

BOOKSHELF

Aspects of cinema

In a definitive, expanded edition of *The Samurai Film*, Alain Silver traces the development of the Japanese warrior figure in the country's history and in its cinematic image. A favorite movie genre in Japan and well-established throughout the world, the Samurai film is presented in this absorbing volume with all its visual and thematic diversity (Overlook Press \$17.95).

Hollywood's influence on Japanese cinema is brought out by David Desser in *The Samurai Films of Akira Kurosawa*. This insightful study shows the effect of Westerns on Kurosawa's directorial style, artfully blending their essence with traditional Japanese culture (UMI Research Press \$39.95).

Lenny Lipton updates his classical annual, *Independent Filmmaking* with a substantial new chapter, "Video for the Filmmaker." This revised edition, a comprehensive guide to expanded production in all 8mm and 16mm formats, includes detailed information on equipment, procedures and technology that will greatly assist every independent filmmaker (Simon & Schuster \$12.95).

Peter and Pamela Brown's *The MGM Girls* is a sometimes lurid, thoroughly documented exposé of the treatment most MGM stars got from studio boss Louis B. Mayer. Garland, Harlow, Crawford and even Garbo, all were at one time or another victims of Mayer's autocratic, greedy and vindictive ways (St. Martin's \$13.95).

In *The Universal Story*, Clive Hirschhorn offers a panoramic survey of the studio's rich history. Since its founding in 1912, Universal Studios has turned

out over 2500 widely diverse films: early classics like *All Quiet on the Western Front*, routine horse operas, musicals, spectaculars like *E.T.*, *The Extra Terrestrial*, and TV series (Crown \$35).

The reference shelf

The first major reference work of its kind, James L. Limbacher's *Sexuality in World Cinema* records over 13,000 features and shorts released between 1896 and 1982. Films are listed by specific sexual activity with a short synopsis and full cross-references. A glossary of media and sexual terms and a bibliography are included (Scarecrow, 2 vols., \$72.50).

Over 6000 biographies of current entertainment industry personalities (including many Canadians but leaving out major figures like Harold Greenberg) appear in *Variety's Who's Who in Show Business*. Edited by Mike Kaplan and based on the extensive files of the weekly publication, each entry carries vital statistics, credits and awards (Garland \$15.95).

An attractive, large format volume, *The Illustrated Who's Who of the Cinema* includes a generous number of international film celebrities from the '20s to the present. Tastefully edited by Ann Lloyd and Graham Fuller, it offers an abundance of color photographs and substantial career outlines (Macmillan \$65).

Used to determine eligibility for Academy Awards, the *Annual Index to Motion Picture Credits* is an authoritative and thorough record assembled by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Fully cross-referenced, it provides all pertinent data on production,

release, director, writer, crew and cast (Greenwood Press \$150).

A paperback edition of *Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion* (7th edition) has been published. This authoritative and reliable reference work, covering every facet of cinema, carries over 10,000 revised and expanded entries - biographies of leading personalities, notable films, techniques old and new, movie genres and much more (Scribners \$10.95).

Personalities on parade

In *Joseph L. Mankiewicz*, Prof. Bernard F. Dick follows the maturation of the director's talent that successfully meshed stylistic theatricality with the visual requirements of cinematic art. Each film is perceptively analyzed, with stress on Mankiewicz's humanism, literate concerns, and versatility in handling comedy, spectacle and romance (G.K. Hall \$19.95).

Two unconventional and gifted artists, whose strong personalities markedly affected their directorial styles, are portrayed in riveting memoirs: *Roman* by Roman Polanski and *Visconti* by Gaia Servadio. Their self-indulgent ways, sexual obsessions, offbeat friendships and financial unaccountability were reflected in distinctive film themes and innovative visual techniques. An artful blend of juicy gossip and historic fact runs through these often sensational life-stories (Morrow \$17.95, Watts \$17.50).

Richard Schickel's biographical tribute, *Gary Grant: A Celebration*, greets the actor's 80th birthday in an informative and insightful assessment of his screen presence and romantic appeal.

Some 200 revealing photographs flatteringly underline Schickel's perceptive analysis of Grant's sophistication, urbanity and wit (Little Brown \$19.95).

In *Baby Doll*, an autobiography that boldly crosses the thin line separating her private from her public life, Carroll Baker recounts the traumatic upheavals she experienced - career setbacks, exploitive love affairs, nervous breakdowns - before achieving a long-sought peace of mind (Arbor \$15.95).

Top box-office star, reputed director, racing car driver and political activist, Paul Newman, at age 58, is rich, talented, good looking, happily married and successful. But it was not always so, as J.C. Landry reveals in *Paul Newman*, an honest and intimate memoir (McGraw-Hill \$8.95).

Rita Hayworth, the legendary "love goddess," was essentially a product of manipulative press agents and greedy studio bosses, as narrated by Joe Morella and Edward Z. Epstein in their compassionate biography, *Rita*. The vibrant image she projected on screen was absent from her private life, and her success in films was overshadowed by domestic unhappiness and the ravages of Alzheimer's disease (Delacorte \$17.95).

