Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film

3-Volume Set

Edited by
Ian Aitken

encyclopedia of the

DOCUMENTARY FILM

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encyclopedia of the

DOCUMENTARY FILM

Volume 1-3

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Ian Aitken

editor

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INTRODUCTION

The documentary film can be regarded as the first genre of the cinema. During the 1890s, when the cinema came into existence, most viewers saw some kind of 'actuality' film. These early documentaries were often simple, single-shot affairs, showing newsworthy events, scenes from foreign lands, or everyday events. However, more fictional (or 'staged') actualities also began to be produced from the earliest years of the cinema, based on the special effects capacity of the cinema. An example here might be the Lumière brothers' *Arroseur arrose*, which appeared as early as 1895, but perhaps the most well known is Georges Melies' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902). Between 1895 and 1905 a number of identifiable genres of documentary film emerged, including 'topicals', 'travelogues', 'scenics', 'industrials', sports films, 'trick' films, 'fantsy' films, and films that used fictional reconstruction or staging in a variety of ways. These early genres of documentary film were quickly assimilated into existing modes of popular culture and entertainment and initially appeared in venues that used other, non-filmic, forms of performance such as acrobatics, song, and dance.

However, from quite early on, the value of documentary film as a form of promotion and persuasion was also recognised. For example, the 'industrials' were usually made by corporate businesses in order to promote their image. Examples include English 'industrials' such as *The Story of a Piece of Slate* (1904). Such films were primarily descriptive and expressed little if any opinion on the industrial processes they represented.

Later, the value of the documentary film as a form of social and political critique, ideology, and propaganda was quickly recognised, particularly so during World War I. During the war, all the participating countries embarked upon major programmes of propaganda production involving the use of the documentary film. The documentary moved out of the province of entertainment and private sponsorship and into the service of the state. Initially, government services were antipathetic and suspicious about this new medium that had emerged from the working classes and appeared to possess the worrying ability to show things that governments would prefer to keep well hidden, or, at least, maintain as the preserve of minority elites. As a consequence, strict controls were placed on documentary filmmaking during the war. For example, upon the outbreak of war, the War Office in England allowed cameramen to accompany the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) into France. A decisive victory had been expected, but when the BEF was forced to retreat from Mons and Ypres in late 1914, all newsreel permits were withdrawn and a blanket censorship was imposed. Nevertheless, important films were made during the war in all the participating countries. Perhaps the most important of these was the British film *Battle of the Somme* (1916). This film, striking for its images of life on the front line, had a considerable impact on its audience. Nevertheless, it was produced within the constraints of an extensive censorship system and would not have appeared if its representations were not acceptable to that system.

The documentary film did not really come into its own as a major and significant form of filmmaking until the 1920s. Before 1920, documentary films were largely 'un-authored', so to speak, and often rather simple in both form and aspiration. Despite the appearance of *Battle of the Somme*, few large-scale documentaries were made before 1920, and fewer of these can be regarded as historically, aesthetically, or politically important. However, the inter-war period in Europe was an age of ideology, and documentary film was soon put to the service of political promotion as well as artistic accomplishment.

One of the most important films in the history of the documentary film also appeared as early as 1922. It is difficult to exaggerate the historical impact of Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*. Set in the far north of Canada, *Nanook of the North* presents compelling images of Eskimo life and reveals the startling potential of the documentary film for bringing the everyday world to life. This

potential was not lost on early film theorists, who soon began to see documentary film as the principal means through which a genuine form of film art could be created, against the background of the accelerating domination of the medium by the mass-produced Hollywood feature film. Thus, André Sauvage regarded *Nanook of the North* as an example of 'pure cinema', by which he meant that Flaherty's film foregrounded the raw, visual naturalism that Sauvage believed to be at the heart of the aesthetic specificity of the medium.

Nanook was also an inspiration for the emergence of a number of hybrid documentaries that appeared in France and Germany during the 1920s. These films, which combined documentary with modernist form, include *Rien que les heures* (Alberto Cavalcanti, 1926) and *Berlin: die Symphonie der Grossstadt* (Walter Ruttmann, 1929). In addition to these films, *Nanook* also made it possible for Schoedsack and Coopers' *Grass* (1925) and *Chang* (1928) to appear, with their respective accounts of the tribulations of Iranian and Siamese peasant life and, less directly, Victor Turin's *Turksib* (1929), with its epic story of the building of the trans-Siberian railway. It was also in the Soviet Union that the second most important documentary film of the 1895–1945 period emerged: Dziga Vertov's *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929). As with *Nanook of the North*, it is difficult to exaggerate the importance this film has had, both in terms of the documentary film and in terms of film theory.

The 1930–1945 period marked another stage in the historical development of the documentary film, when individual authors began to emerge and documentary was put to increasing social and political use. In the United States, the Workers' Film and Photo League was formed, and committed (or socially concerned) films such as *Native Land* (Paul Strand and Leo Hurwitz, 1942) appeared. Similar organisations sprang up in Europe, and committed documentary filmmakers such as Joris Ivens, Henri Storck, Pare Lorentz, and Ivor Montagu also came to prominence. In Britain, John Grierson's documentary film movement made important films such as *Drifters* (1929) throughout the 1930s and 1940s and cultivated important filmmakers, such as Paul Rotha, Alberto Cavalcanti, Basil Wright, and Humphrey Jennings. Wright's *Song of Ceylon* (1934) and Grierson's *Drifters* remain impressive today for their command of aesthetic form and visual beauty. During the war the documentary film movement also played a role in developing a new genre: the dramatised documentary, exemplified by Jennings' *Fires Were Started* (1943).

After 1945, documentary film developed in a number of different directions. More clearly 'authored' but still socially concerned films began to appear, by such directors as Frederic Rossif, Karel Reisz, Lindsay Anderson, Georges Franju, and Alain Resnais. Of particular note is Resnais' *Nuit et brouillard* (1957, *Night and Fog*), with its stark and uncompromising portrayal of the Nazi death camps. Documentary genres were also developed further during this period. Chris Marker produced philosophical travelogues such as *Letter from Siberia* (1958), while the ethnographic film was taken to a new level of importance by Robert Gardner in *The Hunters* (1956) and *Dead Birds* (1963). Even more important in this respect was Jean Rouch, particularly his ground-breaking, reflexive *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961). The films of French filmmakers such as Rouch also influenced the development of the North American *cinéma vérité* movement and the films of Robert Drew, Richard Leacock, the Maysle Brothers, and others. Their work, in turn, influenced the filmmaking of Frederick Wiseman. Interview-based films, such as Marcel Ophuls' *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1970) and the British TV series *The World at War* (1974–1975) also made important advances within the field by tapping into historical experience in an often profoundly moving and discomforting manner. *The World at War* also broke new ground in telling the story of World War II from the perspective of ordinary people, rather than from the perspectives of the great and good.

During the period from the 1980s to the present, important documentary films and filmmakers continued to emerge. Important filmmakers of this period include Claude Lanzmann, Michael Moore, Errol Morris, Chris Marker, Jill Godmilow, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Barbara Kopple, Julia Reichert, Nick Broomfield, Molly Dineen, Peter Watkins, and many others too numerous to mention.

Perhaps the most significant development during this period was the gradual reeemergence of the documentary film as a mainstream cultural form and the creation of new, popular genres. Today, genres such as the docusoap, reality TV, the 'mockumentary', and others receive widespread broadcast coverage around the world and significantly increase the audience for the documentary film, turning it from the preserve of intellectuals and activists into yet another form of mass entertainment. Nevertheless, the recent success of a film such as *Farenheit 9/11* bucks this trend and returns documentary to its subversive roots. *Farenheit 9/11* also exemplifies a characteristic common to much recent documentary filmmaking: a tendency to

indulge in a postmodern bricolage of technique, ranging from straight interview to fanciful reconstruction. Moore's film also illustrates another issue often set before documentary filmmakers: the issue of the impact of this genre of highly realistic and apparently persuasive cinema. Yet, despite its controversial character and public exposure, *Farenheit 9/11* did not derail George W. Bush's reelection campaign.

To some extent, documentary film theory has reflected more general trends within film theory. Early written attempts to assess the role and importance of the documentary film tended to focus on questions of realism, authorship, and social representation, reflecting the concerns of much so-called classical film theory. These include the work of Paul Rotha, Erik Barnouw, John Grierson, Basil Wright, and others. Later work by André Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer in the field of film theory also contained a strong documentary dimension.

