the work that the

"secret" of its organic unity is discovered. The passage by successive bounds from one quality to another is not only the formula for *increase* but also the formula for *progress*, which leads us not as isolated "vegetables" enslaved by the *natural laws of evolution* but as individuals in a collective, in a society, consciously participating in its progress, for we know that such leaps occur in the social scheme also. It is *revolutions* that make for social progress.

We might say that here, underlined for the third time, is *Potemkin's* organic unity. The jump that characterizes the structure of each link of the composition, as well as the composition of the film as a whole, translates as the key element of the theme: revolutionary explosion. And this is one of the leaps by which the continuous chain of social progress is maintained.

The order of any work, as well as the order of all works of pathos, may be defined in this way: the order of pathos makes us *intensely relive the becoming and the accomplishment of development* as it unfolds in conformity with the dialectic laws.

We, and we alone of all the inhabitants of the globe, have received a share in the happiness of living step by step, in its real accomplishment, each moment of irrepressible becoming of the greatest achievements in the realm of world social progress. And more, we have received a share in collectively cooperating in the building of a new history of humanity.

To live a moment of history is the most sublime pathos in the sense of our being welded to this becoming, in the sense of our progression as a bloc and of our collective participation in the struggle.

Such is pathos in life. And such is its reflection in works of pathos. Born of the pathos of the theme, the arrangement of the composition repeats here the single, fundamental law, in conformity to which all organic, social and other development is achieved in the universal becoming. And it is by our communion with this law, of which our consciousness constitutes the reflection, that we arrive at experiencing the flame of the highest emotion: pathos.

One question still remains: by what practical means can the artist arrive at these formulas of composition?

These formulas are found again unmistakably in each successful work of pathos. But they cannot be arrived at by a *priori* arrangement. Knowledge and facility are not sufficient.

A work will become organically one and be saturated with pathos only when its theme, its material and its idea are welded organically and indissolubly to the thoughts, life and being of the *auteur*.

Then, and then alone, there will be a true unity to the work. And this will take its place in the chain of natural and social phenomena by virtue of being a link comparable to the others, by virtue of being an independent phenomenon.

# *Debasement Of The Art Of Montage*

## *By Henri Colpi*

It is a well known fact that montage is the most fundamental and unique means by which the cinema has succeeeded in attaining such a high degree of effectiveness.

The Eisenstein-Alexandrov-Pudovkin manifesto of 1929 was provoked by the coming of sound, and it attempted to save montage with a theory of counterpoint. Sound had badly damaged the art of montage.

When the brothers Lumière were shooting their first films, they simply stationed their camera by the entrance of a factory in Lyons, or in front of an oncoming train in a railroad station. The crank stopped when the film band ran out. The same with the *Feeding Baby*.

But soon there was a need for a more complex scenario. The action had to be recorded in two or more places, and the camera had to be reloaded. This led to the first use of *editing*: it was necessary to join the two pieces which were shot in different locations and on two different pieces of film.

Montage appeared with the discovery of the close-up and the possibilities of placing the camera closer or further away from the actors. It was no longer a question of filming two different scenes. One also had to determine the length of each scene, according to its own action and to the action of the entire film.

*Rhythm*: a new word was born. The magic word, the Sesame-word of both the "art" film and the "commercial" film. If a film failed, it did so because of a faulty rhythm. If a film seemed too long—it again lacked rhythm. And the opposite: a good film had a good rhythm; a fast moving and fast paced movie was a movie with a good rhythm. There was the fast rhythm of a comedy, the medium rhythm of a Carné or a Ford, or the slow rhythm of a Dreyer.

To define what rhythm meant, the dictionaries did not help much. It was closer to the Greek word meaning "number," or "cadence." The rhythm of a film was its cadence, its allegro, its moderato, its andante. But although each film asked for its own proper rhythm, the exact laws of cadence did not exist. Both scientific analysis and mathematical exactness failed when confronted with the sensation of rhythm. It was a matter of impression, feeling.

The notion of rhythm had annexed the Seventh Art on the day it annexed the concept of movement; the movements of the camera, the parallel actions, such as the horse ride, moved the emotions. And particularly since the day it annexed the concept of music. In 1920, a train moved on its iron rails; its conductor suddenly went insane; the speed grew; a frantic ride began. The rails. The man. The engine. The images became shorter and shorter. The crescendo grew to a maximum intensity. The shots were reduced to a few frames, a fraction of a second. Then, again, the shots, slowly extended. Decrescendo. The train stopped. When one watched *La Roue* one easily saw its resemblance to a musical piece. Was not Honegger's *Pacific 231* constructed that way?

In an amazing performance with a pair of scissors, Abel Gance in his own way confirmed the idea of montage which the Soviets later raised to the heights of an institution. The Odessa steps, or the cream-separator sequences, consisted of well measured shots and pieces of shots. The chronometer and the metronome established themselves in the editing rooms, which became known as the true laboratories where the silent film produced its "Golden Age."

The voice of a crooner, Al Jolson, threw art and the commerce of the movies into a panic. Styles and methods developed. The montage, because of the complexities of sound shooting, was soon taken away from the director, and found itself in the hands of the editing technician, the editing specialist. Sound conquered the image.

In the beginning of the sound era, sound and image were registered on the same band of film. This made for a return to the Lumière one-shot-scenes technique. This was further enforced by the restrictions of the camera's mobility because of the microphone.

The problems of montage were suddenly reduced to a minimum. Only after the invention of the separate sound track, and the freeing of the camera from sound, did the camera regain its freedom of movement. Slowly, montage regained its *raison d'être*. However, not so its creative function.

This creative function of montage, as we know, was perfectly illustrated by the now famous experiment of Kuleshov. He used the same close-up of Ivan Mosjoukine to achieve three different impressions: desire, hate and gluttony. This he did by showing first a close-up cut to a nude woman; then to a man being murdered; and finally to a festive table. It was the relationship of the two images, their rapport that pointed up the significance and the emotion. Thus, montage could create *effects*. Today, montage has practically lost this power. The word explains everything, it slows down the progression, it waters down the emotional impact of the image. The camera is no longer concerned with making the objects or the faces

speak; today the camera stays with the actor who goes through the lines, it hangs on to him. The sacrosanct rhythm is no longer being created externally, by montaging pieces of film, but internally, by the rhythm of acting and the *mise en scène*. Internal rhythm has replaced external rhythm; the editor has only to read and obey the style and the rhythm of the direction, and to make his cuts and splices accordingly. If a film has a slow pace, he cuts it into big chunks. If a film is fast, as for instance, Orson Welles' *Mr. Arkadin* — a film with a most mad and unpredictable pace—he cuts it into small chunks. Not because he is making a montage but only because he is following the director's pace.

In short: since the coming of sound, the film is no longer constructed by means of montage. The scissors are now confronted with a limitation imposed by the plot and the dialogue. The editing techniques are those of the pre-montage. The length of the shot is dictated not by the necessary rhythm, but by the text. To introduce some "variety," to make it "move" faster, as the saying goes, the editors and the directors resort to action-reaction shots, they chop the film into shorter pieces. Since 1940, the discovery of the "deep focus" has brought back the long shot, minimizing again the number of shots, and minimizing the role of external montage. The coming of color did not help to shorten the scenes at all. When the screen enlarged itself, the Cinemascope brought with it a preference for long shots. The same with Cinerama. As for the film, *Rope*, it was conceived as one single shot! . . .

So, what is happening to montage? Soon there will be no place for even the moviola and the splicer. The logic of the narration and the imperative of the spoken word control and determine the succession and the duration of the shots; they prevent any other aspects of the creative use of montage. The possibilities of montage are further minimized by the use of multiple sound tracks. Stereophonic sound, with its three or four separate sound tracks, demands from the editor extreme care as to where he will apply scissors and glue.

What then is the editor but a splicing specialist? And we are not exaggerating. Still, we often hear the phrase: "it all will be fixed during the editing." And we still speak about badly and properly edited films. What do the editors do? They go through millions of feet of film which a more selective director—one who still thinks about his editors, for instance, Chaplin—gives them to choose from, a series of different takes, and then they select the usable footage therefrom. They face a choice of several different construction possibilities for the same scene. Montage, then, becomes a problem of proper classification of footage, and of the proper selection of the best shot or best take. Classification and Choice. But as for the art of montage—there is no longer any question about that.

Not that it has completely disappeared. It has found its refuge in the short film. Here the film is still made in the editing room. Here the image has not become the slave of the sound track. Here the image governs sound, it determines the length of the music, of the sounds and of the text.

The creative function of montage, then, survives and continues to exist in the short film. Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog*, for instance, is one of the best examples of the living art of montage.

# *Montage, Mon Beau Souci*

## *By Jean-Luc Godard*

. . . We'll save it in editing . . . Though true of James Cruze, Griffith, Stroheim, this maxim was hardlly any longer true of Murnau, Chaplin, and becomes irretrievably untrue with sound film. Why? Because in a film such as *October* (and still more so with *Que Viva Mexico*) editing is above all the supreme touch of direction. The two cannot be separated without rhythm and melody. *Elena*, just as *Mr. Arkadin*, is a model of editing because each in its class is a model of directing . . .

"We will save it all in editing," is, then, a typical producer's statement. The most that good editing will bring to a film otherwise devoid of all interest is precisely, first, the impression of having been directed. It will restore to the lifelike the ephemeral grace which the snob and amateur disregard; or it will transform chance into destiny. Is there greater praise than that the public rightly confuses editing with cutting?

If to direct is a glance, to edit is a beating of the heart. To anticipate is the characteristic of both. But what one seeks to foresee in space, the other seeks in time. Suppose you see an attractive girl in the street. You hesitate to follow her. A quarter of a second. How to convey this hesitation? The question: "How to approach her?" will be answered for you by directing. But in order to make explicit this other question, "Am I going to love her?" you will have to grant importance to the quarter of a second during which both arise. It is possible, then, that it is no longer up to the direction of an idea, or its abrupt bursting forth

in the course of narration, but to the editing. When? Each time that the *situation* calls for it; be it in the middle of a scene, when a shock effect demands an arabesque; or be it that the basic continuity of the film requires, as the scene changes, superimposing the description of a character upon that of the plot. The above exemplifies the fact that to speak of directing is automatically to speak, yet and again, of editing. When the effects of editing carry it off in effectiveness over the effects of the direction, the beauty of the latter will find itself redoubled; its charm will consist in disclosing the unforseen by an operation analogous to that in mathematics which makes an unknown entity evident.

Those who yield to the temptations of editing also yield to the appeal of the short scene. How? By making the glance the major part of his game. To splice on a look this is practically the definition of editing, its supreme ambition at the same time as its subjugation to directing. It is in fact to bring out the soul under the mind, the passion behind the scheme, to make the heart prevail over intelligence through destroying the notion of space in favor of that of time. The renowned sequence of the cymbals in the new version of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* is the best proof of it. To know how long one can make a scene last is already a part of the problems of shooting. A very cleverly directed film gives the impression of having disposed entirely of directing. Cinematographically speaking, on the same subject, the battle in *Alexander Nevsky* yields none of it to *The Navigator*. On the whole, to give the impression of duration through movement, of a close-up through long shot, should be one of the aims of directing and the reverse paradox one of the aims of editing. One improvises, one invents in front of the moviola just as one does on the set. Cutting a camera movement in quarters can reveal this movement more effectively than keeping it as it has been filmed. An exchange of glances, to take the same example as above, can only be expressed with enough pungency, when necessary, through clever editing. When in Balzac's *Une Ténébreuse Affaire*, Peyrade and Corentin break open the door to the Sain-Cygne living room, their first notice is of Laurence: "We'll have you, my little one"—"You won't know a thing." The proud young woman and the spies of Fouché guessed at first glance that this was their most deadly enemy. This extraordinary exchange of looks, a simple reversed shot, by its very restraint, is more powerfully expressive than any premeditated zoom or pan. What it is trying to convey is how long the struggle will last — then, on what grounds it will unfold. Editing, therefore, at the same time that it denies, announces and prepares the way for directing; they are interdependent on each other. To direct is to plot, and one speaks of a plot as well or poorly knit.

That is why to say that a director owes it to himself to supervise closely the editing of his film is the equivalent of saying the editor owes it to himself to forsake the odor of glue and film for the heat of spotlights. Wandering on the set he will see exactly where the interest of a scene lies, what the strong or weak moments of it are, what the motives for changing scenes are and therefore he won't be tempted to cut them solely on the basis of harmonizing movement, the A B C of editing, I admit, but on the strict condition that it is not used in too mechanical a fashion — as for example Marguerite Renoir, who often gives the impression of cutting a scene at the moment when it was going to become interesting. And on the way, he will make the first step from editor to film-maker.

Jean-Luc Godard: *Contempt*, Fritz Lang, Brigitte Bardot, Michel Piccoli, Jack Palance, and Godard.

# *Age Of Gold (Bunuel), Age Of Iron (Rossellini)*

## *notes on politics and cinema*

### *By Michel Mardore*

The Frenchman votes *en masse*. Since power is personalized, the hexagonal citizen is interested in politics again. It enters the order of things. Public affairs at last have champions, who come to relay a *Tour de France* worn out even to its bicycle tires. And, indeed, one might say, stars, and we would be at the heart of our problem. For film criticism, intoxicated by the presidential race, sets itself to the taste of the day. People fling out again the old labels "Left" and "Right"; they want at any price to be counted. They insult the lumpkins and the cretins, who claim to be apolitical. With a look into the wings at the tendency of you know who. As if what concerns cinema had ever been apolitical. It is necessary to dispose of a ridiculous legend that has never corresponded in the slightest to reality.

By its essence the cinematographic image, representation of life, is as "engaged" as life itself, that is to say, totally. But does that mean that the image and its critical commentary must be subject to the caprices of the most partial anecdote, to the minute contingencies that inspire the opinions of this or that category of individuals at this precise hour of time? To call for a little dignity is not to sink into the reactionary turpitudes of the apolitical—in the sense in which the latter would disguise a shameful conservatism—but to treat with the respect that they merit the affairs of the City. When the City becomes planetary, such a withdrawal is enjoined, not for prudence, but for honesty. Of course, the attitude recommended here is "of the Left," like all the intellectual proceedings in fashion in this country. Besides, one hardly sees what would be " of the Right," while the opposite logomachy costs nothing. Only maniacs and agitators still dare to claim an ideology of the Right. One Frenchman out of twenty (and so one *cineaste* out of twenty, one critic out of twenty, etc.) claims this opinion. That means that all the others, be it 95 percent, are of the Left—Father Ubu would have said more or less. I mean by that, not that what I am saying is the truth, but that the Right does not sell. Now, what does one ask of anyone and anything, in the second half of the twentieth century? That it sell well. That is the only criterion, and one has never seen so many young Rastignacs choose Progressivism in the hope of winning more quickly the Triumph or the Jaguar of their dreams. The Left then sells very well. One would have to be mad to support opinions contrary to the prevailing demagogy. Every enterprise of the Right is doomed to failure. If one appeals to the interest of people, it will be obvious that most of them wil choose to fly to the aid of victory. In the image of the Opposition candidate in the last presidential elections. He had started out in the Action Francaise, had taken an oath to Marshal Petain, had received the Frankish battle axe, agreed, everything you please, but he had known how to switch in time, and all his later career was oriented toward the side of the victors. That is not a reproach, and in the present notes there could be no question of aiding an aberrant opinion to survive, purely for the romanticism of defeat. A *cinéaste* of reputation does not hesitate to say: "I am the Left because the Right has no future." In back of its cynicism and its insolence, such an observation does not lack finesse, in the measure in which it refers to two contradictory tendencies of the human mind. Such examples are advanced, not for a futile polemic, but in order to wring the neck of a certain eloquence. In a prosperous and well nourished nation, for once at peace, the only "engagements" offered the militant concern one or two foreign conflicts, some thousands of kilometers from the Cafe du Commerce. With stay-at-homes, verbalism represents no more than itself. In cinema as elsewhere, if one wants to discern a political content, it will be necessary to discover something other than gratuitous affirmations. When words are devaluated, when people are no longer shooting, when they are no longer imprisoning in the name of ideas, the concept of the political renounces the violence of a specific impact, but acquires a more universal resonance. It invades the essential of the world. Let us profit by this metamorphosis to help French cinema pass through a stage of its adult life.

#### *The two ways and the ideal chameleon*

Until the present, people distinguished two methods for making political films. According to the first, one must orient the images in a single direction, charge them all with the same affective potential and make them all equally significant. In short, one must tell a story. That leads to the revolt of the battleship *Potemkin,* or the strike of *Salt of the Earth,* or the betrayal of the *Jud Suss.* To this category, it is suitable to attach documentaries, *montage* films, etc., for they have in common with the preceding films that they go in a very definite direction.

The other method has recourse to a more harmless proceeding. It is a matter of introducing, in an indifferent context, dramatic or comic "gags" that influence the spectator by suggestion and orient him in the desired direction. In this way, in *Viva Maria* a series of anti-clerical jokes appears. Before his independence, Buñuel made a practice of this system. We ourselves stresed at the time the quality of anti-police subversion in a film most of our colleagues had scorned, namely, *Irma la Douce.* Even in a bread-and-butter movie like *Le Tigre se parfume a la dynamite,* Claude Chabrol slipped in phrases against power. The disadvantage of the device is its facility. A gag, by definition, merely stings in passing. It admits of no analysis. As at the Guignol play, it is not difficult to obtain the laughter or the anger of the spectator by charging the *gendarme* and the *curé* with all sins. That does not teach us why there is a *gendarme,* and why the *curé.* Moreover, the gag, especially if it is verbal, incurs the disadvantage of being reversible and interchangeable. Georges Sadoul, in his *Historie du Cinema,* always thought highly of a quite forgotten film of Delannoy, *Pontcarral,* which was shown during the war of 1939-45. In it a character said more or less: "Today, monsieur, it is the honest people who go to prison." It appears that the spectators applauded at each showing. I wonder why this film has not been re-released. During the first years of the Algerian conflict, the sympathizers of the F.L.N., many of whom knew prison, might have come each evening to applaud the famous reply. Towards the end of the same conflict, the relatives and friends of the O.A.S. would have taken their places, and one must not despair of the future: this film, with its accomodating phrase, will always find

Francesco Rosi: *Salvatore Giuliano.*

a clientele. There exist people who spend their lives cataloguing that kind of gag, and who judge the value of films, edit reviews, publish books, solely dependent on that criterion. Without malice, for in nature there are all tastes and because we abhor fascist exclusives, let us say merely that this practice denotes a somewhat short view.

