

BOOKSHELF

by george l. george

Aspects of Cinema

Woody Allen's comedic art is perceptively explored by Maurice Yacowar in **Loser Take All**, covering all of Allen's films up to *Manhattan*, as well as his writings and club appearances. The relationship between Allen's early experiments in comedy and his later, more sophisticated work, is demonstrated by Yacowar with perspicacity and wit (Ungar \$10.95).

Three studies of noted directors include **François Truffaut** by Annette Insdorf, a sensitive appraisal of the cyclical essence of Truffaut's film plots (Morrow \$4.95); **Raoul Walsh**, edited by Phil Hardy, spotlights the diversity of the veteran directors' movie subjects and the versatility of his talent (N.Y. Zoetrope \$4); **Joris Ivens** by Rosalind Delmar surveys the half-century career of the Dutch documentarian and his creative approach to a demanding genre (N.Y. Zoetrope \$8.25).

A superbly illustrated, large format volume compiled by Clive Hirschhorn, **The Warner Bros. Story**, surveys the progress of this pioneering studio since 1918. Every film it made or distributed is covered, listing cast, direction, critical assessments and plot outline, plus an expert assessment of the WB Studio's contribution to cinema art and technique (Crown \$30).

The ideological guidelines of Soviet cinema during its early years are explored in a well researched book, **The Politics of the Soviet Cinema 1917-1929**. Author Richard Taylor finds that the stormy period following the 1917 Revolution slowed the industry's organizational progress until the end of the '20s decade, when it was achieved at some cost to artistic integrity (Cambridge U. Press \$19.95).

A massive 1200-page volume compiled by Ephraim Katz, **The Film Encyclopedia** takes in every aspect of cinema in over 7000 entries covering personalities, places and events, esthetics and techniques, history and industry. This is an eminently useful book, a reliable reference and research tool, and one of the very best of its type (Crowell \$29.95).

M. Ali Issary and Doris A. Paul examine, in **What Is Cinéma Vérité**, a documentary style that sought to capture on film the essence of life without staging or re-enacting real events. It discusses such practitioners of the genre as Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov, the Frenchman Jean Rouch and the American Maysles brothers. In its extensive bibliography it manages somehow to overlook Stephen Mamber's pioneer study, "Cinéma Vérité," published in 1974 by M.I.T. (Scarecrow Press \$10.50).

Economic realities of the film industry are soundly discussed by Mollie Gregory, an experienced producer, consultant and lecturer, in **Making Films Your Business**. Financing of features or documentaries, theatrical or television distribution, legal problems are among the areas competently and effectively handled in this practical text (Schocken Books \$6.95).

Some 20,000 films, whose copyright has expired and which are therefore available free for exhibition, are recorded in **Film Superlist for 1940-1949 Motion Pictures in the U.S. Public Domain**. Painstakingly compiled by Walter E. Hurst, Johnny Minus and William Storm Hale, this catalog may prove a bonanza for enterprising operators (Seven Arts Press, Box 649, Hollywood, CA 90028; \$95/59.50).

All aspects of narrow gauge filmmaking (8, Super 8 and 16mm) are expertly discussed in **The Book of Movie Photography** by David Cheshire. While designed essentially for the non-professional cameraman, it contains a wealth of information and advice that goes beyond that category in clearly written and well illustrated chapters on camera, film, lighting, sound, editing, processing and special techniques (Knopf \$22.50).

In **Images of Alcoholism**, editors Jim Cook and Mike Lewington assemble essays on the representation of excessive drinking in films and on television, selecting pertinent examples from a broad list of movies dealing substantially with this condition (N.Y. Zoetrope \$6.75).

François Rivière and Gabrielle Wittkop. Named after the popular Paris theater that functioned up to a few years ago, the book knowledgeably examines the styles and techniques of the genre as presented on stage. This theatrical approach prefigured and influenced horror's cinematic versions by such early masters as James Whale and Tod Browning, and such later practitioners as Alfred Hitchcock and British producer Will Hammer (Veyrier FF79).

Able edited by Guy Hennebelle, the latest issue of the quarterly "Ciném-Action," **Cinemas et l'émigration** assembles a broad documentation on a subject of serious concern to many European countries — the presence of some 7 million foreign workers mostly from Africa and Asia, but also from Italy, Portugal, Turkey, etc. Films by them and about them are examined in this detailed survey, together with interviews of noted filmmakers and seminars about these movies' styles and audiences. A thoughtful study of a significant international problem (Filméditations FF30).

Marking the 20th anniversary of his death at age 37, **Gérard Philipe** is the expanded version of Georges Sadoul's affectionate and revealing biography, first published in 1967. This new edition contains, beside Sadoul's text, statements and writings by Philipe himself about his films and his profession, testimonials by friends and associates, and a full filmography (Filméditations FF38).

In **Passagers clandestins**, Francis Lacassin considers the role mythical and legendary personages play in otherwise 'normal' films. How their appearances, often disguised or symbolic, affect the unfolding of the plot and the evolution of characters is unearthed in subtle analyses of films directed by Fritz Lang, Alain Resnais and other creative filmmakers (UGE 10/18 FF20).

Michel Ciment's second "portrait of the artist by himself" — the first having been Elia Kazan's — provides in **Le livre de Losey** an extensive and penetrating study of director Joseph Losey's personality, choice of film subjects, and approaches to his craft. The book consists of in depth interviews wherein Losey clarifies his concepts of cinema art and technique, with specific references to his films (Stock FF80).

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

Recent French Books

The theatrical origins of the horror film are uncovered in **Grand-Guignol**, an informative and stimulating volume by