



Bix Milanich



The Funeral Ship – 25 minutes, colour with sound. *Writer/director/editor/director of photography* – Bix Milanich; *cinematographer* – Tony Westman; *Production* – Doug White; *sound* – Rick Patton; *cast* – Ed Street (lead), Ethel Claxton (old witch), Rob Graham (acolyte priest), Terry Morando (young virgin), Dorothy Atherton (nun balak), and Mary Douglas-Burns (nun balaam). *Time and Period* – Post-Orwellian. *Distributed through the Canadian Film-makers' Distribution Centre.*

There came a time on earth when two factions of humans existed – one was the super computerized half-humans dwelling somewhere above the planet and controlling it, and the other, mutants living on the surface in their small sanctuaries. Some sanctuaries were service stations, some were office buildings, and others were small isolated homes and churches.

Soma was among the first of the computerized humans. Because of inconsistency or default, he was rejected and sent down to the surface. He unknowingly becomes the victim of a group of these mutants who inhabit a small church (the computer prison in this case) and through an ordeal recognizes one of them to be a long lost girl friend of the past – one who has chosen to remain because of a promise of immortality. Through taunting and teasing, the inmates see him as one thing – food – and he, realizing this, tries to flee.

All of the events which have been taking place are being viewed constantly on a video console. Two of the computer humans up in their lofty confines

seated at the console immediately 'stop time' by actuating a button. They resemble Soma in appearance. An argument ensues which causes one to push another button. It all at once commences time and destroys Soma's computer bank (i.e., head).

He lies there smoldering while an old messenger witch tries to dismember him to relay the appendages to the inmates.

A Personal Statement

I was once asked by someone for the meaning of that film. I replied by saying it's like asking an old lady to take her face off. Why? Hidden meanings are always concealed beneath the flesh.

At one of the earlier screenings of Funeral Ship an event took place. Two old ladies immediately began to struggle searching a way to get out of the theatre. They eventually made it to the center aisle and put their hands up trying to block the image while resounding "Garbage" and "Rot" and "Filth" and "... is this where our tax money is going!?"

I really feel that I appreciated every bit of their reaction. I felt I really got to somebody. It must have insulted them so much that if they knew who I was at that exact moment and encountered me on their way out – I would have been in hospital for umbrella bruises and fractures.

The Funeral Ship deals a lot with events that take place as I see it not in the future but as a result of the super technocracy and media dissemination incurred on all people now.

Mankind is evolving to a form of

degenerated regeneration of anthropes stepping all over their own sensitivities, not caring what comes next. After all, what's another step. As long as it doesn't hurt – take it.

Personally speaking, I really believe what I believe in. I write scripts not to satisfy my desire for film-making, but to satisfy my disappointment in current events which become so detrimental to human understanding. No, I'm not a (cliché) pessimist. I'm just a person watchin' persons watch persons watchin' their step as they blindly walk over another's awareness. It's like being aware of them not being aware. They are so imbued with an apathy that they no longer believe – just look and say something like, "... nice day; think it'll rain?"

The Funeral Ship was made by an artist. That's what I really feel I am. There are film-makers – and there are artist film-makers. It's the image that counts. Every visual in a film (that means every single frame on that celluloid-acetate) must be the finished piece of art. It moves all the time and yet it remains still for just that fraction of time – it is so important. How many films contain that shape, form, content and composition that allows the maker to sign it without using his/her name? If it is unique then a signature isn't necessary. As I see films I find many are concerned with 'telling a story' as one would read a novel. The result is – well, why use film? However, if one has all of this beautiful photographic emulsion to play with, then – make magic – it can only happen once.

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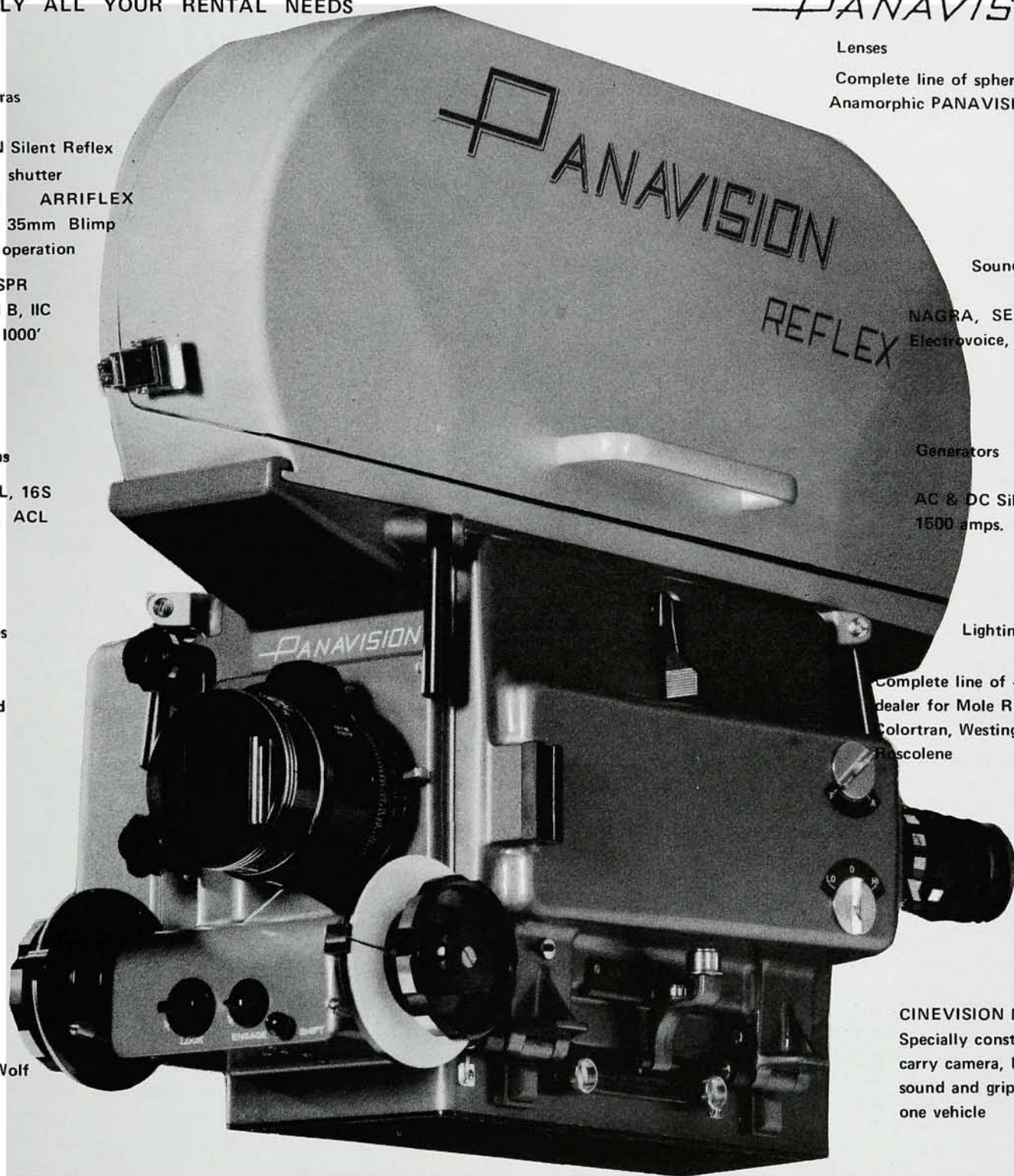
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