

The Cameraman's Art

In **Masters of Light**, Dennis Schaefer and Larry Salvato explore with expertise and understanding the art and techniques of cinematography. Analyzing the work of top Hollywood directors of photography, they reveal the technical preferences, aesthetic concepts, work methods and personal experiences of John Alonzo, Nestor Almendros, Michael Chapman, Bill Fraker and 10 other professionals (*U. of California Press, Berkeley, CA, \$27.50*).

A master of cinematography, Nestor Almendros, combines in **A Man with a Camera** his personal recollections and a report on his professional activities. He explains in detail the technical and creative aspects of his work, discusses the films he photographed (*Kramer vs. Kramer, Sophie's Choice*) and defines the nature of his collaboration with such directors as Robert Benton, Alan Pakula, François Truffaut and Eric Rohmer (*Farrar Straus Giroux, NYC, \$17.95*).

A timely book that reflects a basic changeover in the film industry, **Electronic Cinematography** offers expert advice on achieving photographic control over the video image. Written by Harry Mathias, an authority on the merging of film and video, and Richard Patterson, editor of *American Cinematographer*, it is angled toward the cameraman's point of view rather than the engineer's. It fully describes equipment and its uses, and the ways of applying video theory to creative ends (*Wadsworth, Belmont, CA, \$22.95*).

The seemingly unlimited scope of computer-aided design (CAD) is imaginatively explored by Annabel Jankel and Rocky Morton in **Creative Computer Graphics**. The book unravels the complex technology of the process and explains the image-generating machines. It also underscores the ability of computer graphics to enhance the creativity of their users, particularly in film and television (*Cambridge U. Press, NYC, \$29.95*).

Personalities on Parade

Two absorbing biographies, **Henry Fonda** by Allen Roberts and Max Goldstein, and **Errol Flynn** by Peter Valenti, paint contrasting portraits of notable actors. Against a well-researched background covering public careers and private lives, they balance Fonda's earnest approach to his craft and his natural reserve with Flynn's hedonistic pursuits and casual view of acting (*McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC, \$15.95; Greenwood, Westport, CT, \$29.95*).

Profiled in Debra Winger by M. J. Cahill, the young actress was nicknamed "Hollywood's wild child" because of her uninhibited lifestyle, her fiery temperament and her back-to-back romances. Achieving stardom in record time, she captured an Oscar Best Actress nomination for *Terms of Endearment*, but lost out to co-star Shirley MacLaine (*St. Martin's, NYC, \$9.95*).

Characterized in **Astaire** as a very private man by writer/journalist Bob Thomas, his friend of 40 years, the veteran dancer sheds his reserve and reminisces candidly about his life and career in this relaxed and nostalgic biography (*St. Martin's, NYC, \$18.95*).

The filming in the Peruvian jungle of

Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* is recorded by Les Blank and James Bogan in **Burden of Dreams**, titled after the documentary Blank wrote and shot about the Herzog production. Blank's script, his journals of the expedition and location photographs evoke the incredible hardships endured, and pay homage to Herzog's visionary concept (*North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA, \$12.95*).

On the Reference Shelf

The recently published **Variety Film Reviews 1907-1980**, a massive and invaluable 16-volume reprint of some 40,000 reviews that appeared in the entertainment industry weekly, is supplemented now by a comprehensive **Index**. All titles are listed alphabetically with the date of the review's publication given (*Garland, NYC, \$220*).

David Shipman's **The Story of Cinema** is a chronicle, erudite and entertaining, of film's historic progress. It manages to present in one volume a detailed overview of a nearly century-old medium. Films, personalities, events, technical and industrial developments, and esthetic appraisals crowd this 1000-page encyclopedia (*St. Martin's NYC, \$50*).

In **The Film Year Book 1985**, editor Al Clark assembles reviews of all US and UK features released during the year ending July 1, 1984. Engrossing and well-documented, it contains credits and synopses, book reviews, quotes of the year, notable film flops, newcomers to the screen, obits, and various other reference data (*Grove, NYC, \$12.95*).

In **Vintage Science Fiction Films**, Michael Benson surveys over 500 SF movies produced between 1895 and 1940, reflecting the heightened anticipation of the then-current technology. Benson discusses many films' content and style, and includes a full descriptive listing of all of them (*McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC, \$18.95*).

A comprehensive guide to US television programming from 1948 to the present, **Total Television** by Alex McNeil appears in an updated 2nd edition. It lists alphabetically with extensive data some 3900 series, 666 noteworthy specials, network prime-time fall schedules, as well as other relevant information and full indexes (*Penguin, NYC, \$14.95*).

George L. George ●

LETTERS

Uncovering Mary Brown

As a follow-up to your Mary Brown interview, "Regulating visual images", *Cinema Canada* No. 117, April 1985, you might be interested to know that in May 1984 officials from Mary Brown's Theatres Branch, Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial relations, raided A Space, a Toronto public art gallery, and illegally seized videotape equipment and videotapes. The Theatres Branch thereby closed down the gallery's multi-monitor video installation by British artist Tina Keane, a representation of women's anti-war protest at Greenham Common. They also put into disarray a screening series of carefully curated work by British video artists. These were part of A Space's

British Canadian Video Exchange 1984, an international project sponsored by arts councils here and in Britain.