However, from the 1970s onward, documentary film theory tended to adopt the concerns and intellectual orientations of theorists within the semiotic, structuralist, poststructuralist, and postmodernist camps of film theory. Perhaps it was inevitable that a medium such as documentary film would become a subject of criticism, on account of its supposed 'realism', given the 'antirealist' orientation of 'screen theory' and its derivatives. Given the general tendency of the period to dispense with 'master narratives' and a 'metaphysics of being', it was not surprising to find documentary film theory becoming increasingly preoccupied with the rhetoric and discursive patterns, the codes and interest-based practices of the documentary film, rather than more abstract questions of realism. Bill Nichols was something of a pioneer here, but he was quickly followed by others. This approach to understanding the 'rhetoric' of the documentary film also dominated documentary film theory in the 1980s and 1990s, often giving such theory a pronounced poststructuralist, postmodern, or relativist orientation. Within these approaches, it is the practical impact that documentary film and theory can have on behalf of the minority, or way in which documentary film deploys a post-colonialist, patriarchal, or heterosexist rhetoric, which is of particular import.

Since the early 1990s, however, the field of documentary film theory has broadened, reflecting the spirit of 'post-theory' in film theory. One crucial question affecting documentary film is the representation of history. Historical work on the documentary film has continued, and includes the work of Ian Aitken, Jack C. Ellis, Lewis Jacobs, Deane Williams, Thomas Waugh, and others. Questions of documentary film theory and history are also explored in the work of Charles Warren, Aitken, Derek Paget, William Rothman, Bert Hogenkamp, Philip Rosen, Vivian Sobchack, Michael Renov, and others. Questions of realism and reality in relation to the documentary film are also explored in works by Rosen, Renov, Winston, Anna Grimshaw, and Linda Williams. However, the issue of documentary film and its relation to questions of truth-value, objectivity and reference are rarely considered, though Winston has done so to some extent, and Aitken does in this Encyclopedia. Many of these writers, together with others such as Julia Lesage, Carl Plantinga, Bill Nichols and Trinh T. Minh-ha and Anna M Lopez, also continue to work in a framework informed by gender and postmodern theory.

Structure of the Encyclopedia

In attempting to achieve the requisite degree of comprehensiveness, the goal of this encyclopedia has been to encompass a wide range of different classificatory categories. The most common categories to appear in this work are those of individual films and filmmakers. Entries here range from short (500-word) pieces to much longer accounts of important films and filmmakers, such as *Nanook of the North* and Dziga Vertov.

In addition to this category, the encyclopedia also attempts to assess more broad-based documentary filmmaking traditions within nations and regions, or within historical periods. These are, in general, much longer pieces, ranging from 2,000 words to 7,000 words. Such entries attempt to sum up the most important developments in the documentary film in respective nations, regions, or historical periods. These entries may also prove to be particularly important in bringing to light new material and insights and in providing a rich source of information for future research.

These volumes also encompass a variety of theoretical areas such as deconstruction and feminism. Finally, a number of categories relating to style, technique, technology, production, distribution, exhibition, and other factors are included. All of these entries have a pronounced critical dimension: contributors have been encouraged to think hard about their entries and to interpret them insightfully. All entries also contain detailed empirical sections, such as biographies, bibliographies, and filmographies. Many of these are extensive and the product of considerable research.

This encyclopedia provides a much-needed infrastructural support for the field of documentary film studies, and the material that it contains should provide the basis for many future research projects. The encyclopedia also enables the field to be considered, and even eventually theorised, as a totality. It is now, and for the first time, possible to make comparative studies of different national and regional documentary film traditions, and to create an overall 'map' of the field. This will prove an invaluable aid to future research.

Another function of the encyclopedia is to bring neglected authors, films, and geographical areas of production back into the light of analysis. English-speaking readers will, for example, discover here the names and details of many little-known documentary filmmakers from countries such as India, Bosnia, and China. In this respect, the encyclopedia will also play a particularly important role in bringing attention to bear on films and filmmakers from the former Soviet bloc of eastern European countries. Still another achievement of the Encyclopedia is to provide the opportunity for many contributors to write about the documentary film. Many contributors to the encyclopedia are eminent scholars. Others are less well known, the representatives of a new generation of writers in the field. Many have produced admirably well-thought and well-researched entries. A smaller group of contributors are nonacademic, but bring their own personal experience to bear on the subject.

The field of documentary film studies is becoming an increasingly important area of study. Since the 1980s, a growing number of publications have appeared on the subject, and that subject has also begun to enjoy a greater presence within the academy. Standing conferences such as Visible Evidence and others also provide regular international forums for interested scholars to exchange ideas and research findings. The encyclopedia will aid this process of consolidation and advancement by making available a substantial corpus of critical writing and data that colleagues can draw upon.

Finally, I wish to thank the Board of Advisors of the encyclopedia for their generous help and advice during the course of this project.

IAN AITKEN

A

ABEL GANCE: YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW

Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow is the dubbed version of *Abel Gance, Hier et Demain,* produced by the Office de Documentation par le Film and directed by Nelly Kaplan.

In the 1960s, the motion picture rose to prominence as a key medium of expression. A newly focused and invigorated interest in the movies manifested itself both in new styles of filmmaking and the study of cinema's history. This generation questioned current cinematic conventions, watched old motion pictures, and identified with forgotten filmmakers and cinematic icons. An important outcome of this renaissance was a new appreciation for the art of the silent cinema. This audience was particularly receptive to *Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow,* which championed a rediscovered genius and his neglected silent masterpieces.

Nelly Kaplan, the director of *Abel Gance,* was in the vanguard of this new generation of film enthusiasts. Born in Buenos Aires in 1934, Kaplan abandoned her studies in economics at the University of Buenos Aires because of her fascination with film. She went to Paris as a representative of the Argentine Film Archive, and found employment as a film journalist writing for Argentine newspapers. Shortly thereafter, in 1954, the 20-year-old met Abel Gance and worked as an actor, assistant director, and collaborator on a number of his film projects. A second unit camera operator on Gance's feature film, *Cyrano et d'Artagnan* (1963), Kaplan used footage of the 74-year-old filmmaker taken on the set to frame the flashback of his life and career in *Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow*, which was made that same year.

In this dubbed version of *Abel Gance, Hier et Demain,* an English speaker provides a first-person account of the filmmaker's story. Recognized as a great technical innovator as well as an artist, Gance tells us that he invented prototypes of Cinerama and stereophonic sound. As his cinematic achievements are identified, film clips support his claims. We see examples of Gance's use of montage in his 1921 *La Roue*. Yet, despite the quality of his cinematic innovations, Gance claims the studios were initially reluctant to support his style of filmmaking. With the advent of sound in film, the director was no longer encouraged to make silent films, which he preferred to make. When asked to work for Adolph Hitler during the war, he fled to Spain. Gance did not make another film for over 10 years.

Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow ends with Gance discussing his later work as a director, his disappointment with the current cinema, and his dreams of once again making sensational motion pictures in the future.

Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow presents its subject as a living treasure still capable of great work, one of the cinema's great innovators. Although her motives are understandable, Nelly Kaplan's narrowly focused concern that Gance be recognized as a hero of the cinema has its drawbacks. The constant emphasis on Gance's cinematic accomplishments to the exclusion of everything else prevents us from knowing him as a person. The limiting effect of off-screen narration, which could have been relieved by having Gance occasionally speak on camera, particularly accentuates our feeling of being distanced from the subject and prevents us from experiencing some sense of intimacy with Gance as a human being.

One way the interested viewer can get a better sense of Abel Gance, the person, is to watch the other important documentary on the filmmaker from this period. Kevin Brownlow's 1968 production of *Abel Gance: The Charm of Dynamite* centers on a trip Gance made to England in 1965. This documentary uses extensive interviews with the filmmaker to underscore the importance of his films. *Abel Gance: The Charm of Dynamite* also documents the beginning of Kevin Brownlow's lifelong pursuit of reconstructing *Napoleon*, a quest that confirmed *Napoleon* as one of the major accomplishments of the silent cinema.