*Monsieur Matter-form and Monsieur Content-contained*

In any case, what the gag film and the film of the significant story have in common is that both sacrifice to anecdotism. The one and the other obey fits of the passions and speculate on the most elementary forms of the emotivity of the spectator. That does not mean that one should reject them; quite the contrary. Passion is choice sustenance for the artist, and at some moments fury rightly prevails over objectivity and reason. But these works possess the same sort of beauty as music or painting, whose inspired disorder the constraints of socialist realism, no more than those of other doctrines, have not succeeded in curbing. By its nature, the film of passion loathes political analysis. *Senso,* beautiful example of a division of reason and madness, makes one well aware of this impossibility. Now, it is on the film of passion that the opinion analyst flings himself the most willingly. Whence his quandary when the same sincerity and the same talent give life to contradictory works. So long as its is a matter of singing *Potemkin,* all goes well. Within the memory of man, and with the inertia of routine, people have not dared to oppose anything to it. In the *genre* Sadoul has resolved the difficulty, with the volume of his *Histoire Generale du Cinema* that treated the period 1939-45. He had decreed that fascism and capitalism debilitated talent, and that no valid work could appear under those regimes. Thus, no moral problem. The moment was well chosen, at least in what concerns the extreme cases. It is true that Mizoguchi himself, in imperial Japan at war, found himself paralyzed. But it is better to consider that as an accident, and to face the harrowing contradiction that no dogma can resolve. In this respect, the younger generations show greater scrupulousness. And without going to fetch *Le Jeune Hitlerien Quex* and *Ventres glaces,* which are both mediocre, to put everyone in agreement, the "reactionary" American cineastes provide food for thought. The John Fords, the King Vidors, the Hawks, even the Fullers are not disposed of so easily, except in bad faith from principle. One does not want to admit that, like Eisenstein and Visconti, they are ascribable more to art than to sociology. One trips up over those works that ride vigorously upside down on the steed of History. Instead of understanding that they are mistaken in their object and take the prey for the shadow, the *pseudo-engagés* effect the same dissociation for which they reproach so much, and very wrongly, criticism called "spiritualistic," "apolitical," etc. They separate the form and the matter, put the aesthetic on the right and content on the left. They are the last to believe the double column system authentic, and in the end one reads under their pen phrases of a touching naivete, and strictly unbelievable, of the kind "What a pity it is that truth is on the Left and talent on the Right." Thus they swallow the wrong way, but ultimately they swallow, almost anything, from *Birth of a Nation* to *La Brune brulante.* If purity of political action remains in 1966 the final end, here is a beautiful example of confusionism, the door open to all compromises, to all resignations.

On the whole, we would prefer the old fanatics of the "content-minded." They laughed at aesthetic problems, leaving that kind of consideration to the "fascists," and they found their happiness in the crudest image, provided it represented a macaroni slicer in India, or an Eskimo rice-planter. In our day, they are Chinese. In some way, they are situated in the avantgarde, much more in any case, in the time when we take some lessons from Pagnol and Guitry, than the jesters whose leftism ends in praising Louis Malle and Cavalier. That is to say the lace-makers of progressivism. The only reproach that one can make to the supporters of the "content-contained" is that of not having hesitated to contradict themselves. They willingly settled themselves on beauty, but refused to allow Nazi films to reappear on the screens, asserting that those films were unaesthetic in every respect! But we know that this was an affectation on their part, better, a subtle understatement, that did not at all encroach upon the value of theory. Let us not dispute over details. At the end of the account, it is cinema that one must change, and it is useless to set estimable people one against another.

*Sartre Trappist*

Reduced to the anecdote of the "content-contained," or quite diluted in the aesthetic gag, the intrusion of politics in cinema presents no interest. More then ever, we enter the Spanish inn. The menu is to the taste only of porters of provisions. Without the cowardice of governments, that prohibit from bad conscience, and thus permit intellectuals to swell with importance, one would have long since verified the absolute inefficacity of cinema, as that of literature, for immediate action, of course. Jean-Paul Sartre, who remains the thinking master of the young, republishes *Qu'est-ce que la litterature?* periodically, and the naive conclude the necessity of *engagement.* But on the other hand, the same Sartre, when he writes in newspapers, expresses clearly his pessimism. Our writings (understand equally: our films), he says in substance, changed nothing in the fortune of the Algerian war, in its development. He could take a thousand examples of non-efficacity. Literature, cinema, are deceptions when one obliges them to compete with life on a terrain and in a dimension that do not concern them. It would be necessary to meditate on the eclipse of Sartre after 1960, better to situate the area of the battle. Just now in Paris people are seeing an admirable play that dispatches the question wonderfully well. Le Roi Jones is a black playwright who writes anti-white plays, conforming to the most extremist doctrines of the Black Muslims. At the same time, he knows the futility of the combat. The character who incarnates him, in *Le Metro fantome* (*Dutchman*), says clearly that the artist is a complaisant clown. One blows a trumpet, one acts the play—one writes a book, one directs a film—as a substitute for real and direct action. To express himself, it will be enough for the artist to take a long knife. and to plunge it into the heart of his enemy. He would no longer be an artist, he would no longer show his rump to the public, he would be a man. Those are, it appears, shocking ideas, extremist. I see in them the only truth. People complain of not having had a film on the Algerian war. Instead I would congratulate myself about it. That proves that each person was too busy to waste his time in that kind of stupidity. Whether people were O.A.S. or F.L.N., it was better, all told, to carry bombs than to direct films on carriers of bombs.

Passion, transposed into art, adds nothing to knowledge, we observed. The awkwardness of the listless *engagés,* who seek alibis for themselves now in morals, and now in aesthetics, suggests to us the only possible way. After so many negotiations, let us come to something positive. If we want an adult cinema, it is necessary to discover politics where it actually is, in the totality of man and of society, not in anecdote and sectarian interests. If people are bent on talking about the affairs of the city, it is necessary to widen the debate, and not shrink it to parochial quarrels. Once that has been set down, admitted, let us distinguish between the critical attitude and the creative attitude.

*Hermaphrodism in politics*

In what concerns criticism, the accusation of being apolitical borders on absurdity. In our eyes, everything is political. In this sense, we would willingly subscribe to the opinion that revealed, in all Hollywood films, the statement of a doctrine, that of the American Way of Life, exposed moreover in clear language by the Hays Code. It is obvious that the decors, the costumes, the automobiles, the behavior of the actors, their way of expressing themselves, verify some political option, on the same grounds as, and often still more than, the dialogues, the scenario, and the

physical actions performed by the players. That holds true for everyone, and not only for the Hollywood people. The total vision that one takes from a film is singularly more important than the "political" details gargled by the chronicler of opinion. Contrary to what most people imagine, politics is not a costume that one hangs on a coat rack, or else puts on, at the whim of one's mood and of the circumstances. For us, it belongs to general ethics. One acts politically as one breathes, without knowing it, at each minute of one's existence. Anyone who wants to know the political choice of a cineaste should scrutinize his films in all their details, from beginning to end, and not only in the pieces of bravura. The impertinent phrase, the shock-image, on which censorship is caught like a fly and at which the clever people swoon; these booby-traps do not count for much in our eyes. One can cut them without remorse, and the jester who adds them to please the opinion in fashion will not find favor in our balances. For there remains everything about which he has not thought and which judges him. As well the way of showing a scene of secondary interest as his way of filming women. Whom will one cause to believe that the "audacities" of *Viva* Maria, anticlerical and other, presented any risk at all for their *auteur?* And why talk so much about noble sentiments and about revolution, if it is to photograph the feminine stars as a schoolboy would have done, with shame and scorn? One has not the right to be of the Left one hour a day, the time of playing the militant, only to become bourgeois again in private. That would be too easy, and that is the reproach that we put to the cinema of the anecdote and the gag. It permits all impostures. If the certificate of "good democrat" depends on a few acts, what does it cost any traitor to act the play that is offered him? Nothing easier to imitate than a film "of the Right" or "of the Left" if the criterion is limited to a few crude schemes. What ease in getting past the customs for specialists in the reversible costume, what temptation for hoaxers. I am surprised that scandals do not break out,—the credulity of spectators and of journalists appears so easy to nourish. On the other hand, when one evaluates the personality of the man in its totality, when one estimates at its just value the most fleeting detail of the work, deception becomes much more difficult. It requires a science of lying without example in world cinema. For us, from the moment when the notion of the political is recognized as an integral part of the *mise en scène,* the question does not arise. In an art of synthesis like cinema, the political must be the synthesis par excellence, and merge with the ethics of the individual. Let us add particularly that it will indeed be necessary some day to admit the natural ambivalence of human beings in political matters, as people have ended in recognizing sexual ambivalence. In each person conservative and progressive tendencies—"Right" and "Left" to speak an over-simple language—coexist biologically, and as in the matters of sex only a dominant directs the character in one way or in the other. Of course, education, milieu, heredity, etc., influence the final or the momentary option. No doubt the idea is not new, but, shocking the pure moralists, it offers the advantage of tempering our judgments. In any case, the individual finds himself only the more bound, almost hand and foot, to the totality of his actions.

## *For a totalitarian cinema*

This fundamental analysis of the work — and nothing escapes it, a musical comedy being more significant in this respect than a drama of manners — this total knowledge of the man, his mask torn off, remain the elements of a passive attitude. A method for critical prospection, nothing more. It remains to define a creative attitude, not of the passions and not anecdotal. Such an attitude requires, on the part of the *auteur* as well as the spectator, an adult thirst for knowledge, and not for emotion. A curé who brings out a pistol from the skirts of his robe—that is certain of its effect. Would a film on the Vatican, explaining the temporal and spiritual power of the Church, stripping the peel off the struggles between the Dominicans and the Jesuits, bringing out the Gallican opposition, etc., meet as much favor as a simple gag whose good-child subversion does not go beyond the level of a seven-year-old gamin? One guesses without difficulty the nature of a film of the passions against the Vietnam war. All its art would consist in establishing the difference between the democratic bullets of the North, so good for the bronchi, and the imperialist bullets of the South, which hollow out horrible caverns in the lungs. And vice-versa. But who would dare to tell the actual history, with its collusions, its secret agreements, its ballet of factions, its remote-controlled *coups d'etat,* its trafficking, etc? The true political cinema, if people really want one to exist, will be an objective cinema, serene, complex, pitiless, in the measure of the mysteries and of the cruelty of our time. We hailed the release of *Salvatore Giuliano* at the time, because that film seemed to us to bear the promises of a really dialectical research. What followed disappointed us, as if someone had barred the way that had been scarcely half-opened. Yet it is in that direction that it is necessary to continue. The other paths, a hundred times rebeaten, are only literature, that is to say less than nothing. Alas, the quest for the truth requires, more than emotional faculties, an authentic competence. The rarest virtue. Cinema ages, but its *auteurs* do not grow in wisdom. People grant frankness of speech to those who have not learned the alphabet. The eye puts itself to the camera before having fixed itself on life. Everyone believes he has inborn knowledge, like the fops of not long ago. One cuts through every question, without having learned anything. That presupposes that cinema will never go beyond the level of elementary emotions, in which the "useful load," that is to say the efficacity in depth, is dismayingly slight compared to the "unloaded weight" effect produced by the immediate impression.

One can imagine a political cinema of pure contestation, of integral anarchy, and whose sublime prototype, unequalled, would be *L'Age d'Or.* But most men dream of taking into their hands the destiny of the society in which they live, and not of destroying the human race. To them, we should offer an instrument of knowledge. And to understand what the knowledge of the universe will be, this "politics" of the world in the widest sense, we must come back once more to the freshest and boldest spirit that the seventh art has ever known. Rossellini, since it is necessary to name him, has said and repeated in many interviews, and, to come to en end, about *L'Age du fer,* the necessity and urgency of dedication. Instead of depicting states of soul, the *auteur* should begin by informing of emotional reactions. He must vanquish lack of curiosity; predilection for ignorance and for the irrational; intellectual routine. The aim of politics in the cinema is not to repeat the action of the combatants, with derisory weapons, but to supply the intelligence with facts, to teach the spectator the art of reinventing the world by himself. One should no longer evoke strikes, unions, the contradictions of capitalism, without first having patiently assimilated the rudiments of political economy. One should no longer cite the Vietnam war without taking into account the complexities of international politics. Nothing is played in advance, nothing is "white" or "black." How arduous it is, happily, to choose, to judge. To assert that, to constrain the spectator to a Socratic process, does not mean that one scorns him. Nothing compels the *auteur* to ape pedantry. Quite the contrary. *L'Age du fer* is the demonstration; the unpredictability of the human being, his noble disorder, come to invade the quest and enrich it constantly. Let us remark that this noble form of cinema puts back in their place the strayings of the heart, goes beyond sentimental understanding, and refuses to debase itself. It magnifies honesty, therefore honor. For us, that will be the only true party. MICHEL MARDORE.

Leo McCarey: Rally 'Round The Flag, Boys! Jack Carson, Joanne Woodward, Paul Newman.

A

# *Cahiers Critiques*

A. JEAN-LUC GODARD: *Alphaville,* Anna Karina, Eddie Constantine.
B. JEAN-LUC GODARD: *A Married Woman,* Macha Meril, Bernard Noel.
C. JOSEPH LOSEY: *King And Country,* Dirk Bogarde.
D. PIER PAOLO PASOLINI: *The Gospel According to Matthew.*

B

C

D

# *Collages*

UNE FEMME MARIEE (ex-LA FEMME MARIEE), (The Married Woman), French film of Jean-Luc Godard. Photography: Raoul Coutard. Décors: Henri Nogaret. Editor: Francoise Colin. Music: Ludwig van Beethoven. Cast: Macha Méril, Bernard Noël, Philippe Leroy, Roger Leenhardt. Producer: Anouchka Films - Orsay Films. 1964. Distributor: Columbia.

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Is it possible to look with the eyes of an ethnologist at the society to which one belongs, at oneself? You believe you see yourself as you are in a mirror; in truth, you never see yourself in it except in the act of looking at yourself in it. Is there a subtle mirror that can show you how little yourself you are at that moment, a critical mirror that can slip into the image that it sends back to you an intellectual reflection on the optical reflection, so that, at the end of this mediation, you can find again and know your natural self? Cinema, when it aspires to objectivity, stumbles on the same difficulty: of all languages it is the one that most reduces the distance between the form of the significant expression and that which it signifies . . . Cinema, a Godard character said, is truth twenty-four times a second. But that is precisely what makes it a prodigious mechanism of fascination. What, then, is a truth lived in fascination?

What is the use of tearing us from the immediacy of our existence if it is to make us voyeurs turned to stone watching it as if at the sight of the Gorgon's head? A film that intends to be not only a means of sating the imagination or of mystifying must be able to wake in the very heart of fascination a reflective conscience that enlightens the spectator less on the spectacle than on the way in which it directs itself towards him and inhabits him.

In *Une femme mariée,* we are at a certain moment in the cinema at Orly, where the two lovers have arranged their rendezvous. A shot shows us the curtains opening on the Orly screen, whose whiteness comes to coincide with the real whiteness of the screen of the theatre in which we ourselves are spectators. For a few seconds there is a "metaphysical" oscillation of the image which tends to reabsorb itself in its material support, as if cinema resigned itself to being no more than a white canvas lighted by a projector. It is by a reflective short-circuit of the same kind that we wake out of a dream by the very action of becoming aware that we are dreaming. In the following shot, we see our characters full face, looking at the screen, that is to say ourselves, the real spectators, waked out of our voyeurs' fascination by the disturbing feeling of being seen.

Already, in *Le Mépris (Contempt),* we could see Coutard (Godard) in the act of filming; he ended a pan aiming the eye of his camera on us, designating us as objects of cinematographic vision, and thus seesawing the relations between the possessor of vision and the visible. Klee said that he judged that a canvas was brought off when it was the canvas that began to look at him. To be sure, it is easy for a cinéaste to bring about such reversals artificially. Nevertheless, with Godard they are not isolated proceedings that wake the spectator out of his fascination periodically, but on the contrary the characteristic accents of a style.

The first shot shows us a gigantic arm and hand that slither over the screen. Godard's preferred décor is a neutral white background. Walls, hangings bed sheets come constantly to annihilate their whiteness in that of the screen, thrusting out the characters into the theater. It happens that, in a conversation sequence, a close-up obstinately fixes a face, isolates it from the scene in which it participates; in the end the character bursts into our space and speaks to us directly, as in *cinéma-vérité;* all the more since the text is sometimes improvised, and then the actors stop speaking as characters of a fiction to speak of themselves as actors. Moreover the lover (Bernard Noël) plays the role of an actor, which he obviously is in reality, and when he speaks of his professional experiences, he stops playing a role and speaks to us directly. In all the films of Godard, shots of reality and of the imaginary are mixed up, and in them one sees writers, philosophers, cinéastes come to speak in their own name to fictional characters; and no doubt the actors are never so freely themselves. Thus Godard initiates original relationships between the spectators and the film. He takes the opposite course from traditional films that try to absorb us in the imaginary. With him, fiction is fragile, it comes sometimes to melt into the real, or inversely, it discredits itself by excess, sliding towards caricature or crazy eccentricity, as in the episode of the cleaning woman, or in that of the advertisement of the advantages of modern housing, recited in the tone of conversation by Charlotte (Macha Meril) and her husband. Macha Meril leads us back to ourselves by imitating our posture in the car. Everything contributes to maintain in the spectator the consciousness of being a spectator, and a critical attitude towards the fictitious character of what is shown here. Now, we have seen, the actors play nothing if not their real characters. Here Godard proceeds in the manner of Pop Art, which introduces real everyday objects in the imaginary space of the work of art to show them in a changed perspective.

In a world in which everything is faked, the traditional means of illusion can paradoxically play the role of means of revelation. And this talk, these gestures, this ordinary behavior whose authenticity we suspect, constitute a whole language that is common and familiar to us — so familiar that it makes these aesthetic mediations necessary in order to become perceptible.

In this conneciton, it is not a matter of indifference that Godard is Swiss. To be sure, everyone is Swiss in what is known as a "consumer society," and especially in France of the UNR era. But all the same a native Swiss has more chances to be able to know and to assume his Swissness. Swissness is not only torpor from comfort, it is also the sense of being culturally colonized, mistrust before a language that one receives from a foreign country, menaced by German idioms and by French idioms, the impression of being able to speak only between quotation marks.

Listen to the Swiss accent of Godard in *Bande à part (Band of Outsiders),* this applied and monotonous delivery, as when one quotes, or when one resigns oneself to use a neologism; and this mania for quotations, this bent for considering words from the outside, starting from their graphic architecture, for dissecting them, for gluing the pieces together again in no matter what order, as if their meaning stopped being natural to them, and for agglomerating them. In that there is an uneasiness towards language that appears especially in *Le Mépris,* to which it would not be useless to return.

The marital conflict between Camille (Brigitte Bardot) and her husband effectively comes down to a radical opposition on language; the attitude of Camille, who persists in her silence, is characterized by a wild and desperate refusal of words. She feels herself betrayed by them. Words are, like money, means of exchange, and consequently means of oppression; with this difference, that they exert a constraint less crude but more intimate: money has no smell, one touches it with one's fingertips, and one washes one's hands if the manipulations are dubious. Words, on the contrary, breathe out from the deepest part of us through the mouth. One believes one is speaking intimately from oneself, but one smells of the breath of others. The worst of it is that in the end people are mutually impregnated to the point of no longer being sensitive to the common odor; the Other, this malign genius, speaks a monologue through every mouth, and there is nothing more for us to do but to let words resolve our problems and decide for us. This is the attitude of Camille's husband, whose persistence in wanting to formulate everything is unauthentic; complacently he alienates his contradictory and singular reality to the order of language, which magically conjures away the contradictions and clears him.

