

Recent French Books

The "Cinéma d'aujourd'hui" collection, one of the best French publications dealing in depth with topical film subjects, has issued **Actualité du cinéma américain**. This insightful and sophisticated survey examines the new orientation in U.S. cinema, and reflects the younger filmmakers' perception of the current state of American society: their movies' esthetics and themes, their awareness of politics, violence, family life, women's liberation are explored with a sharp understanding of the issues involved. Included is an annotated listing of directors and performers leading this contemporary trend (Lherminier FF35).

The film critiques of a well-known French literary figure are published in book form: **Philippe Soupault — Écrits de cinéma**. Collected by Alain and Colette Virmaux, these reviews of the 1918-31 period demonstrate his appreciation of the essentially visual nature of the medium, far in advance of most of his contemporaries (Plon FF58).

Interviews by J.A. Gili with outstanding Italian directors — Bertolucci, Comencini, Petri, Risi, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani and many others — are assembled in **Le cinéma italien**. It covers a wide range of subjects from art to politics in a remarkable display of intellectual brilliance and originality (Editions 10/18 FF20).

Several volumes of photographs, culled from films considered daringly explicit in the '50s and early '60s, have been consolidated by Lo Duca and Maurice Bessy into a single tome, **L'érotisme au cinéma**. No hardcore there, not even soft porn in these artfully composed and beautifully reproduced stills, a nostalgic homage to the hardy precursors of a freer cinema (Lherminier FF225).

In "Les cahiers de la cinémathèque," a valuable collection of texts published by La Cinémathèque de Toulouse, appears an informative and scholarly study, **Pour une histoire du mélodrame au cinéma**. The genre, which started with the earliest movies and declined in the late '30s, is surveyed in this well-documented monograph through knowledgeable essays on its most representative films, directors and interpreters (FF50).

Academy Award winning George L. George is a film director who does film book reviews in Canada, France and the U.S.

Aspects of Cinema

Film editor Ralph Rosenblum, in **When the Shooting Stops**, discusses the art and craft of his métier with extensive experience and keen understanding. During his work on many Woody Allen films and on those of Sidney Lumet, Mel Brooks and William Friedkin, he explored the full scope of creative film editing, and shares his insights in this revealing and highly professional book (Viking \$12.95).

Independent producers, intent on glory and profits (mostly profits), will find in Sheldon Tromberg's **Making Money Making Movies** a wealth of practical advice on film production and distribution. A particularly valuable section carries a detailed budget for a \$750,000 feature, realistic, well-organized and ingenious (Franklin Watts \$6.95).

Two classical works by eminent film historian Lewis Jacobs appear in new editions, revised and up-dated by the author. **The Emergence of Film Art** is a significant collection of texts that illuminate the development of the motion picture as an artistic medium, and **The Documentary Tradition** offers a selection of writings by well-known filmmakers, specialists of the genre. Both volumes, edited by Jacobs, contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the essential role cinema has played in the cultural growth of society (Norton \$19.95 ea.).

The traumatic experience that affected many personalities in the film industry during the transition from the silent to the sound era is discussed in **The Shattered Silents** by Alexander Walker. The radical changes of a period that marked the rebirth of an art are evoked vividly in this well-researched and engaging volume (Morrow \$10.95).

In **Landmark Films**, movie critic William Wolf (and Lillian Kramer Wolf) assess the influence of cinema on our perception of the meaning of our lives. This knowledgeable and discerning study examines 38 important movies, further probing their impact in meaningful interviews with directors and performers (Paddington Press \$14.95).

The Western film genre is informatively explored by William R. Meyer in **The Making of the Great Westerns**, a thorough going study of 30 of the best prototypes. The book focuses on the collaborative element in the production of these films, evaluating their part in screen history,

their public acceptance and critics' reaction (Arlington \$20).

Patricia Erens, in **Sexual Stratagems**, plumbs the portrayal of women in films, a controversial subject that has aroused heated arguments. Her extensive collection of opinions and documents on this many-sided issue provides a wealth of material that further illuminates stressful problems of our rapidly evolving society (Horizon \$15/8.95).

Diligently researched by Phyllis Rauch Klopman, **Frame by Frame: A Black Filmography** offers an annotated listing of over 3000 films dealing with black themes or subject matter. Both Afro-American and Third World Blacks are covered in this scholarly reference work, an essential tool acknowledging the presence and participation of Blacks in movies, and their contribution to the art (Indiana U. Press \$25).

James Robert Parish and William T. Leonard have compiled, in **The Funsters**, a substantial survey of some 60 celebrated comedians of all times, including Mischa Auer, ZaSu Pitts, Patsy Kelly, Polly Moran. This massive 752-page volume accumulates a mountain of data, providing definitive reference material to scholars and buffs alike (Arlington \$30).

Considering the mixture of art, technique and personalities that characterizes the cinema medium, editor Don Allen presents in **The World of Film and Filmmakers** a panoramic view of the industry in a superbly illustrated and explicitly written large format volume (Crown \$19.95).

In **Storytelling and Mythmaking**, Frank McConnell establishes the connection between film and literature by pointing out themes of famous literary works that appear in popular and classical movies (Oxford U. Press \$13.95).

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