Both *Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow* and *Abel Gance: The Charm of Dynamite* capture a 1960s cineaste's excitement in recognizing the art of a neglected major silent filmmaker. These documentaries also put Abel Gance in the select company of such maverick geniuses of the motion picture as D. W. Griffith, Erich Von Stroheim, Sergei Eisenstein, and Orson Welles. Lauded today for his innovative cinematic achievements, Gance ultimately was denied the freedom to make motion pictures the way he wished, as his iconoclastic vision could not be supported by the film industry.

FRANK SCHEIDE

See also **Kaplan, Nelly**

Selected Film

1962 *Abel Gance: Yesterday and Tomorrow*: Kaplan

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ACT OF GOD

One of the most controversial and innovative filmmakers of the British film renaissance of the 1980s, Peter Greenaway is a director of fiction films, documentaries, and TV programmes; a painter; and an author of essays and novels. His very distinctive poetic universe is characterized by a proliferation of details and references, and is driven by an encyclopaedic ambition. Fiction features such as *The Belly of an Architect* (1986), *Drowning by Numbers* (1988), and *The Pillow Book* (1996) alternate in his filmography with documentaries that, for their utter originality, are situated at the limits of the genre. He often employs the form of the documentary either to represent something true but futile, as in *Dear Phone* (1977), or *Water Wrackets* (1975), to tell a fictional story through absolutely neutral images a series of rivers and ponds. As Jorge Luis Borges does, Greenaway applies a scientific language to nonscientific topics, considering the language of science itself as articulated in essay writing, in Darwin's books, and in mathematical formulas as a form of narration.

Act of God is a 26-minute film made for Thames TV as part of a series produced by Udi Eichler. It

consists of an investigation into the elusive nature of the phenomenon of lightning, through a series of filmed interviews with people who, from 1966 to 1980, were struck by lightning in various European locations. *Act of God* was presented at several international festivals, including Edinburgh, Chicago, and New York, and won prizes as Best Documentary at the festivals of Melbourne and Sidney. Made with his regular collaborator, musician Michael Nyman, *Act of God* is a documentary that, for its subject matter and aesthetic characteristics, is perfectly consistent with the filmmaker's artistic world and, in particular, with the obsessive cataloguing effort, which has always been at the core of his project. *Act of God*, in fact, confirms Greenaway's passion for taxonomy and categorization, which previously emerged, for instance, in the documentary *The Falls* (1980), the result of lengthy research carried out in the attempt at producing a sort of encyclopaedia of humanity, a gargantuan effort evocative of Borges.

In *Act of God*, Greenaway tries to classify and understand the most unclassifiable and unpredictable event on the face of the earth. Always looking for the point in which all the lines of the world converge and everything happens simultaneously, he searches for a mathematical formula for lightning, which he tries to extract from the numbers that recur in the different accidents, keeping into account the site, the date, and the precise time when the lightning struck, the weight and shoe size of the victim, and anything the subject was carrying or wearing at the time. Greenaway makes a list of all the numbers and objects, but also includes advice deriving from popular belief, thus ironically mixing and granting the same importance to science and to folklore, in tune with his postmodern stance.

Act of God is composed of 13 interviews with victims of lightning who are asked to describe in detail their experiences and the circumstances that preceded and followed the accident. Searching for a manifestation of God in the discovery of the presence of coherence even in the most absolutely indeterminate event, Greenaway is particularly interested in finding out whether and how intensely the victims believed that their accident had a religious meaning and saw it as a divine punishment. Finding that they did not, Greenaway suggests how these extraordinary instances have happened to ordinary people, who failed to interpret them as exceptional events, and tries to offer through the editing a sort of metaphorical interpretation of the stories told. These direct testimonies are intertwined with 10 apocryphal stories also related to lightning, narrated in voice-over, in which the focus is always on the site and date of the accident, the victim, and the objects that she or he was carrying. Greenaway consistently highlights the accidental nature of the events narrated in the made-up stories, and intertwines to them a series of references to literary and music works that refer to lightning, drawing attention to the recurrence of this natural phenomenon in Shakespeare's oeuvre.

The interviews of Ac*t of God* are shot in a way that is utterly unique for a documentary. Every frame is composed by the filmmaker as if it were a painting, displaying a profound attention for location and background, and an obsessive research for symmetry between the body of the interviewee and the space that surrounds it. In some cases, Greenaway creates a game of shadows behind the interviewee's body; in other cases, he constructs an impressive depth of field through open doors and windows. In one interview made over the phone, Greenaway invents a shot with a strange perspective: a telephone handle in close-up looks unnaturally big, and from a window in the background the tops of some trees and a threatening sky are visible. Interviews are conducted both in interiors and in exteriors; when they are set outside, they are generally shot in gardens, always with an emphasis on the element of water (for instance, the rain is falling and the interviewee is under an umbrella, or water sprays out of a watering can, filling in the space between the camera lens and the interviewee). It must be noted that water is a recurrent presence in Greenaway's work, an ambivalent element, which is the object of innumerable associations and contradictions, loved by the director for its photogenic quality as well as for being a component of the human body that links us to the world. In *Act of God*, Greenaway suggests in fact the idea of the liquefaction of the body hit by lightning, in a sort of "water to water" (rather than "ashes to ashes") cycle.

The composition of the shots, the subject matter, and the music by Nyman make *Act of God* a product that is closer to video art than to traditional documentary. As always with Greenaway, the documentary is a language among other languages, to be deconstructed and reconstructed at will. Although the starting point is a real issue, the structure and visual quality of his documentary invite the spectator to doubt the reality of the testimonies, immersed as they are in an aesthetic surplus.

STEFANO BASCHIERA

Act of God (UK, Thames TV, 1980, 25 mins). Distributed by: Thames Television – British Film Institute. Produced by Udi Eichler for Thames Television. Directed and written by Peter Greenaway. Music by Michael Nyman.

Cinematography by Peter George. Editing by Andy Watmore. Filmed in: Devon, London, Lincolshire, Germany, Surrey, Cardiganshire, Lancashire, Norway, Oxfordshire, Italy, Westmorland, Gwent.

Selected Film

1980 *Act of God*: director, writer

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ACTING

It may seem oxymoronic to discuss the role of acting in documentary film. It might be said, for example, that from the time film was invented there was an immediate distinction between the theater-influenced, narrative approach of Georges Méliès and the documentary approach of Louis Lumiere. Méliès used actors, while Lumiere began the documentary tradition by simply filming nonactors. But the issue of the status of acting reappears continually in the history of documentary film, and the simple distinction between actor and nonactor has proved untenable.

In the 1920s, Soviet filmmakers of both fiction and nonfiction film debated the relative importance of acting and editing in filmmaking. Lev Kuleshov's experiments in montage famously showed that an audience's perception of spatial relations can be manipulated through editing. If a shot of an actor in a theater is followed by a shot of an audience, we assumed the actor and audience are in the same theater; in other words, we assumed a spatial coexistence. But this spatial effect, often referred to as the Kuleshov effect, also demonstrated that contextual changes through editing can alter and control audience perception of an actor's performance. In his experiments, Kuleshov alternated identical, neutral shots of an actor's face with separate shots of a baby, a girl at play, a dead woman, soup, and nature scenes. The audience reportedly assumed not only that the actor and the other shots were spatially coexistent, but that the actor's expression was different when it appeared after the soup than when it appeared after the dead woman. Pudovkin writes that the audience "raved about the acting of the artist. They pointed out the heavy pensiveness of his mood over the forgotten soup, were touched and moved by the deep sorrow with which he looked on the dead woman, and admired the light, happy smile with which he surveyed the girl at play. But we knew that in all three cases the face was exactly the same."

Such experiments led Soviet directors to aggressively assert the power of editing technique over the power of acting performance. To the extent that that assertion is true, it holds regardless of whether the acting performance occurs in a fiction film or in a documentary, but the assertion plays out in a variety of approaches toward editing and acting pursued by Soviet directors. Sergei Eisenstein's films usually staged quasi-documentary historical events in which actors often played typed, stereotypical roles. For Eisenstein, nuanced acting was less important that having the audience recognize that the actor represented a particular class or type of person. Once the audience recognized the desired type, a variety of effects and meanings could be produced through the juxtaposition of editing. Typage was also a means of rejecting the western star system.