The equipment was confiscated contrary to the Ontario Theatres Act which stated that the Branch could not seize equipment owned and operated by nonprofit organizations. Mary Brown declared the tapes forfeited to the Crown, however. In October 1984, County Court Judge J. Douglas Bernstein ruled that the tapes be returned. He held that the warrantless search and seizure which had taken place at A Space was unreasonable and inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Judge Bernstein ruled that seizure which directly infringes upon a freedom guaranteed by the Charter, in this case freedom of expression, must have independent prior legal authorization. This had to be pointed out to Brown, Director of the Ontario Theatres Branch, in County Court at A Space's expense.

Theatres Branch officials noted that the work being shown at A Space was in no way offensive, but that a license was needed even "if they were showing *Bambi*." In order to obtain a license, however, every work in the show including gallery installations and video used in performance had to be approved by the Ontario Censor Board, an inspector claimed. And approval can be withheld. The inspector explained that just as you can't drive a car without a license, you can't put on an exhibition without a license. In court, Theatres Branch counsel unsuccessfully argued that there was no difference between seizing tainted poultry and seizing unlicensed film. Such rationale demonstrates Brown's contempt for the Ontario artist community, as well as her shocking ignorance of the fundamental freedoms which are the foundation of any free and democratic society.

At present the video community and galleries throughout the province are beset by anger, paranoia, and confusion regarding the law and its application. Other "unlicensed" video exhibitions in Toronto and at A Space during its 13-year history of video presentations have not been singled out, as was the British Canadian Video Exchange 1984. The seizure severely damaged audience and artist community participation in the 1984 exchange events, and a year later A Space has still not heard whether it will receive previously requested funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture for two final project expenses.

Actions speak louder than words. The Ontario Theatres Branch led by Director Brown is not merely a benign "review" agency. This is government control at its most dangerous. The Theatres Act is powerful legislation applied at the whim of the Director with little regard for basic Canadian constitutional rights.

Mary Brown and the Ontario Theatres Branch continue to harass the Ontario artist community, and are hardly worthy of front-cover prominence by *Cinema Canada*.

Jane Wright,
Coordinator, British Canadian
Video Exchange 1984
Oakville

P.S.: A Space is still seeking donations for legal fees for this case. Please make cheques payable to the A Space Anti-Censorship Trust Fund, and send to A Space, 204 Spadina Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5T 2C2. Your help will be very appreciated.

Educating Yacowar

In a letter responding to Maurice Yacowar's review of *Take Two* that appeared in *Cinema Canada* No. 112, S. Wayne Clarkson refers to my article on *Not A Love Story* as characterized by seriousness and insight. Without in any way providing evidence for his claim, Maurice Yacowar responds that "for seriousness and insight" I would say "trivializing and hallucination". Readers of *Cinema Canada* who have not had the pleasure of reading *Take Two* may not know what is at stake between Clarkson and Yacowar on the matter of my article. And while I cannot defend myself against the charge of having hallucinated the film I reviewed - other than by suggesting that readers consider my article in conjunction with viewing the film and assess the evidence for themselves - against the charge of trivializing, there is a response available to me. I would point out to Yacowar's readers that at the heart of my article are three propositions:

1) that *Not A Love Story* looks like an empirical documentary that presents a protagonist engaged in a voyage of discovery, searching out truths about pornography. But it is not really this. The transformation which the film depicts is not from being ignorant to being informed, but rather from being a sinner to being one of the redeemed. I show this by demonstrating that one must probe beyond *Not A Love Story's* similarities with other empirical documentaries - beyond its inclusion of interviews with psychologists and researchers, beyond its quoting authorities in the social sciences, beyond its surveying the opinions of people involved in the sex industries - and examine the film's structure and its iconography.

2) that the parallels I trace between the structure of this film and the structure of the Christian myth of the fall and redemption demonstrate that theological doctrines inform the film. The article also explores the iconography of the film and cites its parallels with the historical iconography that has grown up around the myth of the fall. It also argues that matters of doctrine are responsible for the views the film expounds about the nature of sexuality and its place within the good life.

Yacowar may find this concern with the film's theological groundwork trivializing, I do not. As is broadly known, I believe theology is one of the most profound subjects one can study.

Finally, readers of *Cinema Canada* should be aware that a large portion of Yacowar's attack on my article was not couched in the terms he used in his reply, but was constituted by accusations of having made remarks about intercourse that are worthy of an orangutan. Not once, in either his review of *Take Two* or in his defence of that review, has he cited one error in my description of the film nor has he pinpointed a single specific instance of implausible interpretation. Readers of *Take Two* will find that, on the other hand, my description of the film is detailed and that my evidence for my interpretation is very specific.

I do hope readers of *Cinema Canada* who are interested in the issues *Not A Love Story* raises will buy *Take Two* (or better, borrow it from their local public libraries) and read my commentary on the film. I believe that in the process they would gain an education in Yacowar's reviewing tactics.

R. Bruce Elder, Toronto