

MINI REVIEWS

MINI-REVIEWS of short films in this issue are from *Mobius International*, 175 King St. East, Toronto M5A 1J4, and were all released during 1983.

GLASSWORKS

A quick look at three artists working in glass, who are more or less given "equal time" throughout this film.

Daniel Crichton engraves on glass, and then conducts a sort of guided tour of his work. He talks about not being so much involved in technique as in trying to bring out the "personal content." His leaning towards the flask form is evident in a number of his pieces shown to advantage outside in relation to nature.

Karl Schantz talks of the cultural and personal background of a glass artist, and his striving for a "harmonious introduction of elements." A lovely gallery display of his work, bathed in golden light, amply illustrates the search for the experimental and its many differing variations.

Peter Keogh produces "sculpture with light." His spare, geometric shapes exude a tactile feeling, while a return to moulding allows him a varied approach to glass. "Water seems to me a visually natural theme for glass," and his exquisitely moulded wave, tipped with spray, surges nobly and naturally.

Crichton also talks about discovering vitrilite, and is seen constructing a cylindrical 'architectural' piece of many layers bonded together. The clear, bright colours and shapes reminiscent of Art Deco emerge forcibly from the screen.

Such beautiful glass and committed artists treated in such a mundane manner! Definitely a film that informs – and useful for that reason – but how much more zingy it could have been with a touch of flair.

p./d. Peter Maynard **cam.** Rene Ohashi **mus.** John Mills-Cockell **colour** 16mm **running time** 24 mins.

LADY IN MOTION

An introduction to "Miss Agness Hammond and Friends" at the Ghost River Ranch, near Calgary.

Agness Hammond talks about her life, but not that of a 'rough it' pioneer by a long shot. One of five sisters, with no brothers, she talks easily of traveling a lot by ship and train – visiting Europe, going to Monte Carlo, being presented at the Court of King George V and Queen Mary. Of wanting to be an artist and having some training in Paris. Of being a championship skier, and of calling Banff her home.

Since 1936 she's lived on one of the oldest ranches in the district, and on which she breeds dogs. And how many on the ranch at the time of filming? "I don't count but probably a

few over a hundred."

There's also a Museum on the ranch containing assorted relics of her own family – her mother's side-saddle, a portrait of her grandfather, Major Burnett – side by side with ancient angora chaps for winter riding, old farm machinery and implements, and other western artifacts.

Agness also welcomes visitors and especially loves the children who have never had a chance to see horses, dogs and other livestock in natural surroundings.

Agness Hammond has obviously lived a long and full life and she's sprightly and interesting to watch. However, the film meanders around, is poorly organized, and interminably stretched out with cute shots of flora and fauna. What a pity to dissipate the obvious value of the central subject.

p./d. Helene White **cam.** Andrew Jaremko **colour** 16mm **running time** 28 1/2 mins

BOOKWRIGHT

A gentle look at a genuine craftsman, Gerard Brender a Brandis, at work at Branstead Press – which is also his home.

Brandis is a gifted wood engraver who feels that he is carrying on a tradition, and his hands creating tiny, exquisite gems confirm this. His all-round dedication leads him to

produce paper by recycling and adding fibres from the ordinary plants growing on the land – bullrushes, irises, golden rod. He sets handmade type; he runs an old letterpress over his textured papers incorporating his own wood engravings. "I usually collaborate with someone for the texts of my books, either a writer or an editor who selects pieces." And that's about the extent of the involvement of outsiders.

To watch Brandis lovingly create the binding for a book, the flow of the hands (using thread he has spun), and the sureness of touch, is to see a master at work. Editions are not large. The smallest was three books and the biggest three hundred, but usually he likes about one hundred.

Brandis admits to being more comfortable working in a tradition than in exploring new grounds, and considers that wood engravings are the central part of the books he produces. These "little vignettes from life" as Brandis describes them, a wheel, a bucket, farm animals and scenes, sprung to life in intricate detail in a truly delightful film of one man's commitment to the preservation of an almost forgotten craft.

d./cam. Scott Barrie **ed.** Paul Fox **mus.** Doug Watson **colour** 16mm **running time** 25 mins.