Dziga Vertov, in contrast, developed the documentary genre by emphasizing nonrealistic

editing and self-reflexivity, while remaining committed to nonfictive subjects and nonprofessional actors. Vertov claimed that filmmakers should intrude as little as possible on the lives of the subjects being filmed, thereby escaping bourgeois film conventions and capturing "film truth" (see entry for Vertov). In practice, of course, it was technically very difficult to avoid intruding on the subject who was being filmed. In *Chelovek s kinoapparatom* (1929) / *Man with a Movie Camera,* Vertov's man with a camera mounts a platform on a car, stands on top of it with a camera and full-length tripod, and has the driver motor around while he randomly films the passengers of cars that they encounter. It is clear that the people filmed in this manner aren't acting in the same way they would if the camera wasn't there. One can distinguish, then, between at least four types of behavior commonly seen by people on film and television:

1. The unaffected behavior of people filmed while they are unaware of being filmed (for example, the television show Candid Camera)
2. The affected behavior of people filmed who are acting for an audience rather than acting for the camera (one example is documentaries of people acting in a play or otherwise performing before live audiences—such actors may or may not be aware of being filmed)
3. The altered, self-conscious behavior of people suddenly aware (or, in the case of reality television, continually aware) that they are being filmed
4. The crafted behavior of professional actors who anticipate being filmed (in general, such acting is less documentary than numbers 1 through 3, although mock documentaries such as *Best in Show* use professional actors to simulate documentaries)

Vsevolod Pudovkin discusses the ways in which numbers 1 and 3 can be exploited. As an example of item 1, he would create real-life situations, place nonactors in the situations, and hope that their reactions would contain the elements he needed for his fiction film. He would, for example, praise nonprofessional actors on the set after they had ostensibly finished their scenes (and were, in their minds, not acting) and film the genuine emotions of joy and pride that he elicited. In this sense, he was documenting the nonacted reactions of persons after they attempted to act. But Pudovkin would then present the results not as a documentary, but as a scene of an actor in a fictional film. Thus, instead of putting the footage of the praised, beaming actor in a documentary about people trying to act, the footage would be used in a fiction film to portray the glee of a young communist suddenly elected to office in a huge meeting. The audience of the film would thus actually be watching a documentary presented as an acted, fiction film.

In similar ways, Pudovkin used the self-conscious reactions of nonactors attempting to act (number 3, above). If a scene in a fiction film required self-conscious behavior, he would exaggerate the pressure felt by the actor of being on camera. The fictive or nonfictive status of such self-conscious acting is, however, less clear than number 1, which is more clearly nonfictive. Pudovkin used such self-conscious behavior for fiction film, but recently it has become a staple approach in "documentary" reality television.

In the later Italian neo-realist movement, directors reacted against many of the Soviet techniques concerning acting and editing. In his theoretical defenses and explications of neo-realist film, André Bazin agreed with Vertov's emphasis on nonprofessional actors and natural settings, but unlike Vertov and other Soviet directors, he deemphasized editing and asserted that the camera shot should respect the "actual duration of the event" (Bazin, 1971). Bazin argues that the authenticity of the nonprofessional actor in his or her real setting should dictate editing and meaning; meaning should not be constructed by editing in the manner exemplified by Kuleshov's experiments in montage. In the extreme case, neo-realist film would have no editing, and story time and discourse time would be identical (i.e., the entire duration of the event filmed would be identical to the length of the film). Indeed, it can be argued that Italian neo-realist films such as *Ladri di Biciclette* (1948) / *Bicycle Thief* are more "documentary" than Vertov's work, despite the fact that neo-realist film usually employs fictive plots. A neo-realist film of real people, in real settings, in real time is arguably less doctored than a film with the extensive editing employed by Vertov, Eisenstein, and Pudovkin.

The status of acting in documentary film arises again with cinema verité. The invention of small, portable cameras allowed filmmakers such as Jean-Luc Godard to shoot on location in restaurants, homes, and cars less obtrusively than Vertov could. Godard and other filmmakers in the cinema verité genre could thus play more easily with the four types of acting listed previously,

because they had more control over whether or not to reveal the presence of the camera.

More recently, postmodern theories of performance drawn from the work of scholars such as Erving Goffman have questioned any hard distinction between fictive and nonfictive acting, claiming that all human behavior is role-playing of one sort or another. Recent films such as *American Splendor* (2003) elide the distinction between fictive and nonfictive acting by creating a mélange that includes real people; actors playing real people; drawings of real people as comic-book characters; real people appearing on television talk shows; staged versions of the same talk show with actors playing real people; and historical autobiography mixed with fictional scenes.

The plethora of reality television shows also plays with the distinction of fictive and nonfictive acting by taking "real" people and casting them in highly fanciful and artificial scenarios (deserted islands, staged marriages, and the like), or by taking "unreal" people (stars and celebrities) and showing them in mundane, "real" contexts (e.g., Paris Hilton in various blue-collar settings). Reality television also toys with the distinction between numbers 3 and 4 in the previous list by keeping people on camera so continuously that the novelty they associate with being recorded wears off. Such roles are an odd hybrid of professional acting and the stardom associated with it, and the naïve, unrehearsed behavior of neo-realism. Increasingly, such manipulations and blurring of real and fictive elements have undermined not only the distinction between acting and nonacting but have also helped undermine the broader distinction between documentary and nondocumentary film. The collapse of the latter, broader distinction is widelydiscussed in film theory, but seldom in the context of acting.

PAUL MILLER

See also **Bazin, André; *Man with a Movie Camera*; Vertov, Dziga**

Selected Films

1929 *Chelovek s kinoapparatom / Man with a Movie Camera*: Dziga Vertov, Dziga Vertov
1948 *Ladri di Biciclette / Bicycle Thief*: Vittorio De Sica, Cesare Zavattini
1960 *À bout de Souffle / Breathless*. Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Luc Godard and Francois Truffault
2000 *Best in Show*. Christopher Guest, Christopher Guest and Eugene Levy
2003 *American Splendor*, Shari Berman and Robert Pulcini, Harvey Pekar

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ACTIVIST FILMMAKING

For well over a century, nonfiction film has figured prominently in the public sphere as a powerful means of persuasion. In 1928, Stalin attempted to coordinate documentary film content with political goals. During World War II, the government of the United States heavily invested in documentary bugle-call films, designed to sell war to soldiers and teetering allies. The Nazi party had a documentary film unit, at times headed by Leni Riefenstahl, to bring highly aestheticized images of political practices to the masses (Barnouw :99–182). Recognized as a forceful means of persuasion, the documentary genre can aid the process of social change.

Using all the available means of persuasion and coercion at their disposal, social movements have collectively developed a diverse set of tactics and strategies to prompt social change—activist documentary film and video being one of the most understudied texts. Thus, there are several questions to be answered about the pragmatic functions of activist documentary film and video. What is activist documentary film and video? Documentary films that reflect the interests of social movements are important but to what end, and in what rhetorical situations are these strategies most effective for social change?

The manner in which activist documentary film is conceptualized in theoretical literature or in film reviews primarily qualifies the term "activist" with the intentions of the filmmaker and his or her ideological commitments outside of filmmaking. There is, however, another tendency to label documentary film as "activist" based on content. If the film mediates as political or moral controversy, the inclination is to label it "activist." However, such labels are fruitless if the film does not actually intervene in a larger public space to create active political agents that will extend and execute the political work initiated by activist documentary film and video. It is not enough for documentary to "be" activist; it must help in creating the space for activism and invested in producing material and cultural change.

Documentary film and video served various functions in the last century, often dictated by historical exigence. Since its inception, the documentary genre has begged the question of social change. John Grierson is widely noted as the father of documentary film and was the most vocal about the potential for documentary to create social change. He, like many of his contemporaries in the 1930s, began to question the expectations of what seemed like an illusory democracy in the United States. According to Grierson, social problems had grown beyond the comprehension of most citizens and their participation was nonexistent, apathetic, or perfunctory. At the same time, Grierson believed that the popular media could acquire leverage over ideas and actions once influenced by church and school. It became Grierson's mission to produce films that dramatized issues and their implications in a meaningful way. It was his hope that documentary could lead citizens through the political wilderness (Barnouw, 1993: 85). In line with Grierson efforts, the Workers Film and Photo League was the first social movement to coordinate political dissent with the recording of a documentary text in the 1930s.

The activist documentary impulse was reinvigorated in the 1960s. However, the activist urge to coordinate documentary filmmaking with political protest morphed and changed. New strategies and technological innovation altered the manner in which filmmakers such as Fredrick Wiseman approached the documentation of social issues.