Let us not conclude too quickly that Godard is a reactionary misologue; to make evident the failure of communica-

tion without complaisance is to sketch an authentic language. If, in this co-production, Godard has let the actors express themselves in their own language without dubbing their voices, it is not in order to reinforce artificially the impression of incommunicability; on the contrary he uses the necessity of translating each speech as a means of revelation. When you speak to a foreigner to whom what you say must be translated as you go along, you watch your words more carefully; you become conscious that what you maintain is often accredited only by the intonation or the syntactical behavior of your language. Translation makes your talk lose its innocence and displays the nakedness of its meaning. In short it is the counterproof to the parody of Hitler's speeches in *The Great Dictator,* from which Chaplin kept only the message of intonations. In general, Godard knows well how to use foreign actors; in their mouths, words suddenly find again a lost freshness, as if they began to have meaning for the first time.

*Une femme mariée* is another film about language. In it Godard presents to us in the manner of an ethnologist a concentration camp universe, our own, with its luxurious stalags, its regimented leisures, its omnipresent discipline. The body itself must submit to the norms of the "equilateral triangle," and it will be righted at need by a pitiless subjection to reprimand. (Has anyone analyzed the social or moral significance of the canon of bourgeois aesthetics that prescribes that a woman pull in her stomach, which however was until the end of the sixteenth century the principal attribute of feminine seduction, and which people liked relaxed and rounded, as the mannerist painters represent it-) In this rigid system, everything has a meaning, which it is a question of deciphering. Consequently it is here a question of a language more subtle than spoken languages and towards which it is much more difficult to take a reflective attitude, for it is made up of signs in some way clandestine, that we interiorise in our tastes, in our ordinary behavior, and even in our anatomy. As Roland Barthes has shown, the objects of our everyday setting are themselves, under their gaudy accoutrement, only disguised signs that send us back to other signs in a whirlwind of evasions that suck up our freedom.

How to disengage ourselves from this snare, how to make ourselves ethnologists or men from Mars when the very act of seeing compromises us already? Certain painters, feeling the visible escape them, try to break this infernal mechanism of significance by the device of collage, which disarranges the order of familiar appearances and substitutes for collusive relationships unexpected juxtapositions. This device allows one to draw back, to restore their opacity to things, in a word to *see.* People are right

*A Married Woman.*

to compare *Une femme mariée* to the paintings of Rauschenberg. Godard too, with the means of a cinéaste, upsets the order of presentation of things, cuts up the real to redistribute its elements in an unacoustical manner. The love scenes are discontinuous, chopped up by montage; a near-sighted camera analyses from a strictly syntactical point of view a complex play of junctions of arms and legs, discouraging all erotic or sentimental participation (except among the members of the control commission).

It is with the same minuteness that Godard analyzes the inscriptions of all kinds that he finds on posters or in newspapers, as if it were a matter of obscure epigraphs that lend themselves indifferently to a thousand interpretations and suggest a thousand correspondences,

One can imagine that in some thousands of years, savants will examine the shreds of our civilization in this way, with the same incongruous fervor that our archaeologists have for the gimcracks of the *nouveaux riches* of Pompeii. Godard carefully classifies the documents that he brings brack from his prospectings and orders them under headings designated by inter-titles. He goes to the point of explaining by captions the conversation of the two young girls in the café, under the heading *"Ce que toute femme doit savoir."* (What every woman should know.) No doubt this was the only means of thwarting the undiscourageable good will of the spectator and of maintaining the choice of critical attention against all inclination to collusive understanding.

There is something scandalous from the ethnological point of view that makes us a society without history, with rigid institutions, where there are no passions, but rites, no events, but genre scenes. Certainly, Godard is not a crab, and he cannot pretend to be. But cinema has the contradictory and formidable privilege of being at the same time an ontological opening to the real and a means of manipulating it. That is to say that one can use it to show the world under an incidence of strangeness, but also to travesty it. This ambiguity has defined two successive major schools to which people customarily refer in situating the style of a cinéaste: that which exploits to the maximum the rhetorical possibilities of cinematographic writing, and particularly of montage, in view of an oriented reconstruction of the real, inflecting or obliterating the natural meaning of thing in favor of a deliberate significance (Eisenstein, for example); and the "phenomenological" school, which tends to suppress mediations in order to apprehend the spectacle with the impartiality of a mirror. (A. Bazin became its theorist. Cf. Christian Metz: *Le cinema: langue ou langage?* in *Communications* no. 4). Yet Godard escapes these classifications. Certainly he is a great manipulator (the word is Roberto Rossellini's), for he turns to account all the syntactical resources of cinema in order to tear us from the immediacy of the lived. But one cannot for all that classify him in the first category: he premeditates no signification, and his numerous stylistic innovations are not means of accrediting a tendentious reconstruction of the spectacle, but play.

It is this apparent gratuitousness that has brought him many detractors. However, many painters, from Delacroix to Klee, have affirmed that they often discovered the subject of their painting only at the end of a formal development with some character of play. Picasso even made a demonstration of this in *Le Mystère Picasso.* The play Godard pursues, which consists of redistributing differently elements cut out of the real, or of conjugating in an unrealistic manner the different languages — images, words, music, sounds — that make up the film, is not exactly gratuitous. For children, the most exciting and the most

constructive play, is demolition: that way they learn the articulations of things. In the same way, the most nonsensical cinematographic manipulations dislocate the logic of our behavior and make it evident by negation. In the sequence given the title *Le présent et la mémoire* (The present and memory), Godard has deleted from the sound track the replies of the people Macha Méril is speaking to. Her talk to nothingness reveals by default the very essence of dialogue: a certain manner of clutching at the words of the other, purely allocutive intonations that search for complicity. Godard often has recourse to this device of expressive deletion: you are never better aware of the motion you perform to climb a stair than when in the dark, you put your foot on a step that does not exist. Sometimes, inversely, it is accumulation that is revealing: the successive repetitions of *"je t'aime,"* the domestic scene on the theme of *"tu n'avais qu'à . . ."* ("you had only to . . ."), sum up the couple.

Godard disturbs the order of motivations, multiplies arbitrary combinations; he puts a long Céline monologue in the mouth of the cleaning woman, disconnected quotations everywhere; he is on the watch for fortuitous interferences between the plot and advertising slogans, newspaper headings, etc. That is a technique of disintegration of appearances that may recall the surrealist games of automatic writing or of the "exquisite corpse," with this difference, that it tries, not to exhume a mythical unconscious, but to discover the unaccustomed that is nowhere else than on the surface of things, by instigating a new vision, not collusive, what Merleau-Ponty called a *perception sauvage,* wild perception.

For this reason, the results will of necessity be unexpected. In this the cinéaste is apprentice-sorcerer; he grants signs the right of self-determination, without really knowing what is going to emerge. Picasso himself — the comparison obviously will not stop there — never precisely *sought* what he ended in expressing, he *found* it by chance in an autonomous evolution of forms. It is in this sense that it is necessary to understand an assertion much more modest than people think. Dubuffet, so attentive to the suggestions of the materials in development, sets off on canvas, on stone, or on copper chains of physical phenomena over which he has no control, which he simply knows how to stop at the right moment. Like him, Godard is less actor than spectator.

There is no authentic work that does not put itself in question as language — that is what one calls humor — and that does not consequently renounce premeditating exactly what it in fact expresses. It is the game of loser-wins, a succession of recovered falls into insignificance, in which the artist risks and loses his demiurgy. It really requires unconstraint. But it requires as well a great sensitivity and a great presence of mind to catch in their passing, in great semantic catastrophes, expressive distortions; and again a certain aesthetic courage to make it the stuff of a work without rational justification, since these are so many outrages to acquired reason. As to talent, the time has come when it is for the public to have some.—Michel THEVOZ

## *Décollages*

*Alberto Giacometti:*—"Have you as yet seen perfect paintings? I never have. Besides, that is one of the characteristics of art. An airplane propellor must be perfect in order to function, a wine glass ought not to be chipped. On the contrary, a work of art is always only a partial vision of the exterior world, always precarious as well."

*On criticism.*—Thematic, it was often. Too often. Dismal or enthusiastic, it registered ideas, neglecting their support. For that reason, the interviews with Barthes and Levi-Strauss disappointed the ill-nourished who saw in them only the decadence of criticism when it would have been necessary to perceive beyond false quarrels (the error of Levi-Strauss' judgment on *The Birds* has, for example, only slight importance) the precursory signs of its renewal. Happily, the theory entails a *praxis:* Michel Delahaye's review of *Man's Favorite Sport?* First, in fact, he takes to pieces an act, the signification, and proposes implicitly the study of effects, without which *Viaggio in Italia* remains a mystery. And *Une femme mariée* an irreducible totality. That these considerations may appear superfluous, *extra muros,* forces us to an anticipatory justification. On one point at least, the film of Godard cross-checks the work of Renoir: art and its criticism in the same production (is it necessary to recall a declaration of J.-L. G. at Venice: "The spectacle of life finally becomes identical with its analysis"?) What more natural, then, than this recall on the efficiency of our weapons and their renovation? In the image of *Une femme mariée,* subject and object become identical.

*On connoted meaning.*—In the last issue of *Communications,* Christian Metz, after having noted that "cinema is by its nature condemned to *connotation* since denotation always *precedes* its artistic enterprise," makes a regrettable mistake. He rejects montage, assimilating it to the manipulation of the real that Rossellini distrusts. About that Godard makes no mistake. To respect reality does not for all that mean non-intervention. An example: he arranges (I neglect intentionally the "free" flag on the taxi) a certain number of signs that Charlotte cannot notice, when she meets her lover at Orly. Their linking is visible only to the spectator: Decide — Danger — Danger — Emergency stop — Decide — Madam if you love your husband. Outside Charlotte's perception, they do not affect her. Nevertheless, each of them dramatizes the action. What precise role to attribute to them? Do they not illuminate even more clearly than the preceding sequences this absence of conscience? Nothing is less certain since they do not condemn Charlotte. Perhaps they are simply the dotted lines we lack to tie together the "fragments of a film shot in 1964"? For if the modern world is characterized by this impossibility of putting two ideas end to end, the visual signs form a link that no chain connects to Charlotte. A little like these broken monologues, those confessions without faith, those derangements where reason is no longer in control.

*On an emotion.*—A full oval, hair barely masking the forehead, eyes open and ashen, wide heavy mouth. Young woman. She is the second, on the right of the screen, in the swimming pool sequence. *She who does not know. . .* She who does not dare. I know nothing about her except that she sends me back to *La Nuit du carrefour,* to Winna Winfred who never stopped awkwardly caressing a fur. A simple pleasure!

*On an absence.*—In a certain manner, *Le Nouveau Mondo* foretold *Une femme mariée.* What disappeared from Alexandra the day after an atomic explosion is even now lacking in Charlotte: the soul, that conscience on oneself and on others. Robert and Pierre suffer too from the same lack. "They no longer have (it is Godard who states it) anything but physiological reflexes." This idea is perceptible on the level of thought, that is to say of the *mise en scène.* The fragmentation of the body answers a double motivation: to rediscover the lesson of Klee while undergoing it. "Rediscover" is no doubt an awkward word, for the verb implies the preexistence of an action while the work of Godard needs no justification. . . The stomach cut apart from the face, the couples rarely framed together in their nakedness, witness that harmony is no longer their truth. Identical gestures. One poses. *Mise en scène!* A record, two beds brought nearer.

On page 204 of volume XXXVIII of his Works (Russian edition), Lenin writes "The human consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it." Charlotte, Robert and Pierre *repeat* it. Reified, they no longer know how to do anything but repeat words fabricated for their use, as when they praise the charms of their apartment. They digest. Charlotte confesses: "I am not an animal. Sometimes I regret (. . .) But there we are, one must understand." Terrible avowal this, which expresses this non-participation, this subjection, made still more perceptible by the impersonal whiteness of the background against which she speaks. On the contrary, the space reserved for Leenhardt

is furnished, alive. Someone will object that the white wall can only reflect its own image. Nonsense! It is rather towards Antonioni and *Tentato suicido* that it would be necessary to look.

*On childhood.*—For the boy, I propose the following explanation. Does he not describe the manufacture of a rocket? In my opinion, yes. Thus we rejoin *Il deserto rosso (Red Dessert)* and this information from J.-L. G.: "But it is also a film for mutants."

*On an absence (continued).* Film on a disappearance, the disappearance of relations among human beings and the gradual transition to a universe of objects. *Une femme mariée* leads to a new way of seeing, to a break (already started with *Breathless* and pursued since in all the other films) with the so-called traditions of narrative. Seeking, in fact, to rediscover a certain purity of conscience, which leads him to rid himself of explanations, and then to go from the significant to the lived, J.-L. G. is constantly in quest of new forms of narrative, sole means of asking questions without faking them in advance by ready made schemes. Before asking oneself why things are as they are, one must first admit that they are as they are. All controversy must begin there. It is starting from this precise moment that they pose problems and become significant. In the presence of such a choice one thinks of the "reality without foreign addition" of which Engels spoke, or again of Brecht. Nevertheless, after having indicated it let us stress it, it is not a matter of copying nature but of thinking it. Thus, beyond the homage to the Kazan of *America America,* the negative sequence of *Une femme mariée* refuses mystification, for in the end that would have been to be taken in the game, denounced besides as sources of loss of the real, and consequently agent of alienation, only to give free rein to the pleasure of filming cover-girls. By reversing his film, J.-L. G. *shows* that these girls exist only on celluloid. Thus arises the dispute of our epoch.—Gerard GUEGAN.

## *Contrariwise*

*ALPHAVILLE, UNE ETRANGE AVENTURE DE LEMMY CAUTION (Alphaville, a strange adventure of Lemmy Caution).* French film of JEAN-LUC GODARD. *Scenario:* Jean-Luc Godard. *Photography:* Raoul Coutard. *Music:* Paul Mizraki. *Editor:* Agnes Guillemot. *Cast:* Eddie Constantine (Lemmy Caution), Anna Karina (Natacha Vonbraun), Akim Tamiroff (Henri Dickson), Howard Vernon (Professor Leonard Nosfératu, alias Professor Vonbraun), Laszlo Szabo (Chief engineer), Michel Delahaye (Assistant to Professor Vonbraun), Jean-André Fieschi (Professor Heckell), Jean-Louis Comolli (Professor Jeckell), and Alpha 60. *Producer:* André Michelin, Chaumiane Prod. — Filmstudio (Rome). *Distributor:* Athos Films.

Among the believers and newly converted, one interpreted *Alphaville,* ninth book of the Law of Godard, as some sort of Apocalypse of modern times according to Saint Jean-Luc. Only barbarians of the cinema find the snobbery or antisnobbery better form and turn up their noses at the fairy tale; in which Princess Donkey-Skin,* obedient daughter of the systematic Brownbeard who burns out the circuits of his magnetic mistresses, is aroused out of her long sleep by Tufted Lemmy and embarks with him for Cythera-City** in his pumpkin-Ford . . . Yet the parable is transparent, the *message* delivered by the film one of the best decoded, one of the most commentable, one of the most strictly committed.

No, they would have none of it; they would like to make us believe that they have lost all innocence and all perversity, all freshness and all maturity. But this time it is because they have understood. Too well, too quickly: Alphaville is never anything but the ABC of the Apocalypse of our times which, etc. (see above).

The film is prophetic for some, anachronistic for others; the reason is that both are concerned less with *Alphaville* or with Godard than with their own *situation,* in advance or behind, in relation to the dialectical coming and going of the world and of electronic machines — the film serving here as pretext for a hastily assumed consciousness. It is a curious thing (and hardly French that an action film (being that for all the more reason if nothing happens in it, which is not the case) inspires an intelligentsia to meditation, even negative meditation, in such a way. If people went to the cinema, it was rather to let themselves be intoxicated by the dark waltz and to think no longer (this implies that they thought outside the cinema). But lo and behold, people are beginning to think: revolution in customs. More still: having to do with a film rightly called "fictional" (but in which science fiction has no place), each person turns to his neighbor for information (to his mirror, to his newspaper, his accepted opinions, his cultural concrete). At the cinema, then, what matters is what it is a convention to call life. The discovery is not new, but maybe it is a good point to know that what makes a film count, what proves whether it is committed or not, is whether one takes an account of it and whether one commits oneself (for, against, it hardly matters) *about* it.

All that to have done with most of the "problems" (going from the personal to the political and even to the cosmic) that the film has tapped and that have caused it to be lost from sight. Happily the plan stands a little withdrawn from this sudden need for exegesis. There remain those who, having understood or not what they chose to, turn a deaf ear and ask "Why?"

When Braque paints two fish and a lemon, all on a plate, people do not come to ask him (not to my knowledge) what the fish may be telling each other, why they are there, and not in the sea, to whom the lemon belongs, and whether the plate is exploiting them. The same thing if he paints a lobster, nobody worries about knowing whether it is *homard à l'américaine.* One can (if the worst comes to the worst ask the fish directly the subject of their conversation; painted fish talk a great deal; and about what would they talk, if not about Braque? In short, it is enough that the fish are painted, nobody takes it into his head to seek out whether they are enlarged sardines or shrunken whales.

*Alphaville,* Eddie Constantine, Jean-Luc Godard.

* Among the *Contes* of Charles Perrault—*Peau-d'Ane (Donkey-Skin), La Barbe-Bleue (Bluebeard), La Belle au Bois dormant (Sleeping Beauty), Rignet à la Houppe (Tufted Ricky), Cendrillon (Cinderella).*—J.P.

** Watteau, *L'Embarquement pour Cythère.*—J.P.

When Fautrier paints blue objects with yellow daubs, there is no amateur (nor even an art critic) to question the fate or the meaning of these nebulae, aureoles or grease splotches. And nobody makes the comparison with the flag of Brazil seen through a heavy fog.

That is a piece of good fortune that painting, poetry and all the rest have; that cinema has not (as yet). What is at the same time the attraction, the strength and the risk of cinema, is that an actor cannot put one foot in front of the other without the spectator wanting to know where he is going, why, whether the woman he loves has broken with him, and whether that is his last pair of shoes. On this point of view, the *auteur* of *Le Signe du Lion* has succeeded in imposing his law, his fancy and his own logic by replying in advance and as a precaution.

Nevertheless it is time to claim, with all the major cinéastes and especially for Godard, the exclusive recourse to *non-signification*. Of course it is out-and-out impossible: impossible that Karina and Constantine in a corridor not refer to *The Trial*, not signify more or less Ariadne and Theseus, Eurydice and Orpheus (among some dozens of envisageable meanings). But from the moment when precisely they do not signify this more than that, they have no special meaning and they have them all, that is to say that it is then permissible and necessary strictly to apply *non-interpretation, non-commentary, non-explanation*. Joyce knew it; he stuffed all the Odyssey of civilization into his *Ulysses*.