Pat Thompson ●

Candy and Flaherty on the road as John and Chick with a collection of scenes and a loose plot to improvise from. They'll build the characters and they'll get the laughs locked down. Then make

GOING BERSERK* **d.** David Steinberg **p.** Claude Heroux **sc.** Dana Olsen and David Steinberg **d.o.p.** Bobby Byrne **p. des.** Peter Lansdown Smith **ed.** Donn Cambren, A.C.E. **music** Tom Scott **exec. p.** Pierre David **assoc. p.** Denise Di Novi **p. man.** Art Levinson **1st a.d.** Dan Kolsrud **2nd a.d.** Patrick Cosgrove **set dec.** Marc Meyer **cam. op.** Ted Sugiura **asst. cam.** Eric Engler **2nd asst. cam.** Paul Prince **sc. sup.** Bonnie Prendergast **asst. ed.** Steve Polivka **apprentice ed.** Michael Thau **casting** Mary V. Buck & Associates **asst. to D. Steinberg** Mary Proteau **sd. mix.** Joe Kenworthy **sd. re-rec.** Robert L. Hoyt, John J. Stephens, Stanley H. Polinsky **music rec.** Hank Cicalo **sup. sd. efx. ed.** Gordon Davidson **sd. efx. ed.** John Shouse **asst. sd. efx. ed.** Tony Torres **ADR ed.** Gil Hudson **music ed.** Cliff Kohlweck **property master** Mike Dunn **asst. props.** Ed Villa **costume des.** Harry Curtis **women's costume** Dolores Zuniga **men's costume** Hugo Pena **hair** Barbara Ronci **make-up** Terry Miles, Tom Tuttle **asst. art d.** Jim Shanahan **DGA trainee** Gerry Keener **unit pub.** Rob Hedden **sp. efx.** Fred Z. Gebler **transp. capt.** Robert Wilson **transp. co-capt.** Don Routhieaux **key grip** Rick Borchardt **gaffer** Chuck Holmes **boom** Paul Wolfe, Jr. **p. sec.** Liz Galloway **craft serv.** Christopher Striepeke **sec. to Mr. Steinberg** Ellen Sommers **sec. to Mr. David** Nancy Skiba **prod. liaison** Judy Steinberg **title des.** Nina Saxon, Dan Quarnstrom **opt. efx.** Universal Title, Pacific Title **running time** 85 min. **dist.** Universal Pictures **lp.** John Candy, Joe Flaherty, Eugene Levy, Alley Mills, Pat Hingle, Ann Bronston, Eve Brent Ashe, Elizabeth Kerr, Richard Libertini, Dixie Carter, Paul Dooley, Ronald E. House, Kurtwood Smith, Ernie Hudson, Gloria Gifford, Frantz Turner, Murphy Dunne, Dan Barrows, Julius Harris, Bill Saluga, Kathy Bendett, Brenda Currin, Hope Hayes, Natasha Ryan, Mark Bringelson, Tino Insana, Mike Moroff, John Paragon, Mimi Seton, Lynn Hallowell, Larry Poindexter, Marianne Muellerleile, Ken Letner, Mark Yerkes, Rosalind Chao, Jeff Imada, George Cheung, James Lew, Eric Lee, Danny Wong, Karen Leigh Hopkins, Sioux Marcelli, Margie Deneke, Jennifer Perito, Ade Small, Patricia Ann Douglas, Ercelle Johnson, Kathleen White, Elaine Bolton, Sarah M. Miles, Judy Pierce, Leeyan Granger, Denise McKenna, Lainie Manning, Helene Phillips, Sara Jane Gould, Pete Willcox, Aaron King, Sharon Peters, Archie Lang, Don Sherman, Robert Bakanic, Jeff Viola, Elinor Donahue.

*Not a certified Canadian film.

the movie. It worked for the Marx brothers in *A Night At The Opera*, it can work now and with results just as good.

Andrew Dowler ●

David Harel's

Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive

This documentary is quite an accomplishment, carefully piecing together the story of the Swede who personally managed to save the lives of at least 100,000 Jews during the Holocaust, but who himself disappeared into the unfathomable labyrinths of the Soviet carceral system. For those who are not familiar with the name Raoul Wallenberg, this film is a must. And those who already know much about this remarkable man will also gain new information and insights into his character and fate.