Reacting to an era of promoting cooperate interests, filmmakers of the 1960s began embracing the role as observer. The films of this period—often called *direct cinema*—were ambiguous, leaving conclusions to viewers, yet the content often poked into places that society was inclined to ignore or keep hidden. Fred Wiseman, lawyer turned filmmaker, was one of the most masterful documentarians of the direct cinema genre: "He selected institutions through which society propagates itself, or which cushion—and therefore reflect—its strains and tensions. All of his films became studies in the exercise of power in American Society—not at the high levels, but at the community level" (Barnouw, 1993: 244). In his film *Titicut Follies* (1967) he created a portrait of the Massachusetts Institute for the Criminally Insane. Although the state of Massachusetts attempted to block the film through legal action because of the fear of political embarrassment, Wiseman argued that if state institutions receive tax funds from citizens, then they have the right to know what happens in them. Hence, the process of documentary production could also be a valuable activist strategy.

The function of direct cinema was to bear witness and to place judgment in the hands of the audience. Although the activist moment for direct cinema is limited by the reluctance to be an advocate, the genre began to carve the way for vernacular discourse and the production of documentary films for the average working person. However, a new movement in activist documentary was mounting; the trend was percolating away from observation and toward intervention. Filmmakers came out from behind the camera and intervened in the world around them. In the early 1960s, heightened political crisis and the development of low-cost video technology created the breaking ground for a new population of filmmakers. This time, the people from the margins were making their own films

and activists were creating their own media. It was the birth of activist documentary film and video movement.

According to Deirdre Boyle in her book *Subject to Change: Guerrilla Television Revisited,* the activist documentary video movement began with the development of lightweight, affordable, and portable video recording equipment in the early 1970s. This gave the baby boomers access to the resources to make their own brand of television (Boyle, 1997: VI). This ''new brand of television,'' also called *guerilla television,* was part of a larger alternative media tide that swept across the country during the 1960s. For a generation that grew up in the shadows of the civil rights and anti-war movements, television had been the window to the world. Troubled by the political and social unrest of the 1960s, the guerrilla television movement focused on a utopian program to change the structure of information in America by creating a distinct parallel broadcast system: ''Optimism about television and its dynamic impact not just on communications but on contemporary consciousness was seized by the first generation raised on television, who found . . . a euphoric explanation of themselves and their changing times [in television]'' (Boyle, 1997: 13). Television, technological innovation, and the political unrest of the 1960s had redirected the potential of activist documentary to create social change. However, the political moment was potentially misguided. Instead of mobilizing around political issues, activists mobilized around video collectives whose objectives were to democratize access to technology. Political contestation was solved ''not by directly assaulting the system—as in a political revolution—but by extending the unifying properties of electronic media to everyone'' (Boyle, 1997: 31).

The liberating potential of this era of activist filmmaking is that (1) it gave legitimacy to groups at the margins of society but it also (2) exploded the rhetorical potentialities of documentary by foregrounding the ideas and speech of the film subjects. Unlike the earlier era of activist documentary film where the filmmaker—often the narrator—could manipulate footage to create his or her own arguments, the methodological commitments of direct cinema demanded that subjects speak for themselves:

> In the new focus on speech—talking people—documentaries were moving into an area they had long neglected, and which appeared to have surprising, even revolutionary impact. Since the advent of sound—throughout the 1930s and 1940s—documentaries had seldom featured talking people, except in brief static scenes.
>
> (Barnouw, 1993: 234)

Now, film subjects, with the help of technology that recorded synchronized sound and image, took significant interpretive control out of the hands of the editor. It was during this moment that the vernacular voice of marginalized communities began to take root in the documentary genre. Much of the activist documentary impulse reflected the technological innovations of the time. Inexpensive and portable recording equipment resulted in cameras occupying new spaces, from the streets to the bedroom. The legitimacy of these documentary works was found in the low-budget quality and arresting content. Aesthetically and in terms of content, there was little consideration for an audience outside of the given political context documented. However, the potential for documentary film and video to aid the process of social change would be tested again at the turn of the century.

The third wave of activist documentary began planting roots in the late 1980s. During this time there was a proliferation of union films that depicted a societal transition in worker-management relations. Films such as Barbra Kopple's *American Dream* (1990) were portraits of living with American workers through crisis. Community access channels in the rising cable market continued to produce an interesting range of activist programming from teaching media literacy through ''Herbert Schiller Read the New York Times'' to the expansion of parallel broadcast networks such as Paper Tiger TV.

Filmmaker Michael Moore developed one genre, a mixture of cinema verité guerilla documentary, and personal film essay. His works *Roger and Me* (1989) and *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) have played a significant role in contemporary activist documentary. However, Moore's work is strategically different from much of the activist documentary films that came before him. Unlike the second wave of activist documentary that characterized social change as a fight between surly commercial broadcasting and activist media, the new struggle for power is issue driven. In fact, much of contemporary activist media is at home in the slick world of corporate broadcasting that is dependent on

maintaining a loyal viewership. Therefore, the strategy of third-wave activist documentary is to place films in major distribution houses for the maximum audience without compromising activist content.

What is specific about the third wave of activist documentary is that it coincides with the development of a new computer technology, the Internet. Much like the developments in recording technology and television drastically altered the project of activist documentary, the Internet provides a new addendum to the relationship between documentary film and social change. The Internet allows audience members to engage in cross-media use for civic purposes. Not only can viewers find out more about a social or political problem foregrounded in the documentary but they can also engage in political organizing on the Internet.

Another way that the public sphere and the Internet are being brought together with documentary video is through the resurgence of street tapes and activist video collectives. Activist Internet journalism developed roots in 1999 during the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle. The meeting of the WTO spawned one of the largest and most cohesively organized instances of social protests in recent decades. Tens of thousands traveled to Seattle from around the world to protest the WTO's meeting to discuss the possibility of further opening economic markets. The *Seattle Times* invited guest columnists such as U.S. Secretary of Commerce William Daley and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner to write for the paper, but the Internet-based Independent Media Center (IMC) was reporting a far different story.

On their Internet website, the Independent Media Center reported over 1 million hits during the WTO meeting while streamlining stories investigated by the IMC volunteers and captured with donated video and audio equipment. The volunteers—many of them WTO protestors themselves—logged around-the-clock footage of protest events and street interviews with everyone from black dress anarchists to the police. The stories emphasized the concerns of the protestors and functioned as a means to bear witness to the numerous acts of police brutally waged in an effort to control the crowds. Such stories included a "man who said he had been hit in the face with rubber bullets fired by police. Another [story] showed police firing canisters of tear gas into a crowd" (salon.com). The images from the street reported by the Independent Media Center were reminiscent of a military invasion while the *Seattle Times* published stories from the Clinton Administration that justified the WTO meeting. The activist Internet video movement is a significant force that challenges the content and ideological commitments of a primary profit-driven media apparatus. This may become an invaluable and necessary agitational strategy to sustain the process of systematic social change.

Since the inception of nonfiction film at the turn of the twentieth century, documentary film has routinely played a supporting role to its more famous relative, fiction film. However, during the past century, documentary film has figured prominently in the public sphere as a powerful means of persuasion utilized by governments, rich patrons, academics, and working people alike. A myriad of historical and social contextual circumstances have situated the documentary genre in a unique historical exigence at the turn of the twenty-first century. As a result, activist documentary film and video are becoming a more visible and politically viable part of civic life. It is the third wave of the activist documentary impulse.