So let us propose leaving, once and for all, thematic analysis, thematic criticism, and thematics itself, to go on forever biting their own tails. It is enough to find fault with the things themselves, assured that their meaning, however little they have, will be in the take.

It is more essential to know how, why *Alphaville* (film) is constructed than to know why and how Alphaville (Utopia) is destroyed. Let us take the example of a sequence particularly disconcerting and rich in why: when Lemmy Caution, having liquidated several white laboratory coats, escapes Alpha 60 and arrives in a kind of garage, where, brutally, the light values reverse, the film changing to "negative" (the black blank and shining, the white cloudy and flat). Obviously this sequence was filmed entirely classically, and nothing lets one suppose (even if it is the case) that Godard at the moment of shooting even then saw it "reversed." In any case it was at the stage of editing that this strange choice took place. One will ask the reason for it. No doubt Godard has his reason, maybe quite simply technical or practical; or else fancy. Thematic criticism will try to answer by linking this passage to the themes of the film, to the subject, to the meaning of the whole. That is possible. One can explain that, as soon as Caution has escaped the infernal tourniquet of the machine, having set it the puzzle whose solution entails the self-destruction of Alpha-60, the latter, forced by its logic, which is to schematize and resolve difficulties, actually clear up the enigma, and thus sets off the process of self-destruction.

Whence, they will say, a cataclysm that will surprise the works wheel by wheel, a chaos of values and orders, signs tumbled and toppled: which the cinéaste would then translate very precisely by an optical effect analogous to the flash of nuclear explosions, or more simply by a like reversal of luminous impressions. I will consent. Maybe it is that. But, beyond the crudeness of the explanation and its naïveté, it would then be a regrettable pleonasm.

Whatever are the reasons for the mysterious operation, to me it would appear simpler, more fruitful, and more necessary as well, to notice, for example, that this visual breaking-in relates to a *play* of light all the length of the film. In this film and in this city where one does not see the sun and where day breaks in electric light bulbs, light is delirious. These are the flickerings, painful to the retina, of a kind of incandescent lamp, which invades the screen at the time of the production credits and which punctuates them with its bizarre rhythms. It returns then, theme slightly wobbly, as if out of kilter, to flood the screen and the eye again with its variations of intensity, the phrases sometimes abrupt and jerky, brief and violent, at other times progressive and sly, according to a complex alternation and a changing frequency.

One will ask then the "why" of these gentle or brutal flashes. I do not ask why this flickering, but what is it? A thing, and its contrary, and from one to the other abruptness or slightness of transition: a very elementary process of inversion. More or less like the movement of a pendulum between two poles. The alternation of phases, the automatic exchange of charges and values. A system in equilibrium, therefore a system in which contraries are of equal worth and can be inverted.

This equivalence of elements is a characteristic quality of the cinema of Godard. There is the refusal to privilege one sign at the cost of others. All things are given, are shown, as equal. Everything is on the same plane: the "negative" sequence seen from the same distance and even on the same level as the scenes of the scuffle, the drive, or the closeups of the headlight; not a unity of tone, a uniformity, but a unity of measure and an equality of weight. The smile has the same worth as tears, the gesture in air and the gesture that kills are charged with the same intensity. The cinema of Godard is not a preferential cinema; in it nothing is stressed — or rather, everything is stressed in the same manner, which does not go without shocking people: that "hollow" moments, the words or the gestures that most directly concern "the action," confers on them an increase of presence, a vexing insistence, a place that seems all the more invasive because it does not exist at all in conventional cinema.

This rigorous refusal of effect leads to a second effect all the more striking in that it is unexpected, unaccustomed. Equalization is the means of reversing roles. What was traditionally considered as consequential continues to be so with Godard, but passes to the middle distance, behind what was not considered consequential but becomes it all the same. Equality exists always in right, more in fact. Equivalence leads to privilege and equilibrium to its breach. Reciprocally, worn situations, necessary conventions, by losing their preeminence win a new freshness, an innocence in its turn disturbing. False innocence that restores a true consequence to the commonplaces of the screen.

Thus one rejoins this principle of inversion, of alternation, of balance, characteristic of the cinema of Godard. This famed découpage-montage with its false-connections and its provoked breaks is an associative type of montage scanned by the inversion of relationships and their contrast; dialogues, elements of stage business, reflect one another detail by detail; the preferred movement of the camera is back and forth; succession of sequences, construction assert too this play of wit, Scotch bath or Russian mountain, obssessive coming and going. dialogues and cross-fires from one end of the film to the other. It is again the structure in mirrors (a little dephased) of *Une femme mariée;* the articulation in symmetrical pans of *Le Mépris*, of *Une femme est une femme;* the disengagements in alternate rows of *Les Carabiniers (The Riflemen)* and of *Vivre sa vie (My life to live)*. (Schemes with which the films accommodate themselves more flexibly.)

*Alphaville* on the other hand is out of perpendicular. It seems that the film is made of successive slips that tilt it, shot by shot, as a whole, as if it were drawn along quietly by this image that it gives of a world upside down; symmetrical and very faithfully inverted image of our lives and settings (shot in Paris today); yet the perspectives seem always a little distorted, as if foreign to our coordinates; everything happens as if this slightly warped image of ourselves, this film too familiar and too strange, belonged already to that other world of shadows and reflections to which they are transparent and which come to superimpose themselves on our image to distort it. Something in the film is disturbing, something which bears the mark of the proposed fiction, which is the beginning of reality for this fiction. That this film is made, that it has been possible, that we are at once its haggard actors and its bewildered spectators, is the first step towards the materiality of the fable.

Thereby *Alphaville* meets some films about which it is better *not to speak*, for fear lest the weight of words, the matter

of commentaries, add still more to those of the image and tilt the uncertain balance between art and life definitively in the direction of life, spectacle reversing to ordeal and dream to flesh; *Vampire, Nosfératu, The Damned, Metropolis* are at the limit of a fragile equilibrium between the imaginary and the lived; a further participation incarnates them a little more each time. It is enough that we are spectators of *Alphaville* for the film and the image of ourselves that it gives us to begin to tilt from the other side of the mirror and of the screen, driving towards us shadows of the region of shadows, drawing to it, first our reflections, then things themselves and us.

The immediate future that the film tells us is indeed our contemporary; we are *voyeurs* of ourselves. It is not a period of time that separates us from it, but an elastic distance, which draws or resists; a difference of density. As if all the weight transferred itself from things to their reflections, inverting the relations that we maintain with our mirrors and our screens. The film sets us with it on the other side of the mirror. It is Lemmy Caution who is on the real side; true spectator of this exchange, it is his to break the mirror for us, delivering our reflections from these shadows that sink like ballast suddenly thrown off. *Alphaville* is at once the story and the outcome of this slow rise of divers towards the surface, of this recovery of ambiguities and parities. The proceeding of the cinéaste superimposes itself on that of his character, and the creation shows itself in the fiction; everything happens as if, even before being begun, the film already existed in its entirety, real and completed indeed, but out of grasp, in negative if one may say so, in the shadow from which it returns little by little. Which implies that Godard, contrary to legend, is not an improviser. His proceeding is that of a child or a poet, wholly the contrary of that of an improviser.

The design of the whole is drawn before being visible; the film, formed before being formulated; the cinéaste knows that, without knowing what this design and this form will be. It is a matter of putting the puzzle together again, each piece after the other; he does not know in what order these pieces will present themselves to him; what one takes for improvisation is only the logic of the whole disengaging itself little by little from itself. One would say that his work is entirely finished ahead of time, and that his labor modestly limits itself to disengaging it shot by shot, to paraphrase Cocteau speaking of Satie.

Moreover Braque said: "When I begin, it seems to me that my picture is on the other side, only covered with that white dust, the canvas. It is enough for me to dust it. I have a little brush to disengage the blue, another for the green or for the yellow: my paint brushes. When everything is cleaned, the picture is finished." It is creation contrariwise. This creation is never truly finished, nor the puzzle complete; new pieces can always integrate themselves into it; let us fear supplying them. The poets of modern art sweep our doorsteps; since Godard is this sweeper of shadows, let us not add to his task.

Jean-Louis COMOLLI

## *Afterwards*

The same highway leads today to Alphaville, that not long ago led to the waste land of *Les Carabiniers*. There it was the obscure, pathetic, brutal life of before Conscience. Some years later, a few years later, today—in 1965, or 1975, the word itself has disappeared, banished from the dictionaries. What happened, *between times?* The evil is inscribed on the face of an improbable secret agent, marking it with strange irregularities, veiling his eyes between wakefulness and sleep. Hypotheses have been set forth, simple or complex, raving or logical. None has been retained. A legend has formed; it is peddled in bars by a ghost in a raincoat, dressed as in the detective films and novels of some twenty years ago. He warrants that all that has happened, happened to *him.*

*Alphaville* is a suspect story, future and past, decked with the embellishments and the lacunae of memory; the uncertain I to whom the tale appears, hung on the thread of this memory, prisoner of its deviousnesees, blinded by abrupt recalls, infected in his turn by the tale which maybe he dreams, which maybe dreams him. He remembers everyday objects, that only the words of the story remove to the strangeness of another time and of another space. But night is identical, here and there, and time is done away with in a present that the legend recovers, gives a form, and distorts. The character who is speaking persists in struggling against these distortions. He claims to bring back proofs, or something like a warning. He brings words. One listens to him attentively, troubled without too much believing him. To our sorrow, the world is real, and to his sorrow, he is a poet. Become himself, when the fable is completed, in the small hours, legend.

Jean-André FIESCHI

## *Condemned To Silence*

KING AND COUNTRY (POUR L'EXEMPLE). English film of Joseph Losey. *Scenario:* James Lansdale Hedson and Evan Jones from the play by John Wilson. *Photography:* Denys Coop. *Music:* Larry Adler. *Decors:* Richard MacDonald. *Costumes:* Roy Ponting. *Editor:* Reginald Mills. *Cast:* Dirk Bogarde (Capt Hargreaves), Tom Courtenay (Hamp), Leo McKern (Capt. O'Sullivan), Barry Foster (Lt. Webb), James Villiers (Capt. Midgley), Peter Copley (The Colonel), Larry Justice (Lt. Prescott), Vivian Matalon (the chaplain), Jeremy Spencer (Sparrow), James Hunter (Sykes), David Cook (Wilson), Larry Taylor (Sergeant-Major), Jonah Seymour (captain of the military police), Keith Buckley (captain of the guard), Richard Arthure (the guard Charlie), Derek Partridge (captain at the court martial), Brian Tipping (lieutenant at the court martial), Raymond Brody, Terry Palmer, Don Cornwall (first, second and third soldiers of Hamp's platoon). *Producer:* Norman Priggen—Joseph Losey, 1964. *Distributor:* Ucinex.

What has happened to *King and Country* one could reasonably least expect: people have reproached Losey for having shirked his subject, for having stopped short of his intentions, in brief for having found fault with open doors, from lack of rigor or of lucidity, indeed from complaisance. For this, they said, is an odd film, in which war and its dramas, justice and its efficiency, desertion and liberty, are meant to be evoked and called in question, but whose seeds of subversion lost singularity by being seen mobilized by a haggard character, irresponsible, unconscious of his actions, almost an imbecile. And for others, it is indeed a useless enterprise, This war film without war, whose range does not go beyond that of the classical humanitarian theses on the ugliness of combats and the ambiguity of judgments. To reply, of course, that war loses nothing by being evoked here rather than shown, reduced to this presence of mud, of rats, of fatigue and of wretchedness; to cite examples (they are not rare) where "fundamental words have been put in the mouths of the simple, of the mad, of the ignorant to humiliate the learned"; to say with Losey that Hamp, rich in earthy common sense, in peasant strength, in dry humor, is not an imbecile, — that would still partake of an awkward system of defense of which the film has no need.

It seems, on the other hand, that it is not sacrificing to the fashion of language and of the relations of sign to meaning, to see posed, throughout *King and Country,* the problem of its true thesis; and in desertion, rather than its subject, an object of which the film would be only an attempt to encircle the definition.

To pose desertion as a point of departure, of which it would be only the more or less successful illustration or apologia, comes back to substituting for the incessant question that the film sets free, a rigid affirmation that it precisely refuses to take upon itself, and to fall into the error of the jurist appointed to the trial, who thinks in all good faith that he is making the problem progress when he declares that Hamp will be equitably judged, condemned if he is convicted of

having deserted, acquitted if he is not. Very well, but what is desertion? Here, obviously, one thinks of the war of 1914-1918, of isolated deserters, of even entire regiments that deserted, of those who were shot, compared with whom, of course, Hamp looks like a pale figure. But rather than condemn Losey for having chosen so lame a representative, let us grant him the right to have had his idea about, precisely, the *question*. For, in the examples cited above, desertion appears as an action considered, intentional, at least taken upon oneself, the logical outcome of a decision motivated by political, social, humanitarian choices, or else the simple refusal of combats. That does not prevent the act of desertion, even when one evokes it today, from seeming the exception, the scandal. Everyone not having deserted, far from it, the action could not represent a universal decision. Moreover, an action of refusal, of revolt, of breach, always seems an aberrant phenomenon, autonomous, shut up in itself and self-sufficient, facing immense reserves of resignation.

It puts in question only itself, whereas obedience to obscure and universal forces, such as the feelings of horror or of panic, holds a question in reserve for all those who endure them without yielding. The intelligence of Losey is precisely to have rid Hamp of all preliminary opinion (he enlisted out of defiance and is not a bad soldier) to situate his film at the level of these forces; the most dead-set of warmongers is not sure that he will always resist terror or the desire to run away aimlessly, merely to go away. Nor even, once this moment of terror is past, that he will not yield to it again (Hamp, whom his lawyer asks whether, in case he should be pardoned, he would then remain at his post, makes this admirable reply: "How do you want me to be sure?"). Through this unique and fragile case, it is the Other, the one who "remains standing, over him the rain of death falling from the airplanes, the burning pitch falling from the walls of the city, under him minds and traps, about him plague and asphyxiating gases, bait of flesh for the javelin and the arrow, point of aim, pulp for tanks, kettle for gas . . . he, struck by the dreadful leprosy of patience . . .," who appears, be he multiplied to millions of examples all the length of history, the monstrous exception. From that time it is fitting not to reduce Hamp's daze, as people have done somewhat simply, to an essential stupidity; explicable in part by the traumas he has endured, it partakes especially of a prodigious surprise at the consequences of an action whose facility and *naturalness* do not appear to him to deserve such attention. Upset that this attention compels him to look anew at his own flight, as people are returning it to him, transformed, falsified, enriched. Henceforth, he judges his action as a stranger. Inserted in a net of false motivations, menacing by its possible prolongations, usable by the exemplary punishment to which it can give occasion, his "desertion" seems to him a remote action, strange, left behind.

One easily foresees the objection that would consist in saying that *King and Country* is taken from a stage play, and I will not take as proof of the beauty of this film that Losey has reworked, transformed, shaken, the original materials, that he has kept the sixth part of the original play, and changed the character of Hamp entirely to make of him something other than the imbecile that effectively he was; nor this obsessive presence of mind, of confinement, or these sounds of cannon in the distance; all arguments by which the most mediocre cinéaste never fails to make it believed but that he has escaped bad theatre to make "true" cinema. No, what it matters to stress, is precisely the nature of the distance, of the dialectical coming-and-going that Losey has been able to maintain between what he had obtained from external *données*, and the purely cinematographic element that was his own contribution: be it between this trial, calmly,

*King And Country*, Dirk Bogarde, Tom Courtenay.

simply filmed, but slyly tranquil, and this finite exterior unfurling what many have believed to be but useless pseudo-baroque flames grafted on a thesis in other respects fully set forth. *King and Country*, without being a dogmatic film, nonetheless, by the very way in which it yields a series of questions, implies a message. Simply, the message does not exhaust the work, any more than it does for the work of Brecht or Buñuel. It would be fitting then to question oneself about what people call "work with a message," and about the discredit from which it generally suffers. People willingly say it is heavy, insistent, without life. But if heaviness and insistence are there, that rests less in that the work weighs on us without respite the opinion that it intends to have us share, than in that it tries most often, and as if suffering from some inferiority complex, to mask its thesis under exterior lures, to pass for something else. As if the original idea, living in the theoretical milieu in which it arose, became, confronted with the phantoms of the real life in which it masquerades, a dead idea. As if, naked and offered to gaze, it appeared stronger and more complex than draped in an explicit apparatus more or less well fitted. When the thesis does not burst out immediately in substances, when the idea is not, from the first germ of the work, lived in terms of human relationships, (as was the case for *The Servant*) it remains for the *auteur*, and Losey has not failed to feel it here, to refuse all suspicious amalgams of abstract and concrete, all ornament plated on afterwards, and on the contrary to stress the border between the two, so that the one not appear as the justification of the other, but as its simulacrum and that which designates it. Not a symbolic relationship: the symbol implies that the significant passes beyond the signified, Christianity will always be more vast than the Cross, and peace than the dove. But techniques of allusion, by which, as Marthe Robert and Barthes have seen, all the work of, for example, Kafka proceeds, which consists in establishing between the two terms the relationship of an *as if*, then to reabsorb the analogy, but this time in favor of the exterior term, to fix on it all the weight of the relationship. The interior element (here all that concerns Hamp), becomes the neutral, withdrawn, discreet form of the relationship; the allusive element (the chorus of companions, the trial and execution of the rat) the rich, intense, spectacular, atrocious, charged form. The circuit that has been established changes polarity: no longer man made like a rat, but rat made like a man. Until the final execution returns to and infuses in the event the weight of which its simulacrum had emptied it, by merging in a higher category of the derisory that event itself and that which was the first degree of derision.

In *Les Premiere Degrés (Cahiers* No. 156), Michel Delahaye made very clear the plasticity of an attitude that consists in charging the shadow to the maximum to let the prey run along more freely. Here, no more of shadow or of prey, but that tension between the two in which their limit tends to be submerged. Today again, Losey poses at the start the realist acceptance of the world, tempered immediately by a bomb, a withdrawal, a reserve of ethical order: between the yes and the no (let one not understand there a guilty suppleness), it is thanks to *but*, light and menacing adverb, that Losey shakes the iron collar of the sermon to set in it his own dispute.

—Jean INOBRAN

# *Straight Ahead*

IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO (L'EVANGILE SELON SAINT MATTHIEU; THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW). Italian film of Pier Paolo Pasolino. *Scenario:* Pier Paolo Pasolini. *Photography:* Tonino Delli Colli. *Cast:* Enrique Irazoqui (Christ), Margherita Caruso (the Blessed Virgin, young), Susanna Pasolini (the Blessed Virgin, aged), Marcello Morante (St. Joseph), Mario Socrate (St. John the Baptist), Settimio Di Porto (St. Peter), Otello Sestili (Judas), Ferruccio Nuzzo (St. Matthew), Giacomo Morante (St. John), Alfonso Gatto (St. Andrew), Enzo Siciliano (St. Simon), Giorgio Agamben (St. Philip), Guido Cerretani (St. Bartholomew), Luigi Barbini (St. James, son of Alpheus), Marcello Galdini (St. James, son of Zebedee), Elio Spaziani (St. Thaddeus), Rosario Migale (St. Thomas), Rodolfo Wilcock (Caiaphas), Alessandro Tasca (Pontius Pilate), Amerigo Bevilacqua (Herod I), Francesco Leonetti (Herod II), Franca Cupane (Herodias), Paola Tedesco (Salome), Rossana Di Rocco (the Angel of the Lord), Eliseo Boschi (Joseph of Arimathea), Natalia Ginsburg (Mary of Bethany), Renato Terra (a Pharisee). *Producer:* Arco Film — Lux — Alfredo Bini, 1964. *Distributor:* Lux.