The first two-thirds of the film concentrate on Wallenberg's growing involvement with the Jews of Hungary. The filmmakers have painstakingly created a very personalized portrait of a man who, born into a wealthy Swedish banking family, chose to place his lot with the persecuted of another country. Having already committed himself to the Jewish cause, Wallenberg agreed to assist the War Refugee Board established by U.S. President Roosevelt. In 1944 Wallenberg, a Swedish citizen, went into Hungary to help save the remaining 200,000 Jews still in Budapest. By creating "safe-houses" under Swedish protection and by issuing thousands of documents called "the schutz-pass" to Jews under arrest, he managed to "slow

Eichmann down with paperwork." These legal-looking Swedish visas were Wallenberg's grand bluff, one which showed his thorough understanding of the Nazi mind and which became the means for, quite literally, snatching people from the jaws of death.

Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive includes a wealth of archival footage that graphically shows us the rise of Nazism during the late 1930s, especially the "Arrowcross Nazis" of Hungary. This material, which includes the pogroms carried out in the ghettos as well as the forced seven-day "death marches" ending at the death camps, is quite astounding footage carefully interwoven with the theme of Wallenberg's diplomatic efforts within the upper echelons of the Nazi hierarchy. The contrasts are jarring, emphasizing the emotional strengths of a man who tried to mediate between such starkly differing worlds.

A key strength of the film is its numerous interviews with survivors who personally owe their lives directly to Wallenberg's intervention. Whatever incredible efforts the filmmakers must have made to locate these people, the result is a series of moving, personal anecdotes which together compose a vivid portrait of Wallenberg in action.

The film also reveals the on-going personal battle between Wallenberg and Adolf Eichmann. In a visual sense, the film seems to be structured around two recurring photographs of these men, each so different in the look of their eyes. We also learn of a strange dinner party at which the two men meet: with Wallenberg offering Eichmann Swedish protection if the latter would stop the deportations of Jews. Furthering this parallel, the film traces the fate of Eichmann, who escaped to Argentina for sixteen years of relative luxury before being executed as a war criminal. At the same time, Wallenberg

disappeared into the post-war labyrinths of the Soviet bureaucracy. Through its subtle but effective structure, the film leaves the viewer with a heightened sense of irony, injustice and outrage.

The last third of the documentary focuses on the frustrating suppression of information about Wallenberg's fate. Seemingly arrested by the Soviets as a spy for the United States, Raoul Wallenberg is still rumoured to be alive. The filmmakers follow every lead, tracing the equally strange, ineffectual workings of Swedish diplomacy, and interviewing ex-prisoners from the Soviet Gulag who claim, as recently as 1978, to have known of "an old Swede" still there. Again, the information is personalized through interviews with Wallenberg's sister, Nina Lagergren, whose search for her brother goes on after nearly forty years. Her unshakeable faith in his survival has taken her through the frustrations of dealing with inactive Swedish authorities, unresponsive Soviet bureaucrats, and an often disinterested public.

Raoul Wallenberg: Buried Alive is an extremely well-researched piece of work, highly informative and emotionally galvanizing. It has been shown by PBS in the United States, but to date has not been aired by Canadian television. The film probably works best on the TV medium because of its many interviews and its strikingly intimate appeal. This is a fine documentary, one obviously made straight from the heart. See it any way you can.

Joyce Nelson ●

RAOUL WALLENBERG: BURIED ALIVE **d.** David Harel **exec. p.** David J. Yorke **p.** Wayne Arron and David Harel **sc.** Peter Lauterman, David Harel **cam.** David J. Yorke **ed.** Roushelli Goldstein **mus.** Tony Kosinec and Jack Lenz **loc. sd.** John P. Megill **sd. ed.** Chris Pinder **sd. mix.** Joe Grimaldi **res.** Claire Weissman, **colour.** 16 mm, 78 minutes. 1983 **dist.** Astral Films Ltd., 720 King St. West, Apt. 600, Toronto, (416) 364-3894.