ANGELA J. AGUAYO

Selected Films

1967 *Titicut Follies*. Dir. Fred Wiseman
1968 *High School*: Dir. Fred Wiseman
1989 *Roger and Me*: Dir. Michael Moore
1990 *American Dream*: Dir. Barbra Kopple
2002 *Bowling for Columbine*: Dir. Michael Moore

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ADOLESCENTS, THE (A.K.A. THAT TENDER AGE)

(France, Brault, Rouch, 1964)

In 1964, at the height of the omnibus film phenomenon sweeping throughout Europe and parts of Asia, a four-part docudrama about the travails of the teenage years was jointly produced by Cinematografica, Les Films de la Pléiade, the National Film Board of Canada, and Ninjin Club. Released that year in Italy under the title *Le adolescenti*, in France and Canada as *La fleur de l'âge*, and in Japan as *Shishunki*, *The Adolescents* (as it eventually came to be known in the United States and Great Britain after a belated 1967 release) is a curious quartet, its many national affiliations and linguistically differentiated incarnations a product of the polyglot sensibilities of that era. With each of its four episodes helmed by a different director (Gian Vittorio Baldi, Michel Brault, Jean Rouch, and Hiroshi Teshigahara—all of whom had gained international notoriety by that time for their ability to wed documentary and fiction filmmaking), *The Adolescents* is, as its title implies, a *plural* text, one that deploys ruptures and discontinuities across a broad, indeed *global*, spectrum so as to point up similarities as well as differences between people based on national, cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, like other multidirector coproductions of the early 1960s, such as *L'Amour à vingt ans* (1962) / *Love at Twenty*, *Boccaccio '70* (1962), and *RoGoPaG* (1962), the film calls into question our critical dependency on the perhaps outmoded notions attending "auteurist cinema" (in particular, the idea that a single director puts his or her personal stamp on a film) even as its trumpets the individual talents of the contributing filmmakers. But, perhaps more importantly, it is plural insofar as it combines fiction and nonfiction aesthetics, thus collapsing distinctions between dramatic artifice and documentary verisimilitude, between narrative construct and unmediated reality.

The Adolescents is differentiated from the above mentioned and other omnibus films—besides its reliance on nonscripted action—is its overriding focus on youth. Although certainly not the first episode film to tap into the existential uncertainties and emotional problems faced by teenagers (Michelangelo Antonioni mined this rich thematic material as early as 1953, when he made *I vinti / The Vanquished*, a three-episode study of the moral bankruptcy and dehumanized behavior of Europe's postwar youth), *The Adolescents* provides a timely reminder of the generational and cultural schisms of the 1960s.

The only scripted episode is that of Gian Vittorio Baldi, who also served as one of the six producers of the film. His tale, "Fiammetta," concerns a 14-year-old Florentine girl (played by Micaela Esdra) whose father has recently passed away. Left to reminisce in her widowed mother's sprawling estate, Fiammetta spends her days moping about the tourist-filled mansion. Eventually, her sexual curiosity and growing awareness of her developing breasts are deflected onto her jealousy for her attractive mother, who is forced to give up her new lover and live a quiescent life alone with her demanding daughter. These interwoven themes of sexual curiosity and jealousy reemerge in the second episode, Canadian director Michel Brault's "Geneviève." The titular teen in this slim story is actually one-half of a female duo whose friendship is tested in a moment of indiscretion and dishonesty. Both Geneviève (Geneviève Bujold) and her companion Louise (Louise Marleau) are 17 years old, and their simultaneous sexual awakenings spark a silent rivalry during a winter carnival in Montreal. Having met a young man named Bernard (Bernard Arcand) the day before, Louise oversleeps and misses her early morning date to see him again. Geneviève steps in and takes her place, spending the day with Bernard while her friend remains blissfully unaware. Later, at the end of the date, Louise discovers the truth when she spies the two kissing; an impulsive yet tentative act on Geneviève's part—one that she steadfastly refuses to admit. Although the plot may sound

trite, what energizes it is Brault's deft handling of space, and his judicious use of the wide-angle lens and mobile framing, which extends the social milieu of the two teens to include a panorama of "real" people doing "real" things.

The third story, Jean Rouch's contribution to *The Adolescents*, similarly revolves around the exploits of two girls. Titled "Marie-France et Véronique," this miniature psycho-drama—starring 16-year-olds Marie-France De Chabaneix and Véronique Duval—could be said to have paved the way for Eric Rohmer's *4 Aventures de Reinette et Mirabelle* / *4 Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle*, another episodic, fragmented film whose main characters' emotional restlessness and perambulatory predispositions provide spectators with numerous opportunities to catch glimpses of Paris—a city that has been fetishized throughout the history of cinema, yet in Rouch's (and Rohmer's) work is portrayed in a subtle way. In "Marie-France et Véronique," Paris is an expressive backdrop against which this diametrically opposed duo make difficult choices in life and love before ultimately going their separate ways.

Followers of Rouch—a socially engaged anthropologist-documentarian sympathetic to the plight of marginalized dock workers, lumbermen, day laborers, vagabonds, and other fringe-dwellers populating postcolonial Africa—may be taken aback by his decision to focus neither on the dispossessed nor the diasporic, but instead on two well-to-do Parisians whose affluence affords them the luxury of grappling with such seemingly trivial issues as the need to escape boredom, family expectations, and marriages of convenience. But in delving into the everyday details of contemporary adolescence, the filmmaker gestures back to his first feature-length film, *Moi, un Noir* (1958) / *I, a Black*. That film focuses on three young men as they go about their daily routines in Treichville, a suburb of Abidjan in the Ivory Coast. Having emigrated from Niger to this so-called New York of West Africa, these laborers could effectively communicate a sense of rootlessness in improvised scenes that invite the spectator to ruminate on the effects of proletarianization and cultural imperialism. By the time he made his contribution to *The Adolescents*, Rouch had mastered not only the technical aspects of fiction and nonfiction filmmaking but also the thematic motif central to that film, which called for spontaneity on the young performers' parts as well as diegetic participation on the director's part.

The Adolescents is an important historical artifact capturing a decisive moment in the careers of all four directors, when "straight" documentary was giving way to fictional forms of cinematic discourse. For instance, Baldi, who drew on his training at the venerable Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome when making such pro-proletariat documentaries as *Il pianto delle zitelle* (for which he took home the Venice Film Festival's Golden Lion in 1959), had begun segueing into short fiction during the early 1960s, when he contributed episodes to the omnibus films *Le italiane e l'amore* (1961) / *Latin Lovers* and *The Adolescents*. Although he continued to nurture his documentary roots and—as the organizer and director of the Istituto Italiano del Documentario—became close friends with Joris Ivens and John Grierson (with whom he cofounded the Associazione Internazionale del Film Cortometraggio e del Documentario), Baldi became increasingly ensconced in the world of fiction once he began overseeing the production of works by Pier Paolo Pasolini and Robert Bresson in the late 1960s.

Similarly, the multitasking Brault, one of the innovators behind the 1950s' "Candid Eye movement" in Canadian documentary who stepped behind the lens on such groundbreaking productions as *Les raquetteurs* (1958), *La lutte* (1961), *Golden Gloves* (1961), and *Pour la suite du monde* (1963), began to feel that fiction did not lie because it did not pretend to be the truth. Rouch was so deeply impressed by Brault's technical expertise and belief that the imagination was a necessary tool for penetrating reality that he proclaimed the Canadian to be the basis for French breakthroughs in cinema verité. Significantly, *The Adolescents*—released just one year before Brault left the National Film Board to found Nanouk Films—was made just a few months after his collaboration with friend Claude Jutra on the nondocumentary *À tout prendre* (1963), a film that suggests that Brault had indeed begun to question the ethical dimensions of documentary and shift into fictional modes of filmic discourse.

Like the other contributors to *The Adolescents*, Hiroshi Teshigahara had begun to feel that dramatic truth was as viable as documentary reportage, something to which the Japanese director's many films about artists and designers (such as *Hokusai* [1953], *12 Photographers* [1955], and *Ikebana* [1956]) only faintly attest. Made a few months before his haunting depiction of moral descent, *Suna no onna* (1964), / *Woman in the Dunes*, Teshigahara's "Ako" (sometimes referred to as "White Morning") is the fourth and final episode of *The Adolescents*, although it

was cut from U.S. prints due to time constraints and has since been shown on its own as a short film in retrospectives.

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See also **Brault, Michel; Rouch, Jean**

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AESTHETICS AND DOCUMENTARY FILM: POETICS

The term *poetic documentary* is usually applied to the study of a particular style of film with conscious or unconscious links to the modernist avant-garde of the 1920s and 1930s (Nichols, 2001), the naive romanticism of Robert Flaherty (Barsam, 1988), or the "prettifying" tendencies of the social problem films of the British Documentary Movement (Winston, 1995). However, both *poetry* and *poetics* are terms with deeper application to the study of documentary than initially seems obvious. The impulse to separate poetry from considerations of the real is characteristic of Western modes of thought descended from the Platonic ideal; however, it is worth remembering here that Aristotle did significant writing on poetics.