The two earlier films of Pasolini (and *Mamma Roma,* still more than *Accatone)* tended already towards Christ-symbolism. So Pasolini was prepared to film the Gospel, a little as Brooks, by *The Brothers Karamazov* (of which T. E. Lawrence said it was the fifth Gospel) to film *Elmer Gantry.*

Something else qualified him to bring off this unique experiment: the fact of being "outside." That allowed him to dig to the bottom of the heap without "complexes," to see everything with a new vision, and to scour the Gospel, as Malraux does monuments, in order to give it back to us in its first vigor.

It is the spirit of boldness: to tackle the monument, joined to the spirit of submission: to respect it. But this submission itself was a risk in the manner in which it could disconcert everyone: both the atheists, likely to regret the orthodoxy of the process, and the Catholics, who in general have read the book little or badly. Intransigence has paid off. Everyone is content. And for good reasons.

The principle, then, is the pure and simple illustration of the text (note that Pasolini chooses — questions of affinities — the driest and most "polemic" of the Gospels), but that text finds itself incarnated in the reality of the settings and of the characters, and through the sensibility of the period and of the auteur, who feels himself the more free in that he has accepted the constraint of fidelity. Guided by this barrier, he can, within it, permit himself a great many things that otherwise he could not have done or would not have dared to do and that in any case (given equal honesty and intelligence) neither a Catholic nor a Marxist of strict obedience would have dared to do, both equally, although with different complexes.

In other respects, the film satisfies the stylists too (who see studied elegance where there is only materialization, but ultimately who see and that is the principal thing) and even the amateurs of painting, who cite the names of painters from the past. Here, I do not say that they are wrong, simply that it was impossible that Pasolini's way should not at some points intersect paths formerly followed starting from the same themes, and with the same striving for fidelity, at once to the text, to their period, and to themselves, by artists whose personalities moreover could not be so very different from Pasolini's. Convergences.

But at the beginning, everyone is a little surprised. At the same time, since this beginning is one of the strongest moments of the film, it asserts itself, and the way is opened. Next one accepts, then one believes, one proceeds, one is carried off. And one accepts everything. Even to the music, this apparently mad mixture of Bach, of Nevskian Prokofiev and of blues (sung in English — and their perfect appropriateness to the film verifies the authenticity of their Biblical spirit) without mentioning the specially composed bridge music, of "primitive" style. And in the end the film acquires the matter-of-fact-ness of "it is like that," a little like the uncriticizable films of Demy (and the universe of Pasolini too is in a sense a closed universe peopled with interconnected phantoms) that one accepts or rejects but that one can scarcely dispute.

And when I say that one believes in it, I mean too that one lets oneself be taken a little as by a detective film (and the film often has the rapidity of one — even in the sermons that Christ flings out at long strides; from then one understands that he had scarcely time to waste and that he knew it), moreover that one is constantly surprised by the unfolding of this story, whose end, nevertheless, in principle one already knows.

Now, therefore, in the way of audacity and respect combined, Pasolini has gone very far. To be specific and given an example, let us take the Angel. Each time that the Angel is talked about, Matthew says that he appeared in a dream. Who does not see what it permitted, this "dream" (and what anyone else would have permitted himself), what supreme temptation of ambiguous fidelity it concealed, offered on a platter by the Evangelist himself. For it was easy, tempting and (apparently) rewarding, to mark with the sign "dream" all the appearances of the Angel, which a Catholic or an atheist would no doubt have done, the first saying to himself that the dream, certainly, was inspired by God — but saving for himself, in fact, the luxury of not offending the second, who on his part (and without offending the first either) would have seen in this apparition a most normal case of dream mechanism in the *engagé,* among those that existential psychoanalysis explains so well. Pasolini, refusing this doubtful struggle with the Angel, each time that he is to speak of him to us, shows us a real one.

In the same way he presents us with real miracles. And before the simplicity and the boldness of the proceeding, one bows. But this proceeding, who, today, would have had the strength to tackle it? Who could have made the scene of walking on water without falling lamentably (the more that faking is a thing that is not pardoned)? No one, except Cocteau.

To sum up, Pasolini succeeds in the very measure in which he denies himself every evasion, and goes straight to the end, to the only end that he has proposed to himself, after having closed all the other outlets. The richness and the strength of the meaning derives from the outspokenness of the signs.

A confirmation: when there is a superior position of contradictory signs, that does not lead to ambiguity. On the contrary, the privileged meaning becomes stronger by the absorption of the signs opposed to it. See Salomé's dance. This, which until now has always been rendered as a manifest eroticism (but it was always too much or too little), is performed, in Pasolini's film, by a young dancer decked with all the signs (as to physical appearance, to dress, to behavior) that customarily connote the virginal. Result: one feels deeply her incredible perversity.

Here we emerge on another aspect of the film: it is the work of a sensualist, of someone who has physically felt the weight of the words (this text admirably flung out — its violent rectitude — gives the exhortations of Christ all their strength. Let us think of the "let them come" that in general provokes murmuring), the weight of gestures and of steps (I have said the strolling sermons, but there is, too, the scene of the merchants of the temple — one of the most beautiful of the film—admirable struggle, precise as choreography, between the spirit from above and the spirit of this world, mediated by the objects, and that finds itself joining the Kabuki climate). And, thereby, the silences and the halts, among them the sermon on the mount, take all their weight.

Moreover, the actors (all disconcerting, at first, all indispensable), have been chosen by their look and their physical radiance, dependent on Pasolini's own personality. That is so obvious that it would not be worth the trouble of mentioning it, were it not that people have attacked the film on the basis of one of

the components of that personality, specifically, homosexuality, which obviously constitutes a low blow. For it would have been offensive, certainly, to see Pasolini put the film to the service of his own obsessions, but it is precisely the opposite that is true. He has put all that he was to the service of the film. All that he was, of course, and if there is something to point out in this connection, it is indeed the conscience and the restraint with which he has proceeded. The result is that all that elsewhere, or otherwise, could have turned to the worst, found itself here turned to the best.

Small detail, to conclude: it seems that the sense of the sacred is less manifest here than in—let us say—*The Flowers of Saint Francis* (Rossellini), *Ordet* (Dreyer), *Nazarin* (Buñuel) or even *Elmer Gantry* (Brooks). But that is not at all paradoxical, and it even bears out to what point Pasolini has understood the Gospel. For the sacred surrounds nocturnal experience of the beyond, while we have here its daylight revelation. We are at the center of the sacred (whence this calm, as at the center of the cyclone), at the moment when the sacred is reinvented and redistributed by a prophet. And he, making us witnesses of the mystery (of which he is the original), if he does not explain it to us, at least makes us understand its ways. Anguish has no place.

The mission of Christ was even, in this sense, to render the sacred null and void. It is he who assumed responsibility for it, and who gave it the only form under which it should be lived henceforth. And the Church which founded itself on him leaves to none of its faithful the concern of experiencing the sacred. They are only invited to share in this original and unique experience that Christ lived once for all men. Here we emerge on the other aspect of the Gospel legacy: to give to religious and human experience a direction, an end, starting from an experience dated in history. Man saw himself given an Origin and a End.

That was to establish a linear vision of history (not to say to establish history) in a world which, until then, was universally conceived under a cyclical form. Now it was this conception (transcendence having been eliminated) that all modern theories of progress were to follow—theories later gathered, organized, taken in trust by Marxism.

That is the ground of the only deep relationship that can unite Christianity and Marxism in his film (relationship that manifests itself under none of the forms in which people have believed they saw it), except to specify that today a complicity of fact tends to be established between the two ideologies, in the face of sporadic resurgences, in our time, of the old pagan sense of the sacred.

Moreover, the one and the other have, too, in common that they see history from too short a distance, condemning themselves to take for a straight line what is only a very little segment of the great circle.—Michel DELAHAYE.

# *From Film To Film / Satyajit Ray*

*(Continued from page 19)*

marvelous, is always improvised. Nothing fixes its unfolding in time.

I was still in secondary school when, at thirteen or fourteen, I discovered a record in my relatives' house, a Beethoven violin concerto. I was fascinated by it, and by the personality of the great musician. I read then everything that concerned Beethoven, from Indian popularizations to Romain Rolland. Even before I was a university student, I began to collect recordings of European classical music.

As a cinéaste, I owe much to music. Musical forms like the symphony or the sonata have much influenced the structure of my films. For *Charulata* I thought endlessly of Mozart. In the Apu trilogy the theme of the train was used and developed for its visual and sonorous elements like the theme of a symphony. *Kachenjungha* is a kind of rondo, in which one begins by introducing the elements A B C D E, that one makes return a certain number of times. In cinema the use of a musical structure permits taking liberties with the material chosen and retained. I do not like arbitrary characters, disarticulated, cut out from life, as in certain modern paintings. I direct my films in harmony with the rhythm of human breathing. Is that why people find them old-fashioned? I value a certain style that is in harmony with the human rhythm, the beating of the heart, if I admire *Ugetsu* or *Ikiru,* it is for having found that in Mizoguchi and Kurosawa.

I would like to be able to experiment more with form, now that the audience is beginning to value such researches. But I do not want to make films that pass over the heads of the spectators. I have treated new psychological themes, whose content was not at all conventional, but I did not want to use for expressing them a disarticulated language that would keep them from being followed and understood. Some young directors, because they deliberately forget the audience, end in no longer being able to direct films. Now, it is necessary to be able to continue to work, meanwhile causing the audience to advance.

I have succeeded in remaining in harmony with my audience. All my films are assured of having a first run of at least six weeks in Calcutta. That reassures producers, and I can choose among them, because I am one of the directors most in demand. I would like, thanks to that, to be able to take up all *genres,* whether they are modern, traditional, or even fantastic or mythological.

The shooting time for my films rarely exceeds six weeks. For each shot, one to three takes, almost never more. The proportion of negative not used in the editing is not very high. It is in the viewer of the camera that I always check the playing of my actors. In fact for two takes out of three, I am myself the cameraman of my films, determining the dollyings, the use of the zoom, the centerings, etc.

Because of my methods of work, my films are not expensive, and their average budget is about 300,000 rupees (300,000 F—$60,000). Even for my film in color, I was determined to respect this average budget, and that is why I shot it in four weeks only. This relatively low cost of production permits amortizing all my films in the Bengali market, without ever thinking of the rest of India, of the Bombay audience, or of the sale abroad. A film is not like a painting that one can make for oneself alone. If one is a cinéaste one must think first of his audience. And so much the better if afterwards your films reach a much wider audience. I thought for example that *Kanchenjungha* would never leave Bengal. Two years later I was able to show the film to Mme. Kawakita, to Lindsay Anderson, to you yourself. You tell me that the film perhaps would have success in Tokyo, in London, in Paris. So much the better, but it matters first to me to be valued and understood in my own country.

It is still of Bengal that I am thinking for another project, which will take place during the famine of 1943 that killed my compatriots by the hundreds of thousands.

The film I am planning is the adaptation of a novel by a new Bengali writer. It takes place in a little village where provisions begin to run short. It ends with the first death from hunger. But the villagers do not yet know that the famine is going to kill them in very great numbers. And then, I have in my head as well an idea from the time of Tagore, about 1905, when the terrorists began their attempts against the English colonials . . . If I can make so many films and with a short shooting time, it is because I spend much time preparing them and putting them in perfect order. My first draft is generally much too prolific a manuscript, from which I establish an extremely detailed technical *découpage;* this for reasons of economy, because then the shooting is much less expensive. (Conversation written up by Georges Sadoul. New Delhi-Calcutta. January-February 1965.)

# *Filmography Of Satyajit Ray*

1955 PATHER PANCHALI. *Producer:* West Bengal Government. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from the novel by Bibhuti Bannerji. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Ravi Shankar. *Decors:* Bansi Chandragupta. *Editor:* Dulal Dutt. *Cast:* Kanu Bannerji, Karuna Bannerji, Uma Dasgupta, Subir Bannerji, Chunibala.

1956 APARAJITO. *Producer:* Epic Films. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from the novel by Bibhuti Bannerji. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Ravi Shankar. *Cast:* Smaran Ghosal, Pinaki Sengupta, Karuna Bannerji.

1957 JALSAGHAR *The Music Room. Producer:* Aurora Film Corporation. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Tarashankar Bannerji. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Vilayet Khan. *Cast:* Chhobi Biswas, Padma Devi.

1958 PARASH PATHAR *(La Pierre philosophale). Producer:* L. B. Films International. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Parasuram. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Ravi Shankar. *Cast:* Tulsi Chakravarty, Ranibala Devi, Kali Bannerji.

1959 APUR SANSAR *The World of Apu — The World of Apu). Producer:* Satyajit Ray Productions. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Bibhuti Bannerji. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Ravi Shankar. *Cast:* Soumitra Chatterji, Sharmila Tagore, Alok Chakravarky, Sivapan Mukherji.

1960 DEVI. *Producer:* Satyajit Ray Productions. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray. from a short story by Prabhat Mukerji. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Ali Akbar Khan. *Cast:* Chhobi Biswas, Soumitra Chatterji, Sharmila Tagore, Karuna Bannerji.

1961 TEEN KANYA *(Les Trois Filles — Three Daughters). Producer:* Satyajit Ray. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from a novel by Rabindranath Tagore. *Photography:* Soumendu Roy. *Music:* Satyajit Ray. *Cast:* Soumitra Chatterji, Aparna Dasgupta, Kali Bannerji, Anil Chatterji, Chandana Bannerji.

1961 TAGORE. *Producer:* Government of India. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray. *Photography:* Soumendu Roy. *Music:* Jyotirindra Moitra.

1962 KANCHENJUNGHA. *Producer:* N.C.A. Productions. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Satyajit Ray. *Cast:* Chhobi Biswas, Karuna Bannerji, Anil Chatterji, Pahari Sanyal, Anuva Gupta, Aloknanda Roy. *(Eastmancolor).*

1962 ABHIJAN. *Producer:* Abhijatrik. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Tarashankar Bannerji. *Photography:* Soumendu Roy. *Music:* Satyajit Ray. *Cast:* Soumitra Chatterji, Waheeda Rehman.

1963 MAHANAGAR *(La Grande Ville — The Great City). Producer:* R. D. Bandal & Co. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Ivarendra Mitra. *Photography:* Subrata Mitra. *Music:* Satyjit Ray. *Cast:* Madhabi Mukerji, Soumitra Chatterji, Kapurush O. Manapurush, Vicky Redwood, Java Bhaduri.

1963 CHARULATA. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Rabindranath Tagore.

1965 THE COWARD AND THE SAINT. *Producer:* R. D. Bandal & Co. *Scenario:* Satyajit Ray, from Premen Mitra and Parasuram. *Photograph:* SoumenduRoy. *Music:* Satyajit Ray. *Cast:* Madhabi Mukerji, Soumintra Chatterji. *(Filmography established by Satyajit Ray.)*

# *Openings*

## 6 French films

*Baraka sur X 13,* film in color of Maurice Cloche, with Gérard Barray, Sylvia Koscina, Agnès Spaak. A kind of advertising streamer for the Bodygraph of the Belle Jardinière: the many brawls are only to test the staunchness of the cloth. But that would be much better with tomato paste, as they say on television: strong with this edifying maxim, from time to time Cloche spills half a can on the jackets. They hold up well. Bravo.—J.-A. F.

*La Dame de pique,* film of Léonard Keigel, with Dita Parlo, Katharina Renu, Michael Subor, Jean Négroni, Philippe Lemaire. Gives all the measure of the adolescent romanticism in which some people wrongly confine Pushkin. Actualizes exactly what we can imagine art is at the age of fifteen. Since Keigel is older, he has been able to wrap it up in the rules, no less exact, of the F.A. — F.A. Fine Arts firmly applied. — M.D.

*Deux heures à tuer,* film of Ivan Govar, with Michel Simon, Pierre Brasseur, Raymond Rouleau, Catherine Sauvage. —Like *Galia, Deux heures à tuer* is attributable to the fine inteligence of a professional of mystery and of atmosphere. But Ivan Govar is less amusing than Lautner and even the last Carné appears a measuring standard of modernity compared with this sordid grey in which noble old hams confront one another. Alas, among them is Michel Simon, who once again succeeds in places in making the blackest stupidity moving. As the pertinent Jean Houssaye says so well: "The striking theme we owe to the original André Popp is noticed and should be remembered."—J.-A. F.

*Operation Lotus bleu,* film in scope and in color of Terence Hathaway, with Ken Clark, Helga Line, Philippe Hersant, Mitsuko. This is a traveling Bond: the gull is the spectator. To be noted, the good photography of the Spanish cameraman Baena.—J.-P. B.

*Paris au mois d'août,* film in scope and color of Pierre Granier-Deferre, with Charles Aznavour, Susan Hampshire, Alan Scott, Michel de Ré, Daniel Ivernel. Brief encounter of a vendor of Samaritanism, who passes for a painter, with an English cover-girl. The populism of René Fallet transposed by Grunier-Deferre becomes a moment of sham. The employee has at his disposal an immense apartment and everything in keeping. Hollywood of old, without the money. Only amusing and basically sympathetic detail: Charles Aznavour, who is practically the producer of the film is complimented through the mouth of Susan Hampshire: she repeats to him several times that he makes love very well.—M.M.

*La Sentinelle endormi,* film in 70 mm and in color of Jean Dréville, with Noël-Noël, Pascale Audret, Francis Blanche, Raymond Souplex, Michel Galabru. Aided by his factotum Dréville, Noël-Noël brushes a fresco in 70 mm starting from a minute theatrical argument to which the innocuous style of televised dramas would be better suited. If it is not presumptuous to talk about ideology here, that which emerges from this as-unaggressive-as-possible novelette is so comfortably nonexistent in its satisfied weakness and its unctuous paternalism that it discourages even bad temper and impulses to sarcasm. The object is of another age — better, ageless, finely chiseled and adorned with a French irony dismal and stupid enough to make one weep. One gets a little angry at so much money squandered, as a matter of form and because one really must occupy oneself, one then goes gently to sleep, like the sentinel of the title on the battlefield of Jena.—J.-A. F.

