

BOOKSHELF

by george l. george

In **Motion Picture Camera Data**, extensive descriptions of some 90 cameras in general use with detailed instructions on their operation, maintenance and repair are offered by David W. Samuelson. This useful manual is enhanced by many excellent line drawings (Focal Press \$8.95).

The film music editor's craft is discussed in practical terms by Milton Lustig in **Music Editing for Motion Pictures**. The book explores thoroughly the complex and precise work of the editor, and the equipment required. It is a documented text that composers and arrangers will find equally valuable (Hastings House \$15.95).

An illustrated history of the silent film, Kevin Brownlow's **Hollywood: The Pioneers** is an uncommonly informative and engaging picture of a significant period. A compilation of interviews, it offers a broad assortment of vivid recollections by survivors from all ranks of the industry, backed by a remarkable collection of rare stills (Knopf \$20).

A hilarious, on-target book by Harry and David Medved, **The Golden Turkey Awards** singles out the "worst achievements" in Hollywood history, drawing a bead on such epics as *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes* as *The Worst Vegetable Movie of All Time*, and bestowing *The Most Ludicrous Racial Impersonation Award* on Elvis Presley for his role as an Indian in *Stay Away, Joe* (Putnam \$6.95).

Three collections of reviews by a trio of top film critics afford enlightening insight into the variations of the craft. In **When the Lights Go Down**, Pauline Kael, critic for *New Yorker* magazine, displays her sharp analytical powers and her extensive familiarity with cinema art and history (Holt, Rinehart, Winston \$18.95/9.95); in **Before My Eyes**, reviews and comments by Stanley Kauffman in *The New Republic* attest to his sensitivity and his appreciation of the collaborative nature of filmmaking (Harper & Row \$16.95); in **The Pleasure Dome**, novelist Graham Greene's sophisticated approach, as dis-

played in British periodicals of the 30s, is a delightful change of pace (Oxford U. press \$9.95).

In a scholarly study by Stephen Neale, **Genre**, ideological approaches to the evaluation of film are explored in a knowledgeable and stimulating manner. Cogently criticizing structuralist/semiotic and other currently popular disciplines, Neale advocates a switch in perspective to a methodical analysis of cinema as a social institution (N.Y. Zoetrope \$6.25).

Names on the Screen

Are artists in general, and movie stars specifically, beset by self-destructive urges that sometimes lead to suicide? Katinka Matson, in her controversial volume **Short Lives**, cites the cases of Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, Judy Garland and Montgomery Clift as proofs of her assertion. She fails, however, to present solid psychological motivation for the factual evidence she submits (Morrow \$16.95/9.95).

Was Errol Flynn a Nazi spy? Charles Higham, in **Errol Flynn: The Untold Story**, unveils declassified CIA and FBI documents to support this allegation. True or false, his book spins a fascinating tale, a classical mixture of sex, intrigue and glamour (Doubleday \$12.95). In **Cagney: The Actor As Auteur**, Patrick McGilligan assesses the versatile performer's innate ability to rise above the often hackneyed roles he was called upon to enact and offer true in-depth characterizations (Da Capo \$6.95).

Fassbinder, a perceptive collection of essays edited by Tony Rayns analyzes the noted German director whose recent *The Marriage of Maria Braun* managed once again to infuriate both establishment and anti-establishment groups in his native land. These papers examine the factors behind Rainer Werner Fassbinder's sharp attacks on bourgeois society and assess their place in Europe's progressive film culture (N.Y. Zoetrope \$8.25).

A celebrated Hollywood producer of successful, low-budget films of a generally sensational and gory nature is saluted in **The Movie World of Roger Corman**, an entertaining and informative factbook

edited by J. Philip di Franco. It gives Corman due credit for his unorthodox methods of film production and his willingness to use young and unknown directors (Chelsea \$17.95).

Recent French Books

A valuable compilation of French film books has been issued by the Comité de Liaison de l'Édition Cinématographique with the assistance of publisher Pierre Lherminier. Listed in *Le cinéma en 100,000 pages* are more than 800 books published prior to 1980 and still in stock, with a separate list of those announced for or published during this year. All French-language books are included, whether published in France or abroad. Film buffs and scholars, libraries and bookstores will find this brochure a thoroughgoing reference source (Cinéma d'aujourd'hui F5).

In **Comédiennes aujourd'hui**, Jean-Luc Douin offers in-depth interviews with 6 leading young actresses: Isabelle Adjani, Dominique Laffin, Isabelle Huppert, Miou Miou, Christine Pascal and Maria Schneider. Articulate in their assessment of their craft and professional in their exercise of it, they represent new directions in French cinema toward a realism without hangups (Lherminier F110).

An early star in French movies is sensitively profiled in **Musidora, la dixième muse** by Patrick Cazals. Seductive in a clinging black silk leotard that covered her revealingly from head to toe, Musidora dominated French cinema in World War I. days by her sensational appearances in Louis Feuillade's celebrated serials *Judex* and *Les Vampires*. Musidora went on to directing films, writing books, lecturing, singing in music halls, and forcefully championing militant feminism (Veyrier F60).

Film techniques taught at the Vincennes department of the Université de Paris are summarized in a collectively written volume, **Du cinéma selon Vincennes**. Contributors include members of the teaching staff who explore the various experimental approaches and theoretical innovations that link film techniques with the social and esthetic realities of contemporary life (Lherminier F55). ■

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