For Aristotle, poetry, like all art, was a form of imitation of life descended from man's primal desire to reproduce what he sees. In his *Poetics*, he concluded that there were three categories of imitation: those that portrayed men as better than they are, worse than they are, and as they are. It is easier to understand how this argument relates to the project of documentary given that, for Aristotle, poetry was integral to the development of a social conscience. These categories of imitation were closely related to a desire not merely for description but also to a desire for the betterment of humankind. If we recognize that documentary films constitute part of the human attempt to replicate, explicate, and transform the environment, we can see how the disciplines of poetry and documentary are related.

Joris Ivens saw the poetic and interpretative capacity of documentary as essential to its social value. For Ivens, the project of seeking direct connection with the audience imparts documentary film with the capacity to address important issues more clearly and honestly than narrative fiction. He wrote,

> A documentary film requires the development of the personality of the filmmaker, because only the personality of an artist separates him from commonplace actuality, from simple photography. A good filmmaker stands in the middle of the matter, in the middle of reality.
>
> (Ivens, 1931)

Identifying and analyzing the poetics of documentary can be seen as a defense of the paradox, from John Grierson, of "creative treatment of actuality." As much of the writing on subjectivity in documentary affirms the authorial voice, which many would see as a primary indicator of a "poetic" sensibility, is present as an aesthetic force even in a medium with such strong claims to referentiality. As Erik Barnouw (1993) writes, "Whether they [documentarists] adopt the stance of observer, or chronicler, or painter, or whatever, they cannot escape their subjectivity. They present their version of the world." Bill Nichols's

concept of "voice" is also a theoretical signpost directing study of the utterances of the work of documentary to an identifiable, expressive presence that orders and arranges findings according to desire and disposition.

Jim Leach, drawing on Lindsay Anderson's critique of the work of Humphrey Jennings, lists three criteria that identify the "poetic" documentary: (1) the filmmaker's ability to develop a personal vision, (2) the absence of an omniscient voice-over or commentary and (3) the film's capacity to create a sense of private connection with the viewer in spite of the presence of a "public gaze." For Leach, the criterion of personal vision is probably the most troubling due to its associations with auteur theory, yet it is still a recognition of a disposition toward individual self-expression evident in the work of certain documentary filmmakers. The criterion of the absence of omniscient commentary seems to contradict this, but Leach explains that this absence refers to the manner in which "poetic" documentaries employ structural devices, such as ellipses and repetition, to create a space for the viewer's response. The sense of a "private eye," which he identifies as the third criterion, is concerned with how the process of connection between the viewer and the film can therefore be seen to "disturb the ideological continuity of the public sphere and to generate a psychological tension around the competing forces of association and dissociation, continuity editing and montage" (Leach, 1998).

Michael Renov delves more deeply into the ways in which poetics of documentary may be employed in analyzing the medium. He proposes four "fundamental tendencies" which, he claims, "operate as modalities of desire, impulsions which fuel documentary discourse" (Renov, 1993). His project is directed toward identifying and separating the impulses that fuel the desire to document; the constitutive principles that operate beneath the level of conscious action. His four fundamental tendencies are (1) to record, reveal, or preserve; (2) to persuade or promote; (3) to analyze or interrogate; and (4) to express. He examines these in terms of their operation within the documentary impulse as "modalities of desire" where each serves a different psychological/instinctual need.

The first tendency he refers to as "the most elemental of documentary functions"—a manifestation of the primal desire to mimic. The impulse to record, reveal, or preserve constitutes an element of our need to maintain our sense of self. The second tendency identifies the impulse seen in greatest force in rhetorical form, especially social documentaries such as those of Grierson and Pare Lorentz. These films are tempered by a propagative need that extends beyond physical recording, and is distinct from their coexisting desire to record, reveal, or preserve.

The third tendency may be seen to favor the exploration of lived experience—the need to penetrate filmed actualities and find in them matter with which to draw further conclusions concerning to the reality being portrayed. It is important that documentarians retain the ability to analyze and interrogate even the means of their own production (as in Nichols's reflexive mode), and that as an expression of desire, this is matched by the audience's curiosity about natural phenomena, events, history, and other subjects. Although Renov's fourth tendency, "to express," may seem out of place—being inherently linked to a project of concretizing the other impulses—he distinguishes "expression," or the desire to express oneself, as central to human experience, and a desire from which no documentary filmmaker is excepted.

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See also **Anderson, Lindsay; Barnouw, Erik; Flaherty, Robert; Grierson, John; Ivens, Joris; Jennings, Humphrey; Lorentz, Pare**

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AFRICA: DOCUMENTARY DRAMA

In Africa, the documentary drama film, like many other visual aids that were employed in the service of mass education in the 1970s and 1980s, elevated the documentary to the level of document. The documentary drama in Africa reveals historical and sociological documentation to have been at the heart of cinema culture during those decades. Notice the trend in the southern Africa region, with films such as *Borders of Blood* (Ebano Films) from Mozambique and *Flame* (Ingrid Sinclair, 1996) and *Everyone's Child* (Tsitsi dagarembga, 1996) from Zimbabwe that are based on closely documented historical environments.

Documentary drama, or docudrama, or fiction drama is variously defined. Essentially the genre refers to representations on film or video involving found stories that are dramatised for the purpose of passing a didactic message or a lesson. One can define *docudrama* as a cinematic outgrowth of documentary aesthetics of authoritative narratives premised on memory, representation, and found material (Goldfarb, 1995).

Documentaries remain the popular genre of films produced by Africans. African filmmakers were late entrants into the world of film due essentially to the colonial society's structures and strategies. Admittedly, African filmmakers were arguably different to colonial producers who saw in documentary a medium for "education," involving only the technical training of workers and peasants in order to make them understand new agricultural methods and modern products, health issues, and the new social relations (Smyth, 1989).

Colonial authorities went on to create educational film units that served as training grounds for future African filmmakers (Ukadike, 1994). Paulin Vieyra, Safi Faye, Oumarou Ganda, and Sarah Maldoror are good examples of future African filmmakers who came out of the colonial film units (Harrow, 1999). This insidious but extremely effective colonial educational structure was carried over into the postindependence period where nationalist regimes saw education as one of the pillars of development.

With independence, the documentary form, in its educational role, was hijacked to support the political strategies of postindependence regimes (Goldfarb, 1995). Pedagogy became ideology and politics; education became yoked to statist regimes of legitimisation and intervention into ordinary people's existence. This authoritarianism was clearly felt by filmmakers, leading to their tacit rejection of the "voice of god" style in documentary. This roundabout way led to the development of the documentary drama as a central cinema form in the continent. Moreover, this embrace of documentary drama satisfied audience desire for fictional narratives. This is essentially because most documentaries made during the colonial period were "suggestive" (Rouch in Levin, 1971).

Historically, however, the practice of the documentary drama in Africa can be found in the "scenarios" written specifically for educational films by colonial film units. In southern Africa, for example, films on health propaganda such as *Two Brothers* (South Africa, 1940) and those made within the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment (BEKE, 1937–1939) worked toward either medicalising or bureaucratising social problems. Many of these films were comedies, a style that was often used to "good" effect during the colonial era. Under BEKE, over 35 short films were produced with the Bantu as a market and were shown across seven countries of the region with remarkable interest and ease (Smyth in Curan, 1993). The farcical nature of the narrative structure (Mr. Clever and Mr. Foolish) and acting lent themselves to emphasising the paternalistic and colonial perspective (Giltrow, 1986).

This can also be found in films such as *Daybreak at Udi* (Nigeria, 1950) and many others in Francophone, Lusophone, and even the former German Africa (Togo and Cameroon). What needs to be noted is that the films never did address the underlying socioeconomic structures that kept the problems current. They were marked by their paternalistic viewpoint and messages.

Early African filmmakers in each new nation endeavoured to educate their people in whatever the new regimes decided was important enough to be transmitted through the comparatively more expensive medium of film. This

process led to a veritable propaganda genre that soon limited itself to newsreels about the leaders and regimes, but sometimes served a unifying role through making people in the nation acknowledge their identity in visual and ideological terms.

However, this was not to continue for long. Soon, African filmmakers realised that their audiences hankered after fictionally driven stories more than reality-based narratives, which led them to embracing the documentary drama genre. African filmmakers took the opportunity to speak of new subjects after independence, and the films produced allowed glimpses of liberation history and created a conscious interpellation of cultural interests.