## 11 American films

*Black Autumn,* or *Psychodrama (Violence dans la nuit),* film of Richard L. Hilliard, with Lee Philips, Sheppard

Strudwick, James Farentino, Jean Hale, Margot Hartman. Young women, supposedly pretty, and no doubt not very virtuous, are savagely killed by a mysterious hand that wields with skill the commando poignard. Who is guilty? The painter, sanguinary ex-GI? The principal of the girls' school, professional *voyeur?* or the handsome delivery-man with steel muscles and tenacious jealousy? Don't try to find out. Besides you will have found out as early as the first reel. It is the sister of the talented dauber. Del Tenney — the producer — and Richard Hilliard, to whom we owe as well the legendary and unreleased *Horror of Party Beach,* have tied up a little surprise film which, all told, lets itself be seen without displeasure. The amateurs of the "second degree" will even go to the point of finding in it some reminiscences of the regretted Vernon Sullivan. Without the humor, of course.—M.C.

*The Family Jewels (Les Tontons farceurs).* See *Cahiers* French edition, interview page 30 and texts page 37.

*Five Weeks in a Ballon (Cinq semaines en ballon),* film in scope and in color of Irvin Allen, with Red Buttons, Fabian, Barbara Eden, Peter Lorre.—New tinkering with a novel of Jules Verne. All the marvelousness of the book has disappeared in favor of a photograph album of notable platitudes. Only Barbara Eden and Peter Lorre make the result less frightful than *L'Ile mystérieuse.*—P.B.

*The Hallelujah Trail (Sur la piste de la grande caravane),* film in cinerama and in color of John Sturges, with Burt Lancaster, Lee Remick, Pamela Tiffin, Jim Hutton, Donald Pleasance, Brian Keith.—Even the worst enemies of John Sturges would not wish him such an end. The pseudo-talent of the Clausewitz of westerns endlessly draws out a battle — not for women, *misogynie oblige,* misogyny imposes obligation!—but for a convoy of whiskey. Imbecilic and crude parody of a style already parodic. Note the scene of "massage" that rivals the famed session of masturbation Jane Fonda — Jean-Claude Brialy in *La Ronde (Circle of Love)* of Vadim, less unexpected than one might believe in this hypocritical farce.—M.M.

*King Rat (Un Caïd),* film of Bryan Forbes, with George Segal, James Fox, Tom Courtenay, Patrick O'Neal, Denholm Elliott, Todd Armstrong — An operator in a prisoner of war camp. One supposes vaguely at the beginning that the idea is going to follow somewhat in the tracks of *Stalag 17,* until the moment when one realizes that ambiguity has been put everywhere. Among other results of the process: the subject splinters into at least ten others, each of which could have been interesting if it had been treated. Whence this odd impression of not knowing where one is. In a camp, at least? No. An idea of a camp, into which, to tell the truth, as many animals as Englishmen have been introduced. Two of them, no doubt, are notable Englishmen: Tom Courtenay and James Fox, but one discovers that, not oriented, they allow themselves everything a little too much.—M.D.

*Lady L ((Lady L),* film in scope and in color of Peter Ustinov, with Sophia Loren, Paul Newman, David Niven, Claude Dauphin, Philippe Noiret, Michel Piccoli, Dalio.—The jealous care brought to the rococo ornamentation of the decors (here Monsieur Loyal is remembering Ophuls, but badly to the point) is not enough to palliate the weaknesses of construction or the stereotyped playing of the actors, and the excessive use of colored lights too often takes the place of mise *en* scène.. Let us point out moreover that *Lady L* is the second low blow struck in less than a month (after *Viva Maria)* against the anarchist Internationale: that way many bombs are lost.

*Nothing But a Man (Un homme comme tant d'autres)*—See *Cahiers* French edition critique page 72.

*The Outlaw is Coming (Les Trois Stooges contre les hors-la-loi),* film of Norman Maurer, with The Three Stooges: Larry, Joe and Curley; Adam West, Nancy Kovack, Mort Mills, Don Lamond.—After having endured Selander, Springsteen, Salkow, Nazarro and other piece-workers, the West is subjected to a new ordeal: the arrival of the monstrous Stooges. The idea of opposing them to the most famous heroes of the westerns, whom they ridicule one after another, helps matters not at all. The originality of the film lies in the amazing (and, to say the least, out of place) allusions to the hermaphrodite tendencies of Wild Bill Hickock and Belle Starr.—P.B.

*Situation Hopeless, But Not Serious (Situation désespérée . . . mais pas sérieuse),* film of Gottfried Reinhardt, with Alec Guinness, Michael Connors, Robert Redford, Mady Rahl, Frank Wolff. —The story is a cocktail of *The Collector* and of *Time Machine,* but Wyler and George Pal not being there, the first part of the title remains a perfect definition of a certain cinema of Germano-British occupation.—P.B.

*War Drums (Les Tambours de la guerre),* film in color of Reginald Le Borg, with Lex Barker, Joan Taylor, Ben Johnson, Jerry Chance, 1957.—An Indian chief susceptible to Yankee charm carries off a young Paleface and marries her to the great despair of postulant squaws. One guesses what follows, very conventional, but fleetingly enlivened by the wedding afternoon during which the American girl, otherwise become a fierce Amazon, initiates the Indian to the "French kiss!"—M.D.

*Wild Seed (Graine sauvage),* film of Brian G. Hutton, with Michael Parks, Celia Kaye, Ross Elliott, Woodrow Chamblin, Rupert Crosse, Eva Novak, 1964.—Only one idea, but treated, and vast, under its limitations of principle. The story is attractive, (and the rapport of actors is good). A young outcast, touching and stubborn, takes under his wing a very young girl fugitive of awkward beauty, who is running away from her adoptive parents to go in search of her real father. They vagabond together. A blues song completes it. There are clashes, but they console each other. The film, which one first thinks its auteurs will not succeed in controlling, very quickly, however, finds an honorable equilibrium by reason of negative but very real qualities like the modesty of the tone and of the words. When, as happens at moments, the beauty of the subject and the art of the story teller are harmonized, it takes on some amplitude. To conclude, the girl finds her father again, but he is amiable, cowardly, and wants nothing of her. She intends to return to her adoptive parents. Then no. To continue to vagabond with the boy. Thus she assumes definitively her role of wandering darling, her means become end.—M.D.

## 9 Italian films

*A 008 operazione stermino (Suspense au Caire pour A 008),* film in color of Umberto Lenzi, with Ingrid Schoeller, Alberto Lupo, Dina De Santis.—C.I.A. and Egyptian counter-espionage, A 008 and X44, bullet-proof windbreaker and transistor, Le Caire and Zermatt, anti-radar and good savants, spies and double agents . . . yet the most diverting thing in the film is a killer in dark glasses whose right hand is covered with a poignard-ejecting glove.—P.B.

*Call Girl 66,* film of Roberto Mauri, with Alberto Lupo, Marilu Tolo, Hélène Sanel, Lisa Bernardi, Aldo Betti, Geppy de Rose.—Having had the lucky idea of choosing the evil day to walk about in Hiroshima, since then the protagonist has been disguising his ravaged face under masks bearing the effigies of the most famous film stars. By night, prostitutes fete him. But he quickly becomes violent and one of the girls confesses that the road is painful that will lead her perhaps to Fellini or to Antonioni. In fact.—J.B.

*I Compagni (The Organizer).* — See *Cahiers* French edition, 175, critique page 73.

*I giganti di Roma (Fort Alesia),* film in scope and in color of Anthony Dawson (Antonio Margheriti), with Richard Harrison, Wandisa Guida, Philippe Hers nt, Nicole Tessier, Ettore Manni, 1964. —The recipes of modern espionage applied to the peplum; in which how a shock commando of the Roman C.I.A.

destroys the secret weapons of some joyous Druids, inventors before H-hour of Titan or Atlas rockets . . . Without comment.—A.J.

*Kindar, l'invulnerabile (Kindar, Prince du désert),* film in scope and in color of Osvaldo Givriani, with Mark Forrest, Mimmo Palmara. — The very insignificance of the mise en scène of Givirani, of the interpretation of Mark Forrest, of the story of this young prince gifted from his birth with invincibility, make it perfectly exemplary of those peplums dedicated to immediate oblivion. To the point that critical lashing proves itself, for once, too facile: is it not useless to seek or to pretend to seek there too a beauty that otherwise one already loves and that is probably absent here? Nor is it necessary to plead guilty: such films arouse an emotion, different to be sure and perhaps contrary to that which the "great" films call forth but which recalls rather well that which one can feel before any landscape, any everyday event. As to pure emotion, all films situate themselves on the same plane, which is elevated, and the final difference is not of degree: it is of kind. The surprising thing would be, not that there are in every film, even this, *at least* five minutes that are interesting, as people have claimed, but that there should be only five interesting minutes.—C.D.

*I misteri della giungla nera (Les Repaires de la Jungle noire),* film in scope and in color of Luigi Capuano, with Guy Madison, Peter van Eyck, Inge Schoener, Giacomo Rossi Stuart, Ivan Desny, 1964. — How a father, twenty years afterwards, finds again the daughter carried off by Thugs of India who had consecrated her to the goddess Kali. Pretty story of love and adventure in nineteenth century India according to the Italian specialist Emilio Salgori.—J.-P. B.

*I piombi di Venezia (La Vengeance du Doge)* film in scope and in color of Pino Mercanti, with Guy Madison, Lisa Gastoni, Jean Claudio, 1963.—The original title points out the "prisons" famed to tourists in Venice, for it was there that the Doge teased his adversaries. Moreover it is not he who takes vengeance, but they: one of the adversaries, lacking a sense of humor, dies, and his friend, the famed Massimo Tiepolo, to repair this injustice, overthrows the sinister Doge. Soon the sequel: *I piombi II,* or *La Fin de Massimo Tiepolo.* We will avoid talking about it, since that has been done already.—J.-P. B.

*I sentieri dell'odio (Les Sentiers de la haine),* film in scope and in color of Fred Wilson (Mario Girolami), with Rod Cameron, Thomas Moore, Patricia Viterbo, Dan Harrison, Enio Girolami, 1964.—Racial frictions between a family of whites and the tribe of Cherokee Indians, dear to Count Basie, the whole filmed in a suburb of Madrid. The white girl loves the red chief, solely it seems from a taste for complications. Few surprises, good or bad, and little to note, except a production less penniless than usual and the convincing acting of Rod Cameron, the only authentic element.—J.-A. F.

*Uno straniero a Sacramento (Je te tuerai),* film in scope and in color by Serge Bergon, with Mickey Hargitay, Steve Saint-Clair, Gabriella Giogelli, Barbara Frey, Ariel Brown. — Pale chrysanthemum sprung from Italian greenhouses and flung, withered when it was scarcely gathered, on the tomb of the great myths, at the burial of the wide-open spaces.—A.J.

## 5 English films

*The Alphabet Murders (A.B.C. contre Hercule Poirot),* film of Frank Tashlin, with Tony Randall, Anita Ekberg, Robert Morlay, Maurice Denham, Guy Rolfe, Sheila Allen, 1964.—This Tashlin, dismal and flat enough in truth, still deserved some consideration on account of the exceptional professional conscience of the *auteur:* one must see how he persists at saving the inept situations of Agatha Christie, and what care he brings to the illustration of an anecdote whose prolongations are foreseeable from the first quarter of an hour. So, by flashes, this commissioned work is transformed into a little fable, pierced, in a very minor key, by the specifically Tashlin quality of a temperament and a style elegantly absurd. J.-A. F.

*Black Fox (Black Fox),* film of Luis Clyde Stoumen. French commentary by Marlene Dietrich. The idea at the base (comparison between Hitler's career and the *Roman de Renard)* being false already, awkwardly and in vain the film tries to prove it.

*The Caretaker (The Caretaker).*—Film of Clive Donner. See critique in our next issue.

*Repulsion (Repulsion),* film of Roman Polanski. See, *Cahiers* French edition, no. 168, *Cannes,* page 69; no. 171, *Berlin,* page 13; and in this issue, interview with Polanski, page ... Critique in our next issue.

*Where the Spies Are (Passeport pour l'oubli),* film in scope and in color by Val Guest, with David Niven, Francoise Dorléac, Cyril Cusack.—In form and in matter, this is comparable to any Umberto Lenzi of the series, even a weaker spoof if possible: the fearful gadget is here a simple Sheaffer's fountain pen and the spies are wearier than ever. The weakness and the excessive use of transparencies made the theater snicker mechanically. The childish lunacy of the anti-communism put forth recalls the high days of McCarthyism: to play the Reds, Guest chose the ugliest actors, the rest is of a piece. One must point out especially a scene supposed to take place in the Cuban airport, where school children, virilely framed, agitate yelling the obligatory Marxist slogans. J.-A. F.

## 5 Mexican films

*Don Quentin el amargado, El Gran Calavera, Gran Casino, La Illusion viaja en tranvia, El Rio la muerte,* films of Luis Buñuel.—For these five films, see article in our next issue.

## 2 German films

*Lana, die Konigin der Amazonen (Liane, fille sauvage* or *Liane, deesse de la jungle),* film in scope and in color of Geza von Cziffra, with Catharina von Schell, Michael Hinz, Anthony Diffring, Christian Wolff, Jara Lex.—New feminine version of Tarzan . . . in which the ugliness of the heroine refers more to the sinister *Jungle Jim* and *Bomba* than to the flights of Burroughs. The German cinema seeks its road, that is a fact; it is certainly not in the jungle that it will find it. — P.B.

*Schusse aus dem Geigenkasten (Jerry Cotton G-man agent C.I.A.),* film of Fritz Umgelter, with George Nader, Heinz Weiss, Richard Munch, Sylvia Pascal, Helga Schlack, Philippe Guegan. — After Scotland Yard, it is the turn of the C.I.A. to inspire (!) the West-German cinéastes. (When will it be Ben Barka and the S.D.E.C.E.?) One moment of hope: one sees a western on television; alas, it is a German western . . . A pessimistic note: the production credits warn that it is a matter of the first film of a long series.—P.B.

## 1 Austrian films

*Die Geliebten der Dr. Jekyll (Les Maitresses du Dr. Jekyll),* film of Jess Franck (Jesus Franco), with Agnès Spaak, Hugh White. — Science considered as means of conjugal vengeance: made misogynous by the adulterous relations of his wife and his brother, a mad savant (ironically interpreted by a film critic of Madrid) transforms the said brother into a robot assassin of women. Of horror, none at all, unless that afforded by a grievous debauch of pseudo-German breasts (the action is supposed to be situated in Austria). The tranquil hoaxing of Jesus Franco culminates in closeups in which terror laughably controls the faces of the hams in service.—J.-A. F.

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

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## *N Y Openings*

*Agent For H.A.R.M.*, film in color of Gerd Oswald, with Wendell Cory, Mark Richman, Carl Esmond, Martin Kosleck. American.

*Apache Uprising*, film in color of Robert G. Springsteen, with Rory Calhoun, Corinne Calvet, John Russell, Lon Chaney. American.

*The Black Torment*, film in color of Robert Hartford Davis, with John Turner, Heather Sears, Ann Lynn, Peter Arne. British.

*The Brain*, of Freddie Francis, with Anne Heyward, Peter Van Eyck, Cecil Parker, Bernard Lee. Remake of Curt Siodmak's "Donovan's Brain." British.

*Face Of The Screaming Werewolf*, of Jerry Warren, with Landa Varle, Lon Chaney, Raymond Gaylord, Donald Barron. Mexican.

*Hercules Vs. The Moon Men*, film in scope and color of Giacomo Gentilomo, with Alan Steel, Jany Clair, Anna Maria Polani, Jean Pierre Honore. Italian.

*How To Stuff A Wild Bikini*, film in scope and color of William Asher, with Annette Funicello, Mickey Rooney, Brian Donlevy, Buster Keaton. American.

*Judith*, film in color of Daniel Mann, with Sophia Loren, Peter Finch, Jack Hawkins. American.

*King And Country*, of Joseph Losey, with Dirk Bogarde, Tom Courtenay, Leo McKern. British.

*Master Of Horror*, of Enrique Carreras, with Narcisco Ibanez-Menta. Spanish.





*Our Man Flint*, film in scope and color of Daniel Mann, with James Coburn, Lee J. Cobb, Edward Mulhare, Gila Golan. American.

*Sandra*, film of Luchino Visconti, with Claudia Cardinale, Jean Sorel, Michael Craig. Italian.

*The Shop On Main Street*, of Jan Kadar and Elmar Klos, with Josef Kroner, Kaminska. Czechoslavakian.

*When The Boys Meet The Girls*, film in scope and color of Alvin Anzer, with Connie Francis, Harve Presnell, Sue Ane Landgon, Joby Baker. American.

*Where The Spies Are*, film in scope and color of Val Guest, with David Niven, Francoise Dorléac, Cyril Cusack. American.

*Wild, Wild Winter*, film in scope and color of Lennie Weinrib, with Gary Clarke, Chris Noel, Steve Franken, Don Edmonds. American.

*Zebra In The Kitchen*, film in scope and color of Ivan Tors, with Jay North, Marshall Thompson.

# *Editor's Eyrie*

## *Andrew Sarris*

First and foremost, a letter from that luminous beauty, Louise Brooks:

"Thanks so much for the English Cahiers. It must have been one hell of a job to reduce your material to such a fascinating selection of photographs and such an intriguing selection of articles.

"Your introduction was cleverly sharp and plain and short preceding the Bazin translation which took me two hours and three dictionaries to get through. Mind, I am no intellectual judge but it did seem a lot of words, fancy words and four-letter words for director to get to the simple fact that 'the politique des auteurs' is 'the negation of the work to the profit of the exaltation of its auteur.' Ever since the beginning of films, writers and directors have been jealous of the actor's glory, trying to find some way of wiping them off the screen with words . . .

"One truth Bazin pressed to the point, I thought was splendid. 'It is only through an absurd discrimination that one could attribute to cinéastes alone a senility from which other artists would be protected.'

"From London I have been hearing all sorts of spiteful things about how badly the Chaplin film is going . . .

"Now I have just got a letter from Kevin Brownlow who was on the set with Gloria Swanson. And he says that Chaplin is full of bounce and having the time of his life. Naturally it is tough for Loren and Brando, discovering that they have bodies and an infinite number of ways of using them.

"Thanks again, Andrew. And don't pay any attention to me. If the magazine wasn't complicated and obscure, people wouldn't think they were getting the real French McCoy."

Kenneth Tynan in the *London Observer* under a sub-head in his Films column, said sub-head proclaiming, RELIEF IN PRINT:

"Readers distressed by the recent dearth of good films may be interested to know the cause: the Academy Cinema has had a hit. For more than a month, both its public auditoria have been occupied by the lamentable 'Giulietta of the Spirits.' When a bottleneck occurs at the Academy, London virtually ceases to exist as a centre of world cinema. I have whiled away part of my ennui by reading the first issue of *Cahiers du Cinema in Einglish* (available from the Cahiers Publishing Company, 635 Madison Avenue, New York City).

"The inaugural number is a retrospective intended to give you the flavor: which, by God, it does, conveying that mixture of rabid parochialism, insensate Hollywood worship and pure revelation that distinguished the parent magazine, which launched the present French school of critic-directors. *Cahiers* addicts will thrill to the crisp, authoritative inaccuracy of remarks like: 'A new, brilliant generation of Hollywood directors from Nicholas Ray to Joshua Logan all emerged from the Actors' Studio in New York.' (Neither Ray nor Logan ever belonged to the Actors' Studio.) And translation is not wholly to blame for the following description of Murnau's key quality: 'this diffuse presence of an irremediable something that will gnaw at and corrupt each image the way it wells up behind each of Kafka's sentences.'

