

## Aspects of Cinema

A significant and invaluable addition to the body of reference film literature, **Cinema: A Critical Dictionary** expertly evaluates the work of leading international moviemakers and the main streams of cinema art. Edited by New York Film Festival director Richard Roud, it carries appraisals by such eminent film critics as Andrew Sarris, Noel Burch, Penelope Houston, James Monaco and Roud himself who render informative and penetrating verdicts on the history of film and its evolution (Viking, 2 vols., \$75).

Updating an authoritative and indispensable reference series, the latest addition to **The New York Times Film Reviews** reprints all movie criticism published during 1977 and 1978 in the renowned daily. It is an impressive collection, going back to 1913, that provides an unequalled perspective on world film production and establishes a unique record of American and foreign cinematic achievement (Arno Press \$70).

A detailed and unbiased study by Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, **The Inquisition in Hollywood** examines the political witchhunt by the House Un-American Activities Committee which nearly wrecked the film capital during the 1950s. Extensively researched, it reports factually on the events that aroused the social consciousness of the movie colony to a memorable fight for civil liberties (Doubleday \$17.50).

At Otto Preminger's invitation, Theodore Gershuny attended the filming of "Rosebud," reporting on his experience in an entertaining and often corrosive book, **Soon To Be A Major Motion Picture**. It is a lively account, accurate and technically knowledgeable, of the customary turmoil that attends film production and which, in this case, resulted in a "multimillion dollar disaster" (Holt Rinehart Winston \$14.95).

The handling by the British newsreel companies of the Spanish Civil War is the basis of **Cinema and History**, Anthony Aldgate's study of the manipulation of public opinion by the news media. The larger objective of this thoughtful study is

to assess the use of film as valid historic evidence of socio-political events (N.Y. Zoetrope \$11.95).

A useful reference volume, **The Illustrated Who's Who in British Films**, compiled by Denis Gifford, provides credits, data and vital statistics on some 1,000 film personalities from Great Britain and the Dominions — producers, directors, performers, cameramen and inventors (Gale \$32).

An historic cornerstone of British film production is honored in Charles Barr's affectionate and well-documented memoir, **Ealing Studios**. It evokes the team spirit and the creative mood that producer Michael Balcon fostered among his co-workers and which resulted in a string of significant movies attuned to the mood and concerns of Britain's changing times (Overlook/Viking \$17.95).

Bringing up to date the 1963 edition, Erik Barnouw and S. Krishnaswamy's **Indian Film** surveys the world's most prolific motion picture industry. The steady growth and multilingual nature of production are described in well-researched detail, stressing the progress from an early imitative phase to current status as a respected mirror of Indian society (Oxford U. Press \$15.95/5.95).

Dealing with American movies characterized by sombre and cynical mood, brooding anti-heroes, with generally low-key photography and expressionistic angles, **Film Noir** is an unusual reference work compiled by Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward. Some 300 films, from Josef von Sternberg's "Underworld" (1927) to Martin Scorsese's "Taxi Driver" (1976), are included in this well-researched volume (Overlook/Viking \$25).

Prof. Alexander Sesonske's penetrating study, **Jean Renoir: The French Films 1929-34** is substantiated by a personal friendship with the director that enabled him to probe with rare intimacy into Renoir's esthetic and psychological motivations during a crucial period (Harvard U. Press \$25/9.95).

In **The Complete Films of William S. Hart**, Diane Kaiser Koszarski brings to life the Western film genre pioneered by the legendary cowboy. A biographical study of Hart's rugged background prefaces a detailed filmography and an extensive photographic record (Dover \$8.95).

## Recent French Books

Because film production in France is relatively small by international standards, French audiences take to imported films with an eager interest already stimulated by intellectual curiosity and geographic factors. This helps motivate the publication of books dealing with world cinema, as shown in the works reviewed below.

Denis Marion's **Ingmar Bergman** is an unusually perceptive analysis of the motivations and influences that determined much of the themes and story lines of the Swedish director's films. His obsession with the "silence of God," the problems of the couple and his eroticism are traced to his revolt against a straight upbringing. Marion's close examination of Bergman's films stresses the appropriateness of their technical aspects to their dramatic content (NRF, F13).

Two volumes from Éditions Dadci (41, rue de la Chine, 75020 Paris) bring a highly personal view of film in African countries. **Première histoire du cinéma algérien (1899-1979)**, edited by Younès Dadci, closely relates political events to the changing concepts that emerged during the colonial and post-colonial eras. Production, distribution and financing are considered from a socially dedicated standpoint that takes issue with the still persistent colonial influence (F75).

A similar assessment prevails in **une politique africaine du cinéma**, edited by Bahri Ben El Haj, expanded to Africa as a whole (F65). Both books are often difficult to follow because of their assumption of the reader's familiarity with regional politics. They present the added hurdle of including numerous undeciphered acronyms.

A factual and objective study of film censorship in a stable, democratic country, **la censure cinématographique en Suisse** reveals the unresolved conflict between the individual's freedom of choice and governmental supervision. Henri Rosset considers the problem from a legal viewpoint, defining the framework within which the Swiss censors operate and the principles that guide them. His indictment of the paternalistic control of adult thought reflects similar concerns in virtually all "free world" countries (Georgi F60).

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