Former child actress Andrew Darvi draws on her own experience for a behind-the-scenes look, in *Pretty Babies*, at the often exploitive and emotionally scarring life of many Hollywood child performers (McGraw-Hill \$14.95).

George L. George ●

MINI REVIEWS

Over 1000 Canadian shorts are produced every year. To further increase its coverage of Canadian shorts, Cinema Canada will also be concentrating on Quebec distributors by reviewing a series of shorts from one distributor every month. This month features Quebec shorts from Les Films du Crépuscule (514) 849-2477.

QUÉBEC ÉTÉ DANSE

Three choreographers, three dance pieces, one film. A visually impressive film that allows the viewer to watch these dances evolve as separate pieces unto themselves, as well as a kind of essay on dance in Quebec.

There is a surrealist/absurdist feel to the choreography ranging from post-punk-gangsterisms - *L'Amour c'est un chien fidèle* by Edouard Lock; to the choreographed copulation and mock physicality of *Lavabo* by Paul-André Fortier; to the vaguely Magritte looking *Mille millions de tonnerres* by Robert Desrosiers.

Director John Brooke manages to accommodate the demands of each piece by having the dancers dance for themselves and not to the camera, and by finding an appropriate visual style to heighten the effect of the piece, not compete with it. In structuring the film as he has, with each piece more theatrical and more conceptually complex, our sense and appreciation of the form is extended.

A prize-winner at the recent Montreal Art Film Festival.

d. John Brooke cam. Philip Earnshaw add. cam. Jacques Hollender, Bill Kerrigan cam. assts. Vivian Kellner, Peter Vinet sd. David Brooke, Vivian Kellner ed. John Brooke sd. ed. Peter Thillaye. Produced with the collaboration of The Canada Council. Colour, 56 mins.

BOUCHES

An absolutely charming little movie that begins as a kind of reflection on mouths and ends with a great big, you guessed it, KISS.

The upbeatness of it all is the result of an original piano piece by Lewis Fury, and at last, a Lewis Fury piece that is not so melo-dramatically tango-ish as to recall Bertolt Brecht, but one that is actually a toe tapper and eminently hummable. The music sets the tempo of the editing and the combined rhythm makes the whole movie much fun.

d. Josette Trepanier, Michele Mercure cam. Daniel Jobin ed. Louise Côté mus. Lewis Fury p.c. Les Ateliers audio-visuels du Québec with the collaboration of Productions Ici et là. Colour, 16 mm, running time: 5 mins.

ÉTAT 1

A film about a performance piece but together by Pierre Pepin and the musical improvisation group, SONDE, staged in a "space" at the University of Quebec's Montreal campus.

Framed between the paintings of Degas and Rousseau, the film ostensibly records the performance of the

artist as a kind of nuclear-age tight-rope walker. As the piece itself is about movement, images, color, space, sound - the basis of art - so, too, is the film. In other words, for once it actually makes sense to describe a film as being about what it is: an art film about art.

The film invites its audience to share in the multi-levelled demands made by the original performance, but does so mercifully in considerably less time. Presumably it was this quality which accounted for ÉTAT 1 receiving the Award For Aid To Creative Achievement at this year's Montreal Art Film Festival.

d. Georges Leonard and Claude Laflamme p.c. Mouton Rose Films. Colour, 16 mm, running time: 8 mins.

NORANDA

In 1980 the Federation of Mines and Metallurgy, a division of the Quebec union, the Conseil des syndicats nationaux or CSN, invited the school of medicine of Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York to investigate the state of health of some 800 workers in the Noranda Mines in Abitibi. Predictably the results were dramatic, the logical conclusion of dumping over 60 tons of sulphur trioxide into the air since 1925.

The film is an investigative report as well as a record of the medical team's investigations. Through interviews with workers and their families, the issue is crystallized: they must choose between work and their

health. They might not have to if the company would invest in the technology necessary to clean up their act, but that, we are told, would cost the equivalent of one year's profits.

The filmmakers try hard to stick to the direct approach and succeed in all but two sequences, the opening and the closing. In the first, a fulfilled local dance marathon recalls the '30s depression world of *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*; while the final tour of the city streets, the company smoke stacks always and inevitably in the frame, evolves into a funeral procession as the names of workers who have died of cancer are read off in a monotone more ominous than any single fact or image.

Powerful stuff of the sort that causes companies with image problems to seek injunctions against the film. A small change is made to the wording of the death list, and the film is screened on Radio-Québec in the Abitibi region. The station and the Noranda Mines have something else in common: they are both owned in part or completely by the Quebec government.

NORANDA d. Daniel Corvec, Robert Monderie cam. Alain Dupras, Marc Bergeron, Martin Duckworth cam. asst. Madeleine Ste-Marie, Pierre Pelletier sd. Robert Girard, Pierre Pelletier ed. Liette Aubin sc./mus. Richard Desjardins narr. Michel Garneau, Francine Tougas p.c. Abitibi Blue Print colour 16mm running time 55 mins.

Kevin Tierney ●