"At the same time, there are dazzling items like André Bazin on *la politique des auteurs*, that gallant doctrine which represents the last gasp of individualism in the mass media. According to the *auteur* theory, a film qualifies as a work of art if the director's signature is visible on every frame. Hence the passion of *Cahiers* fans for Hollywood B pictures: 'the acknowledged banality of the scenario leaves that much more room for the personal contribution of the *auteur*. An

Louise Brooks

*auteur* can do no wrong, whereas nothing is more despicable than a mere *metteur en scène*, who simply shoots what the screen-writer wrote.'

"Like M. Bazin, I mistrust these exclusive classifications. Because the French have two expressions—and lack a single word for 'director'—they have talked themselves into believing that they have a classical antithesis, a genuine duality. In fact, they have good, bad and indifferent directors like everyone else, with non-verbal shades of grey in between."

We hope that future issues of *Cahiers du Cinema in English* will clarify some of the "exclusive classifications," about which Kenneth Tynan is so dubious, but we remain grateful for his having reviewed us in good faith and high spirits. Roger Greenspun of *Moviegoer* and Crowell-Collier reveals a mandarin's mania for Madison Avenue with his sly suggestion that we doctor up the Tynan article in genuine movie-publicity style as follows:

"*Cahiers du Cinema in English* . . . flavour . . . revelation . . . dazzling . . . passion . . . brilliant."

Kenneth Tynan, *London Observer*

For shame, Roger. We are an honest publication. Really we are.

Alan Lovell is somewhat less charitable in the London *Peace News* of March 11, 1966:

"In the fifteen years or so of its existence the French magazine of film criticism, *Cahiers du Cinema*, has created a revolution in attitudes to the cinema. Most importantly by championing the films of certain American directors (Alfred Hitchcock, Howard Hawks, Nicholas Ray, Vincente Minnelli, among others), it has broken down the traditional view of the cinema as divided between European film-makers who produce serious films worthy of the attention of the intelligentsia and American film-makers who produce entertainment designed only to keep the masses happy.

"Through the ideas it developed (principally the notion of the importance of the director's personality in the creation of a film) and its attack on certain traditions in the French cinema (e.g. the film whose only genuine claim to quality was that it was based on a distinguished novel), it paved the way for a new school of cinema, the Nouvelle Vague, represented by films like *The Four Hundred Blows, Breathless, Paris Belongs to Us, Jules and Jim, Une Femme Mariée, Paris vu par* (at present showing at the Paris Pullman cinema in London).

"Now the magazine is to be made available in an English edition as well as French. In a sense, this development comes too late, since the great days of the magazine are clearly over. Of the critics who helped to create the *Cahiers* position, the most authoritative and intelligent, André Bazin is dead, while most of the others, Jean-Luc Godard, Francois Truffaut, Alexandre Astruc, Jacques Rivette, are preoccupied with film-making.

"The first issue (published from New York but available from Housmans and specialist bookshops in Britain at 7s 6d monthly) is a reminder of the great days, since it is a collection of essays from past issues of the magazine. Although the selection is not a particularly intelligent one, the issue is well worth having for the essays by André Bazin on the 'politique des auteurs'; by Truffaut on the 'tradition of quality' in the French cinema; and by Godard on Ingmar Bergman."

As for the selection not being "particularly intelligent," three Lovell-approved essays out of nine is not a bad batting average on this side of the Atlantic. I believe it comes out to .333, and even Mays would settle for that mark in this age of the compleat Koufax. As for the "great days" of the magazine being "clearly over," the writer's gift of prophecy is admirable. Also, it is curious that the magazine's "great days" were never particularly appreciated at the time, and there is no need to go into chapter and verse on all the slings and arrows of outrageous polemics aimed at the Messrs. Bazin, Truffaut, Godard, Rivette etc. in the supposedly "great days." The same battle will be fought many, many times through many, many generations. The greatest danger is that *Cahiers*, French or English, will become too respectable, and thus lose its eternal youth.

Ernest Callenbach in the Spring 1966 Film Quarterly:

"*Cahiers du Cinéma in English*, long-heralded, has published a first 'Special Flashback Issue' edited by Andrew Sarris, containing outstanding items from the magazine's past: Bazin, Godard, Truffaut, Leenhardt, Astruc, Ophuls. Subscriptions to the monthly version, which will begin 'very shortly,' are $9.50 per year; 635 Madison Avenue, New York 10022."

We appreciate the quotes around "very shortly." Film publications in America are notorious for vanishing into limbo and insolvent points beyond. The spirit is willing, but the cash is weak, and all that sort thing. *Cahiers du Cinema in English* is feeling so healthy these days that it is looking forward to consistent monthly appearances, though we hope that consistency turns out to be the least of our virtues. Anyway, the Spring 1966 *Film Quarterly* is quite stimulating, particularly with its articles on Fellini and McLuhan. (University of California Press, Berkeley, California 94720. $1.00 per copy, $4.00 per year in the U. S., Canada and Pan-America. Elsewhere: $1.80 per copy, $7.20 per year.)

Nicholas Gosling of 27 Victoria Road, London W.8., England, writes in a constructive spirit about our first issue:

"Congratulations on producing an English version

of *Cahiers*. It fulfills a long-felt want among those who, like myself, are too lazy to be regular readers of the French version. I was particularly interested in the article by the highly moral young Truffaut, complaining about all those funerals.

"You say in your introduction that you hope for comment from readers, so I hope that you will accept the following remarks as intended to be constructive rather than destructive. I know that French, especially literary French, is devilishly hard to translate, having tried it (including *Cahiers*) myself. But there were a number of mistakes in your first issue which come under the category of howlers, which should, I think, have been avoided.

"For example: in the Bazin article, p. 8, second par., *'collaborateurs'* in the context of a magazine means 'contributors,' not 'collaborators.'

On p. 11, column 2, 1st par., *'achève de se définir* means 'finishes defining itself,' not 'achieves its definition.'

"On p. 18, 2nd par., *'un film genial'* means 'a film of genius,' not 'a genial film.'

"In the Truffaut piece (p. 31, 2nd par.) a sentence and a half seems to have been left out which results in the unhappy sentence 'In adaptation there exists filmable scenes and unfilmable scenes, and that instead of omitting the latter . . . etc.', which is also rather hard on English grammar.

"On p. 32, line 1, of the 2nd column, 'Me, I no longer, perhaps, have the right' is scarcely a correct English version of *'Moi, je n'ai peut-etre plus le droit.'*

"Again in the Leenhardt article, (p. 43, par. 1) 'one must limit himself' is rotten English, even if the translation is all right. On the same page, 6th par., *'en effet'* is wrongly translated as 'in effect'—it means 'in fact' or indeed.' The same mistake occurs in the Godard piece, p. 60, 2nd col. par. 2.

"On p. 55, in the Astruc article (col. 2, par. 1), *'Mais comme dans la peinture baroque'* means 'but as in baroque painting,' not 'but as a baroque painting.'

"In the first line of the Ophuls article *'et croyez-moi'* comes out as 'and believe,' while in the 4th paragraph *'traverser à pied'* turns even more oddly into 'cross . . . on feet.'

"I dare say some of these are pure printing errors due to the difficulties of a first issue, but there are also some which are clearly translator's errors. I realize that mouthfuls like 'the subtlety of an argumentation which could not prevail against the naiveté of the postulate' are the fault of the author, not the translator. But you ask for readers' advice about translation, and mine is to be careful of the sort of elementary howlers I have listed.

"After all this, may I offer my best wishes for the future to your magazine—I hope we will continue to see it in England where there is a dire shortage of good film papers. Incidentally I see 'The Village Voice' quite often and always enjoy your pieces in that."

We thank Nicholas Gosling for his constructive criticism and good wishes. Is this the same Nicholas Gosling who writes the bright film reviews in *Films and Filming?* If so, we are additionally grateful.

*Cahiers du Cinema in English* Number Four will take up the question of Jerry Lewis, a French enthusiasm that baffles many Americans even after the informative article on the subject by Hollis Alpert in the New York Times Sunday Magazine. *Cahiers*, like its rival *Positif*, completely endorses Lewis. I will present the arguments for those American Cahierists, who draw the line at *The Family Jewels*. Readers of *Cahiers du Cinema in English* are invited to send in a post-card with their names and addresses, and one of two statements on the card. Jerry Lewis—Oui or Jerry Lewis—Non. I am curious about the size of the Jerry Lewis cult in the English-speaking world. The results of the poll will be announced in a few months, and will have no bearing on the debate within *Cahiers du Cinema in English*. Just "oui or "non," nothing in between. This is a referendum, not a debating contest. Mail the cards to Cahiers Publishing Company, 303 West 42nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

**Jerry Lewis—Oui or Non?**

# Small Talk

*(Continued from page 9)*

with him and to perfect all the colorist tones of Technicolor. In 1922 they both founded Technicolor, Inc., but their firms was dismantled in 1950 by the antitrust law, and, from that time, the name of Natalie Kalmus disappeared from screen credits, then at last from the memory of the public. (cf. the article in *Variety: Natalie Kalmus Alone . . .* April 15, 1964). Her husband died July 11, 1963, at 81, and November 15, 1965, she died some days before the fiftieth anniversary (December 9, 1965) of the process thanks to which she could raise to the sublime the talent of certain hand cameramen (Shamroy notably), and which Fred Astaire in his number *Stereophonic Sound in Silk Stockings* of Mamoulian named so perfectly "the glorious Technicolor." Those who would like to seek out more complete information on Technicolor and on color in the cinema in general might consult: *A Chronology of Color Film* in *Films in Review* (December 1954); *Technicolor's Camera and Kalmus* in *Films in Review* (June-July 1964) and finally to the remarkable special issue published by *Bianco e Nero, Il Colore nel Cinema* (1952). P.B.

## Adventures At Helsinki

A "free" young woman (Harriet Anderson), a modern man in a city (Helsinki) where old quarters face the new apartment buildings of Alvaar Alto as the city does the forests—such are the characters and the setting of *Ici commence l'aventure . . .* the latest film of Jorn Dönner.

It is nothing but a sentimental promenade in one of those Scandanavian countries where matters of the heart are thought to find their true proportions. The heroes search for each other, avoid each other, flee each other, and discover each other at last.

Little by little, a modern *carte du Tendre* is drawn under our eyes, demarcated by the streets and the lakes, the gardens and the forests. But Donner discovers only horizons as far as the eye can see. Love is the sea with the forest, it is the departure toward new encounters. And he reminds us that the great Scandinavian cinéastes were lyric poets.

Jorn Donner.

## Jean-André Fieschi: Le Parc

In *Le Parc,* provisional title and place of the short film that Jean-André Fieschi is completing, the composer Maurice Roche pursues a voice without a face but which does not fail to evoke the very sweet face of Edith Scob. No doubt for him it is a question of taking her captive in the sole net of a vocal range, but would not this purpose mean to stand also as a prelude to dealings of another sort?

However that may be, the pangs of everyday life (Claude Ollier—co-scenarist besides—and Marcelin Pleynet have their share of responsibilities in that) make this task difficult while creating its value. So it is banality that will lead our friend to the unusual, topography to the fantastic, land-surveying to poetry, in short, Lumière to Feuillade, and it might be well that in following in such detail the itinerary of his hero, an itinerary that can be marked out very clearly, Fieschi explores as never yet windings that can be fixed with very little precision, the windings of artistic creation, of which *Le Parc* would yield us at once the outcome and the genesis just as it is.

*Le Parc,* Maurice Roche, Edith Scob, Jean-Andre Fieschi.

## A Face For Soraya

The fact that Michelangelo Antonioni agreed to direct one of the three sketches of a film whose character is so markedly that of publicity as *I tre volti* (1964) is at least questionable. Nevertheless given the chosen subject, that did not prevent him from freeing himself from all external constraint and pursuing his work with coherence. Unfortunately, on several questions one finds oneself in the presence of adulterated elements (which some people would no doubt try to attribute to a purpose of irony): I am thinking particularly of the presentation of Dino de Laurentiis or of the frequent references to the "colossal" of Huston.

So that the sketch directed by Antonioni called *Prefazione* is not profoundly different from those that one owes to Bolognini and to Indovina, and which not only do not succeed in making an actress of Soraya, but suffer from her coldness to the point of provoking a deadly boredom.

The subject treated by Antonioni can be summed up in a cliché: the conflict between reality and illusion. The very structure of the story (reconstruction of a real fact) already contains this duality. But Antonioni refuses to play on the ambiguity, and constantly inserts a kind of continual explanation of his intention, shots which stress the presence of all the cinematographic apparatus: so the high angle shot that closes the scene of telephone call—interview—end of test, the long shot of the studio in which is the wind machine that creates a "real" wind. Antonioni adopts the position of someone who knows more than the spectator, he intervenes from the height of his distant pedestal and from there situates himself at antipodes to a Godard, for example. in the extent to which the latter sides with the true or the false, leaving to the spectator alone the freedom to make allowances. Compared with *Deserto rosso* in which his ideas were more incarnate, *Prefazione* in *I tre volti* proves the danger of a certain abstraction.

The livid dawn which ends the film, Soraya's telephone call surrounded by cameras, etc., so many scenes which remain half-way between an interesting project and its successful realization. So *Prefazione* does not fail to evoke the experimental period that saw *Tentato suicidio* originate and its difficulties at achieving a happy marriage between cinéma-vérité and fictional cinema.—A.A.

# *Small Talk*

## Marcel Hanoun: Octobre a Madrid

The latest film of Hanoun makes a clean sweep of many cinematographic tabus. *Découpage,* preparations, intuitions, placements, shooting no longer have meaning here or rather see themselves paradoxically put back in their true places: those of arbitrarily isolated and purely abstract elements. The film gives the impression not of being improvised under our eyes, but of perturbing conditions and circumstances, not only to find its way but frankly to exist. Ceaselessly solicited by the profusion of over abundment material, Hanoun does not attempt to master it or to yield from it the inextricable movement. That would imply an *a priori* aesthetics aimed at establishing, on the one hand a balance, on the other hand a correspondence.

While the *auteur* makes the most innocent choice, the most unencumbered of conventional forms or of acquired turnings, he struggles with cinema to find the *mot juste* by the oblique approach of effort and groping. Let there be no mistake about it, *October à Madrid* is not a reflection on cinema, but a free discourse on the power of cinema, on creation, on the departure and arrival of a film. And that not by resting on an illustration or some analogical landmark (that is to say by having recourse to the principle of the film within the film), but by taking as crucial point of the discourse the very film we are watching. Starting from the shooting and some years later resulting in the definitive print through the medium of a succession of laboratory work, the distance that composes the film appears, is seen not transposed but really evaluated. The only way of indicating these constitutive stages was to refer the rushes to the sonorization, to compare the scattered significant forces and show their recutting and their combination: a work of modifications.

Now, these systems of transformations by erasures and developments which test the work cause it to appear here only on those grounds. Such an enterprise requires a profound freshness, preventing all cheating, all duplicity. The naïveté of Hanoun succeeds in prevailing over everything, eliminating by the outbursts of the utterance all possible reticences of the spectator. For the *auteur* does not draw back in the slightest for perspective on what he shows: instead of criticizing, he interprets, comments, draws out or reduces. For the principle of judgment he substitutes that of adhesion, alternating the effects of amplification and those of restraint.

What the film says is its own will to take from in spite of or because of the accumulated obstacles. And its manner of saying it all vibrating. That manner mixes gestures and words on the thread of a music escaped as soon as received. It scatters projects and landscapes like so many furtive evocations that cannot be caught again. It removes to a distance under the garlands of the Plaza de las Commandoras the light that dazzles the veils of the young communicants. As if for Hanoun it was a question not of leafing through a gloomy photograph album of Spain but of trying to put on each face or each garden a name, a sound or a color.

Of causing to appear from an excursion on a lake not the congealed smile of lovers but the beating of oars and the distant animation of a Sunday afternoon, the moving and provisional touches of the movement experienced. The voice of Hanoun tries to breathe into things this sensual presence, this lost sparkling, and offers only illusions, fragile contours, "some minutely detailed patches in a sea of impressions." And when the camera follows blindly the white figure of a girl in the crowd, that recalls not a journey in Spain but things as grave and secret as the departure for the army of a Pole thinking of Eurydice or that of Clelia in the rainy streets of Parma. A.T.

## Howard Green

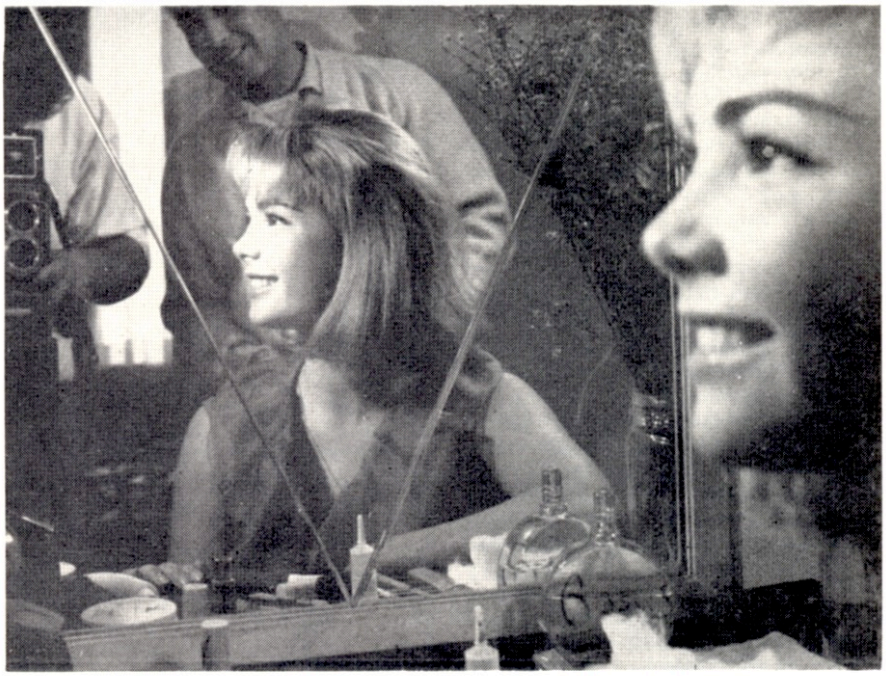
Scenarist of talent. To this former newspaper man, born in San Francisco March 20, 1893, one owes particularly: *I Am a Fugitive From a Chain Gang* (1932) of Mervyn LeRoy violent exposé of the American penitentiary system, and whose hero, remarkably interpreted by Paul Muni, entered prison as an innocent man, but, tortured physically and morally, left it finally and forever a criminal.

