

### NO...

d. John Stoneman, ph. John Stoneman, ed. William Carter, m. Gustav Holst "Planet Suite" (Saturn), p.c. Mako Films Ltd. 1977, col. 16mm, running time 6 minutes.

To describe in words the damage man has done to his planet could take thousands of pages and many hours. John Stoneman has attempted to do it without words, and in just six minutes, using a series of skillfully juxtaposed images and sounds. The film is both a very personal statement about the horror of man's rape of the earth, and a plea for the protection and preservation of one of the last relatively untouched areas, the oceans. It is also, incidentally, an expression of the joys of being a diver.

In the first three or four minutes the camera glides through a beautiful underwater landscape of green and blue, past waving sea fans and strange white coral shapes. We slowly drift amongst glittering schools of jacks as they twist and turn in the water, and pause by a single silvery barracuda looking suspicious as barracudas usually do. The smoothness of the camera work makes us feel a part of the fluid, rippling environment. And the music from Gustav Holst's "Planet Suite" is a well-chosen complement to the sense of pleasure and enchantment we get from this unfamiliar and peaceful world.

But the music occasionally has ominous overtones, creating a mild tension that subconsciously prepares us for what follows: a sudden direct cut to distressingly familiar scenes of our everyday life... factories blasting black chemical smoke, cars bumper to bumper in the grey air, masses of people jostling each other on concrete sidewalks, dead animals lying amongst piles of foul garbage. The images are a sharp and painful contrast to what has just filled the screen a moment before. So, when the divers plunge back into that cool, clear water and we follow them down again into the ocean, it is with a sense of relief and escape and even thankfulness.

It is a simple statement that would be hard for anyone to disagree with,



John Stoneman comes up for a coffee-break

especially in the climate created by recent massive oil spills, and stories of whale atrocities and careless mining of the ocean floor. The film could be accused of being not only simple, but simplistic, of avoiding an exploration of the complex reasons behind why man persists in destroying his own environment. Stoneman as a diver and environmental filmmaker must surely be aware of these complexities. He has chosen instead to express the dilemma in as brief, direct and uncluttered a film as possible. No long explanations, no involved rationalizations, no gimmicks, just the simple visual impact that tells its own sad story. My only quarrel with the film is that the converted can only nod and agree, but for the unconverted or unaware, it does not have nearly enough impact. Certainly not enough to change any minds.

Penelope Hynam

### THIS FILM IS ABOUT RAPE

d. Bonnie Kreps, ph. Jan-Marie Martell, ed. Haida Paul, p. Bonnie Kreps, p.c. Chesire Films Production, 1978, running time 29 minutes, dist. Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Center (Toronto).

By now, Bonnie Kreps is well-known as a feminist filmmaker in Canada. Her short films *After the Vote*, *Portrait Of My Mother*, and a series of *Working Mothers* films made for the NFB have often been used as the focus for discussion in women's groups and have been seen in festivals in both Canada and the U.S. One aspect of her filmmaking style is the attention she pays to the objects and personal surroundings of her interviewees, letting these details reveal characters, establish mood. It works quite effectively for the opening of her latest film *This Film Is About Rape*. On the soundtrack we hear a woman telling of her experience as the victim of an attempted rape, while we see shots of a meticulous and slightly frilly living-room decor — flowered wallpaper, family snapshots in their gilt dimestore frames, plants, and a doll in a bright, crocheted dress. Only after we have seen her personal physical surroundings, her living space, do we see the woman herself — a slim, elderly lady wearing spectacles who is speaking about the aggressive invasion of her body by a rapist. The uncomfortably jarring relationship between sound and image works well to prepare us for the shock of recognizing this woman's age, thereby dispelling any notions about the sexual provocation by rape victims. The film later informs us that rapists act on "the opportunity of the moment" rather than on the desirability of the victim, and an interview with a convicted rapist brings out the admission that "the appearance of the woman had nothing to do with it."

What is perhaps most moving about the opening interview in this film is that the woman can discuss her own ordeal calmly and clearly, but breaks into tears when telling of her daughter's rape in years past. Compassion for