

"the eternal idealist" remained virtually silent, communicating only with family members, until his death in 1972.

Yet even with the tragic events of these later years, **A. M. Klein: The Poet As Landscape** is a powerful affirmation of life and an eloquent portrait of a poet who cared so deeply about people and community. This film deserves, and will surely receive, wide exposure. The thorough research, excellent craftsmanship, and passionate commitment which created it have made this documentary an extremely memorable and moving experience, unique among current filmmaking efforts.

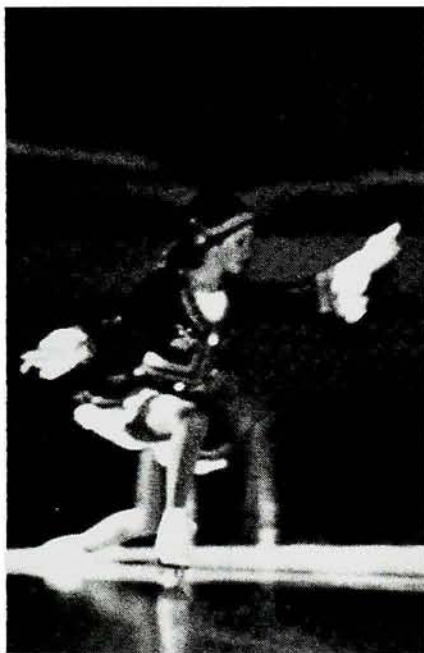
Joyce Nelson

## NICOLINA

d. Rebecca Yates & Glen Saltzman, sc. Marc Rosen, ph. Mark Irwin, ed. David Leach, sd. Brian Day, sd. ed. David Leach, lp. Johanne Hinterseer, Rosalia Maggio, Antonis Michailides, Demetreus Anastakis, p. Rebecca Yates & Glen Saltzman, p.c. Cineflics Ltd., (year) 1978, col. 16mm, running time 27 minutes, 45 seconds, dist. International Tele-Film Enterprises, Toronto.

There are moments in this film that Truffaut would be proud of: the subliminal humor, the delicately drawn textures, the use of secondary images in the frame, and the self-questioning that, as with the male equivalent of puberty in **The 400 Blows**, comes with Nicolina's brand new breasts. And this 25-minute film ultimately succeeds because of Johanne Hinterseer, a "discovered" non-actress twelve-year-old in the title role, who is perhaps as significant a find as Jean-Pierre Léaud.

"Weddings are really dumb — especially Greek weddings!" cries the girl in dismay when she is obliged to step out of a figure skating competition because it coincides with nuptial festivities in the family. Rosalia Maggio as Nicolina's Aunt Sophie has come all the way to Toronto from Greece



Johanne Hinterseer, playing Nicolina

for the event — and Nicolina's awe of this draconian and portly version of Sophia Loren who can't speak Canadian, the hairdo bouffant, is the basis of her coming of age.

There are clues laid down early in the film in a scene where Nicolina's father is frustrated in his attempt to interest her in Greek grapevine dancing, the rhythm of the camera-work repeating the earlier lyricism of the opening sequence of Nicolina figure skating. "I can't understand Greek, I hate this stupid dance and I don't care," seems to tear irreparably across the tentative bridge the old culture is putting out to the new. But the use of image on image in the film conveys a turning point in the drama as Nicolina becomes intrigued despite herself with Aunt Sophie's old wedding album. The filmic transition from the stills of Greek ancestors in the album to freeze-frames of Nicolina in Greek costume at the wedding may be cliché, as are the MOS shots of conversation as Nicolina confides her dilemma to her friends: but these stylisms are often used because they can work well, and they certainly do here.

The director-writer's fine touch with detail (father in hard-hat meets daughter... and in the next sequence the daughter is seen wearing the hard hat )

and humour (the kid brother who smothers his food in ketchup at the dinner table; later at the climactic arrival of the news that Nicolina will be able to skate in the free expression event, he interrupts with, "You wanna listen to my bazouki?") manage to slip the romanticism of the film behind our defences and allows the poignance and the sentimentality to seem welcome in an ending that might be all too pat.

In the final image, which is forgiveably a freeze-frame, we see Nicolina pirouetting on skates in a drastically shortened version of an ethnic wedding outfit which was once her great aunt's, giving her family the thumbs-up. Greek roots and juicy fruits, old and new, multiculturalism and pop culture come together. Nicolina's selfhood focuses in the subtle monochromes of this last single frame as does the inconography of the film itself. The obligatory cut-aways here and there, the frequent absence of foreground in framing and the single, derivative use of the pull-back out of a mirror can be forgiven. The film **Nicolina** is an honest, well-written evocation of the T.V. generation's insensitivity to what has gone before and it reconciles the opposites without diminishing any of the several parties.

Michael Asti-Rose

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