Formerly an impresario, he described the world of the theater with a certain acuity in *Morning Glory* (1933) of Lowell Sherman, from the classic *Stage Struck.*

Other films: 1927 *The Private Life of Helen of Troy* (Korda), *The Long Long Trail* (Rosson), 1939 *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex* (Curtiz), 1944 *The Racket Man* (Lederman), 1946 *George White's Scandals* (Feist).

## Fred Quimby

He was the producer of Tex Avery, Michael Lah, William Hanna, Joseph Barbera; that is to say, that because we owe to him (in part) Tom, Jerry, Nibbles, Droopy, Spike and other heroes of memorable adventures, we reserve him a place of honor in our pantheon of the cartoon.



*Octobre A Madrid,* Chonette Lauret and Marcel Hanoun.

This *petit journal* was written by Adriano Aprà, Jean-Claude Biette, Jacques Bontemps, Patrick Brion, Jean-Paul Cassagnac, Michel Delahaye, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, Axel Madsen, Claude Pennec and Adré Téchiné. Drawings by Folon.

# *Small Talk*

## Alexandre Astruc: La Longue Marche

The action takes place in the Cevennes in the spring of 1944. The debarkation is about to take place a few days after the start of our film. We are with a maquis group that, in morale and in *matériel,* seems scarcely fit for combat. Discipline is lacking, and the members of the maquis; half partisans, half terrorists, are detested by the population because of their requisitions of food. The plot thread of the film is the forced march of 250 kilometers undertaken by this maquis, mostly by night, during three weeks in June 1944, to join a more solid point of support, the *Maquis Napoléon,* in the North, on the other side of the Rhone. The idea is original. But Alexandre Astruc became aware afterwards that in this region, in actual fact a group of maquisards had made a march of more than two hundred kilometers in the mountains. Fiction rediscovered reality.

The chief is Carnot (Robert Hossein), man of the common people, courageous résistant of the left. But, in a critical turn of events, the maquis group is surrounded, and everyone speaks of surrendering: Carnot must yield his command to Philippe (Jean-Louis Trintignant) who at once asserts his authority over the men and reveals himself a better strategist. There is also Morel (Paul Frankeur), a politician of the Third Republic who has been tortured by the Germans and who has just escaped. The maquis group is charged to watch over him until an airplane comes to call for him. To attend Morel, Carnot has the maquis kidnap a doctor, Chevallier (Maurice Ronet), whom everyone believes a collaborator. Alexandre Astruc says: "These are desperate characters, a résistant of the Popular Front, a résistant of the Right, a kind of collaborator, a former minister of the Third Republic; with that assemblage, what I hope is to find France."

During its march, the maquis needs medicines to care for Morel. Chevallier and Carnot go down to the nearest village to obtain them, Carnot is forced to kill a German in the pharmacy. As reprisal, the SS massacre all the men of the village. The maquisards discover the charnel house; Astruc films this shot in a little village, Villemagne-l'Argentière. The shot lasts 4 minutes 45 seconds. It is a succession of dollyings and of pannings which disclose all the outlets of the village, all the actors, the maquisards, the old men, the children who come in a group to discover the corpses at the foot of a wall.

Far from holding the deaths against the maquis, the survivors bring them food and clothing. At the opening of the film, Philippe-Trintignant had said "We have become foreigners."

And, in contact with this population, the little troop of poachers in rags is transformed, it becomes the army of a country. Trintignant, wanting to express thanks, can only stammer: "Pardon us," and he designates his men with a grand gesture as if to say: this is all that I have, it is all that I can give you, but these are your soldiers, they belong to you. And the politician Morel finds himself compelled to speak, he searches for his works, tears them out of himself, he whose *métier* was precisely making orations, Astruc says: "At this moment, I would like my character to be thinking: there are forty dead in the village, it is because of me, because I governed a country badly, because I accepted Munich, because in 1940 people got beaten like lousy bums, all that is my fault."

During the march, Morel even confides a letter to Chevallier in case he should happen to die. Chevallier-Ronet does not understand. In the eyes of everyone, he is a collaborator. Marcel says to him, "Not at all, I know you, you have been dying of shame for four years, you want to punish your country for having been defeated." Chevallier accepts the mission; Morel salvages him.

"I believe that these are things that have strongly marked the history of the Resistance and of collaboration, different notions through which each person sought after a certain idea of France. And the drama is that it would have been necessary that from the start someone should forbid that there be others, because the business of a government is to be completely and totally responsible. People need someone to decide for them, they do not have to decide for themselves, contrary to all the existentialist perspective. According to the national perspective, people belong to an order, this order is that of their country, and there are other people whose *métier* it is to decide, to choose, at the risk of coming to their end in front of a stake if they make a mistake. The private citizen does not have to pay, because he is there to obey. He is like a child.

"And then, this world of the occupation, this France crouched in on herself, the country one cannot leave. At one moment someone says speaking of Morel: there will always be an airplane for him. That is another idea of the film, a tension between the abstract and the concrete, between the reality of the earth, which is one slope of the hill, and the will to abstraction, which is another side, the tension between these two things is moreover the whole history of Vichy and of London."

*La Longue Marche,* Robert Hossein and Jean-Louis Trintignant.

In his script of more than 400 pages, Alexandre Astruc indicates that, each time his litter is placed on the ground, Morel seems to recover strength. At the moment of the crossing of the river, at the end, he speaks too of this line of separation of the elements, of the water and of the earth, that Trintignant will not cross alive.

"Yes, that appears very abstract in a scenario . . . but the character Trintignant plays is the son of a bourgeois, indicated as being Protestant. He is not attracted, even fascinated is not the word—he is swept along. First automatically, because of his famly, he feels himself responsibile, for he has heard too much said all around him—dirty

bums, Popular Front, Jews, Communists —And when he meets a fellow who is in such a situation, that throws him. Then he lives only by his head, he is very young, he is a very puritanical character, very terse. He is bewildered by this fellow who is a politician and who, an extraordinary thing in this plot, is silent almost all the time, is heavy, dense, who in absolutely frightful circumstances when he is pursued by everyone, remains very calm, lying down, who almost merges with the earth, it is the peasant side that exists through the radical man."

Frankeur, who plays the role with his presence, his striped shirt, his suit, makes one think at once of Edouard Herriot.

"Philippe (Trintignant) is a character close to Evariste Galois, but less abstract; besides, I made *Evariste Galois* after having written this scenario. I am making *La Longue Marche* in reaction against my love films, because I wanted to show that one could narrate romantic films in which the abstraction would be included in the concrete otherwise than by treating the relations between men and women. In *Education Sentimentale,* I wanted to introduce a scene between Brialy and Marie-José Nat on the beach of Arromanches so that he could speak to her about the war. There is something else in life besides having a girl. This film is a love story with three characters. Hossein, Ronet and

*La Longue* Marche, Maurice Ronet.

"That is what I wanted, without pointing at personalities of course, yes: someone like Herriot. If you will, de Gaulle is drawn by Pompidou. It's a little the same thing. One imagines a boy of twenty meeting, in a maquis, a Herriot who has escaped four times: he sees this big fellow who is bleeding, who does not complain, he says to himself the fellow is a speculator, he is everything that my parents taught me to detest, but, after all, France is that too. I come back again to this idea: this film, these are different aspects of France. I am persuaded that France is not at all the idea people conceive of her. France is something profoundly more mysterious, it is the imagination that leaves the ground at every instant, this imagination can take all forms, it is not at all a question of making a narrow and absurd nationalism. In the end, there is no spirit more of the earth and of the air at the same time than Descartes, for example . . . That said, this is absolutely not a philosophical film, I am telling the story of fellows who are in a maquis, that is all.

Trintignant face one another like characters of Racine, with something over their heads; not like the characters of Corneille: They do not defend ideas, they do not represent abstractions. These are questions of the skin. Suddenly there is something stranger than everything that hits them in the face, they cannot do anything about it. Their attitudes disappear when the thunder falls on their heads, the charnel-house. I am trying to make a cinema of more and more breadth, with themes that are simpler and simpler, less and less particular, because I find that it is in the broadest themes that there are the most possible variations. With particular themes, one ends in being driven to the wall, under pretext of modernism, one believes one is going farther and in the end that is not true. Now, war is a simple theme. The jealousy of men among one another is a simple theme. When Hossein takes back the command from Trintignant, he seizes his gun like a wild beast and thinks no further. I feel that what there is fantastic in the mise en scène is to show things like those, and above them, an idea running."

.At the end of the film, the maquis must cross a river under German fire to rejoin the Maquis Napoléon. "The end? The crossing of the river is the Old Testament, it is the crossing of the Red Sea; that poses no problem. All the difficulties that Philippe made about taking the command come from the fact that he felt himself, as Alfred de Vigny said, the elect of the All-Powerful. He does not wish to go about it, but there is nothing to be done, he must go about it, he has the maquis cross the river. gives up the command to Carnot and dies."

The script of *La Longue Marche* does not provide for the word *fin,* but only a sentence: "Six days later the Germans launched the assault and the Maquis Napoléon was annihilated."

"I would not want people to think that it is an ending in the manner of Huston. The film is not at all made on the sentiment of defeat, absolutely not. I inserted that sentence because it was true, because it happened like that. If the sentence gave an impression of defeat, I would take it away immediately, because I would not wish it to turn against the film. The end is what William the Silent said: "It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake nor to succeed in order to persevere." This is not a defeat, since they succeeded in doing what they wanted to do. But there is no philosophy of the absurd in my film, none at all."

The shooting took place entirely in the Massif of the Espinousse; delayed slightly by bad weather it was finished during the last days of November. The film will be releasted in March and France will have—except for *This Land is Mine*—its only major film on the Resistance.

## Mannheim

The Fourteenth International Mannheim Festival gave us a new occasion to verify the nonexistence of the official West German cinema (Christian W. Rischter: *It's a Wonderful Life,* Ferinand Khittl: *Der Heisse Frieden,* Roland Klick: *Zwei,* Walter Krüttner: *Der Worletzte Akt*) except for the group evolving around Jean-Marie Straub, the expression of the techniques proper to *cinéma direct*, and the fact that the films of young cinéastes proved to be the best (*Cahiers* have already spoken, or will speak before longe, about most of them: *Walkover, L'Age des illusions, Nicht Versöhnt, Appunti per unfilm sul Jazz* of Gianni Amico and *Al nostro sono inquieto* of Gian Franco Mingozzi).

Besides, three short films of quality

*Hynek Bocan: Nikdo Se Nebude Smat,* Stepanka Rehakova.

should be mentioned. First of all, *Na progu* of the Pole Karimierz Karabasz, which presents to us some eighteen year old girls who have just passed the local *bachot*. It is by disguising his camera that the *cinéaste* tries to know more about their aspirations and their personalities. Some stolen gestures, smiles caught in flight, at the beach, at a dance, a succession of juvenile comportments and so on, such are the visions of this candid eye whose field of vision is no doubt limited to the surface of things. To go beyond, the cinéaste appeals to a second method, that of *cinéma-vérité*. The girls are brought together in a studio, and they are questioned to obtain responses necessarily determined in part by the conditions of the experience, but giving rise to some reactions of value, perceptible on the faces still more than in the words. Nevertheless it is only on a third level that the film can be completed. The questions were put in writing this time, therefore in a more anonymous fashion, and the live, disquieting responses were recorded and are given to us in still photograms of the girls taken in attitudes which return to the first stage of the documentary. It is intentionally that the film remains thus without conclusion, leaving to the spectator the responsibility for reorganizing these notes, enriching the first period of the film with the contribution of the two others.

*Lambert & Co.,* or *Dave Lambert Audition At RCA* is a model of technical perfection and of equilibrium in the description. Dan Lambert's vocal quintet, the orchestra, the technicians of RCA, are the three elements on which Don Allen Pennebaker and his collaborators have concentrated their attention. He adapts the shooting angles, the shots and their length to the musical rhythms and arrives slantwise from an "objective" recording of reality to a "subjective" deformation, discrete but constant, of this reality, which thus he reveals to us.

*Kleine Front* of Klaus Lemke, seen out of festival, is, as Straub said, the German equivalent of the first short films on the subject made by Truffaut and Godard. Two young people come out of a theater that is showing *Hatari!*, visibly marked by the Hawksian universe and the heroic deeds of John Wayne. They go to meet a friend and in his company reach a pond where they stage, *mettent en scène,* their fishing as if it were a military action. The parody is interrupted by the arrival of a car that drives all three of them to a bar where the *comédie* is taken up again, this time on the theme of relations with girls, but to end again in an analogous nothing. At the end, when the daylight begins to fall, the friends meet again at the edge of the pool, where they discover the inefficacy of their trap set for the fish. Nothing remains for them but to return to see the chases of Hawks. Lemke gives proof of a great vivacity which permits him to escape the charm of appearances and to give to this confrontation of life and of the cinema accents which bear no trace either of complaisance or of artifice.

Last of all, *Nikdo Se Nebude Smat* of the Czech Hynek Bocan is a good full length film, winner of a *grand prix* undeserved given the presence of *Walkover*. It tells the story of Klara, flighty and gay modern young girl, who lives with Karel, serious professor of the history of art. Friends and colleagues do not look favorably on such a liaison, which gives rise to a reversal of characters, an exchange of roles. In Karel is revealed the conformism that his "serious" attitude was dissimulating, while Klara gives proof of a serious attitude that her apparent superficiality was masking. The film is redeemed by this very strong opposition of characters, enhanced by the talent of the actress (Stepanka Rehakova) and the precision of the canvas of the social background, of the description of the milieu which evoke those of Milos Forman.

Nevertheless, the Bocan's film seems to me far from the best modern cinema present at Mannheim, completely differently engaged in the deepening of the relations between spectacle and spectator (Skolimovski, Straub) or in the discovery of society through individual problems (Skolimovski, Szabo).—A.A.

## C. Gardner Sullivan

One of the best scenarists of the American silent film. Born September 18, 1879 at Stillwater, Minnesota, and former newspaperman, he became scenarist at Edison from 1911, then, in 1913, worked for Thomas Ince and Bison 101. From 1914, he was one of the regular scenarists for Ince at the New York Motion Picture Company; then he went to Triangle and finally to Famous Players Lasky, later becoming one of the most faithful collaborators of De Mille. In a period when the cinema was caught too often in the snares of more or less good plays, he created a lively and essentially modern style of scenario. It is enough to remember, for example, *Sparrows,* where Mary Pickford and a group of children in her charge found themselves drawn along in a kind of serial, tracked by the great Gustav von Seyfertitz and menaced by dangerous crocodiles in the heart of a real jungle, the whole mixed with a spiritualistic symbolism very much in the De Mille style (apparition of Christ as the Good Shepherd).

*Principal films:* 1911/16 scenarios for W. S. Hart and Thomas Ince (notably *Beckoning Flame, Civilization, Honor's Altar;* 1919 *Dangerous Hours* (Niblo); 1924 *Wandering Husbands* (Beaudine); 1926 *Three Faces East* (Julian), *Sparrows* (Beaudine); 1927 *Yankee Clipper* (Julian); 1928 *The Tempest* (Taylor); *Woman Disputed* (Henry King/Taylor); 1929 *The Locked Door* (Fitzmaurice); 1931 *Cuban Love Song* (Van Dyke); 1932 *Strange Interlude* (Leonard); 1933 *Man Must Fight* (Selwyn), *Three Live Ghosts* (Humberstone); 1938 *The Buccaneer* (De Mille); 1939 *Union Pacific* (De Mille); 1940 *North West Mounted Police* (De Mille), *Kit Carson* (Seitz); 1942 *Jackass Mail* (Thorpe).

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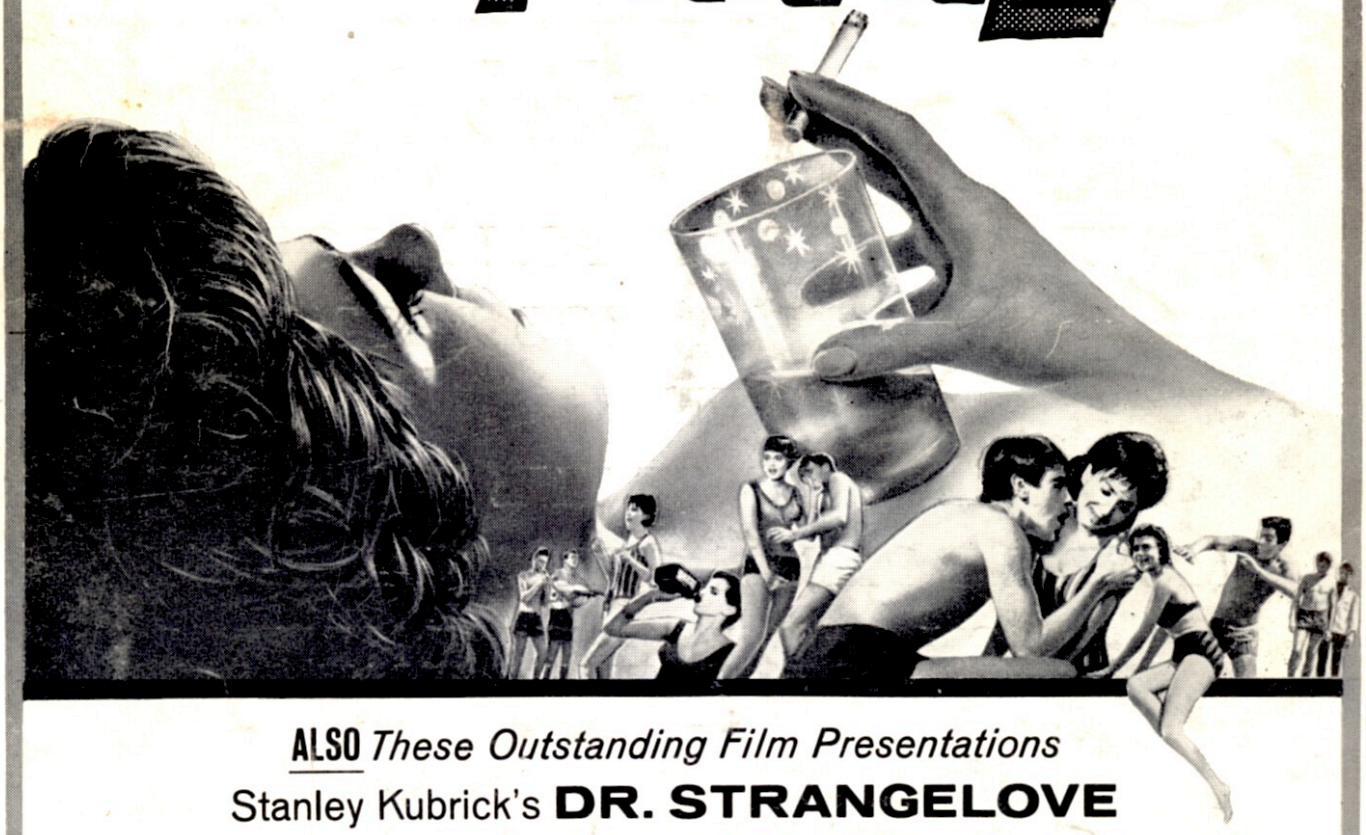

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