African filmmakers also refined the genre itself. Filmmakers such as Sembene Ousmane used their creative and ideological prowess to clearly communicate, through reworked material, specific social messages. Ceddo (1976) and Camp de Thiaroye (1988) are typical examples of Sembene's employment of the creative treatment of reality.

There were, however, specific influences that helped build this genre and its acceptance among African filmmakers. These include Gillo Pontecorvo's *Battle of Algiers* (1966) and Lionel Rogosin's *Come Back Africa* (1956). These two documentary dramas were of critical importance to the theorisation and development of the genre in the continent, as they set the tone for the ideological perception of African narratives coming out of the colonial experience into nationhood. With *Battle of Algiers,* we find the enduring preoccupation by certain African filmmakers to tackle subjects according to "the theoretical positions of their auteurs"—consciousness-raising (Zacks, 1999).

With *Come Back Africa,* we find a lyrical structure that was to be reapplied in such major productions as Ruy Duarte's *Nellisita* (1982) and Ruy Guerra's *Mueda: Memoria e Massacre* (1979). Ruy Guerra's attempt to find a new language by a merging of orality and dramatisation reflects the contending space of documentary practice in Africa, which has led to the growth of documentary drama.

An excellent reflection of the status of documentary drama in Africa came in 1985 when the film *Arusi ya Mariamu* (Ng'oge and Mulvihill, 1985) was awarded the first OAU Award for a film that best expressed the idea of being African at FESPACO. This documentary drama was to set up the trend for the evaluation of the genre in the continent.

Indeed, many new styles of documentary drama are revealed through such films as *After the Wax* (Maviyane Davis, 1991), *The Ball* (Licino de Azevedo, 2002), and *Africa I Will Fleece You* (Jean-Marie Teno, 1992). These films mark a new approach to African filmmaking, one that is aware of the value of contextualising modes of production as well as "coherence in the discourse they [the filmmakers] choose to deploy" (Diawara, 1993).

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Africa. *See* **Documentary Drama: Africa; Feminism: Africa**

AG DOK

The German Documentary Association (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Dokumentarfilm)—AG DOK for short (www.agdok.de)—was founded on September 19, 1980, during the Duisburg Documentary Filmfestival by some mainly left-wing documentary filmmakers. In publicizing the ''Duisburg Declaration,'' they were already trying to show the reasons why a strong pressure lobby was necessary: ''Documentary filmmaking today is in a sorry state. Television has reduced the documentary film to journalism with pictures and for commercial cinema it does not exist at all. Faced with such a situation, we are no longer prepared to stand by and do nothing.''

In the last 25 years, AG DOK has become the most important advocacy group for documentaries and independent filmmaking in Germany. Thomas Frickel, a politically committed documentary filmmaker himself, has headed the organisation since 1987. It has over 750 members. The association comprises numerous well-known German documentary filmmakers; winners of countless film, television, and festival awards. Five regional groups in Berlin, Hamburg, Köln, Frankfurt, and Munich enable direct contact and exchange through their activities. AG DOK is a professional organisation not only for filmmakers but also for authors, producers, cameramen and women, festivals organizers, and everybody who is interested in independent film, as well. It sees itself as the documentary lobby organisation in all debates on media policy and has successfully presented their position in official hearings (e.g., for film funding or on copyright laws). The goal is that the wide range of documentary forms, which have developed in the 1990s, should be present in the movie theatres as well as on television. It struggles for the recognition of the documentary film as an art form. In AG DOK's view, even a very long documentary by an acknowledged author should have its place in prime-time programming and not be pushed away to the specialized cultural channels. In the year 2000, AG DOK financed and published a study on slots for documentaries in German television. The association also commissions studies and legal reports on matters relating to independent film production. In addition, the organization argues in favour of better contractual conditions and against the position of public broadcasters who try to get more and more rights for less money or to not pay for the repetition of a program. Members can obtain legal advice free of charge and it offers professional help in lawsuits. AG DOK is very visible at media debates, conferences, and festivals to make its positions clear. With its initiative ''German documentaries,'' an online database was founded with information on recent films and authors, which should become the important platform for efficient export and festival presentation of German documentaries. A catalogue is distributed every few years with the synopsis of films in English. AG DOK cooperates with international film festivals as well as institutions such as EDN (European Documentary Network, Copenhagen) to enable meetings and exchange with colleagues from other countries. A comprehensive manual with short biographies and selected filmogaphies of the members is published every two years, which is an important tool for getting in touch with the members.

In November 2000, the OnlineFilm AG was founded as a public company by 120 filmmakers and copyright owners, mainly organized in AG DOK. The goal was to build an online database and distribute German documentaries over the Internet by using recent digital tools. Unfortunately, this initiative was not too successful after the collapse of the new economy. But it shows that AG DOK is always trying to give the documentary a future perspective and to fight for it.

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AGEE, JAMES

The American writer James Agee was one of the most significant contributors to the development of the documentary form in the United States in the mid-twentieth century. He offered no systematized theory of documentary film, and he was only peripherally involved in the industry—first as a reviewer in the 1940s, and then as a screenwriter for such films as *The African Queen* (1951) and *The Night of the Hunter* (1955). However, the publication of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* in 1941 and his collected writings in *Agee on Film* in 1958 are evidence of his importance to the history of the documentary. Agee argued that many documentaries in the 1930s and 1940s were as removed from reality as Hollywood movies, with the filmmaker often adopting a didactic and polemical approach to the subject. Agee's solution was to develop a hybrid form, or semidocumentary, that he believed would offer a truer record of experience than the "flat" presentation of life then currently presented in documentary films. He argued that propagandists had corrupted the documentary form in Germany and in the Soviet Union by degrading the film craft of Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein (arguing that by the 1940s it had become "posterish, opportunistic, and anti-human"), but he believed the form still held great promise in the United Kingdom and the United States.

Agee wrote extensively on British World War II films and newsreels in the early 1940s, applauding them for capturing the bravery of servicemen and offering a cathartic encounter with reality (calling them "the finest 'escapes' available"). He also praised poetic documentaries such as Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), recommending it for its "beautiful simplicity," and *Man of Aran* (1934), which manages to convey the drama and nuances of human behavior in its portrayal of the daily struggle of Aran fishermen. He particularly liked the use of nonactors, which imparted a naturalness that would have been lacking, he believed, in actors' performances. Agee considered documentary no less a creative experience than fiction. As a modernist thinker, Agee was interested in the "musical coherence" of documentary film and wrote about the "real poetic energy" of its better exponents throughout his reviews for *The Nation* and *Time,* written between 1941 and 1948. This kind of poetic realism, which cuts across generic boundaries, was popular among other American cultural producers such as Tennessee Williams, who developed a plastic form of theater in his dramatic work in the 1940s and 1950s, and later, the New Journalists, who attempted to blend factuality and fiction in their prose.

Agee's major work, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men,* was derived from a feature article commissioned in 1936 by *Fortune* magazine, for which he was asked to document the lives of white tenant farmers in the South (the article never appeared in the magazine). His research was conducted in Hale County, Alabama. Agee wanted to interfere as little as possible in the lives of his subjects. He relied heavily on montage in the book, with Walker Evans's 60 photographs, literary and biblical allusions, poetic meditation, autobiographical reflection, newspaper reportage, and domestic anecdotes, creating a fragmented text that invites the reader to recognize the artifice involved in producing documentary. The result is a text that shuttles between detailed observation and a broader statement about poverty, deprivation, and human need that cuts across different modes of inquiry—a technique that accords with Agee's claim that he and Walker did not position themselves "as journalists, sociologists, politicians, entertainers, humanitarians, priests, or artists, but seriously." His radical documentary technique challenged the flat realist documentaries of the 1930s, as well as the conservative ideology of the southern Agrarians, with their emphasis on past glories at the expense of engaging with the present.

In light of Agee's disdain for certain modes of documentary technique, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* can be read as an attempt to create not only a semidocumentary but, as T. V. Reed argues, an "anti-documentary," marked by complexity and an apparent lack of structure. Because it is so difficult to classify, the book can be interpreted as a serious modernist intervention into the verbal and visual language of documentary, or even a playful postmodern pastiche of styles. In fact, its hybridity stems from Agee's interest in the same kind of affinity between documentary and art that is evident in his film criticism. Agee was more comfortable with photographic images than

language in capturing "truth," arguing that words tend to be slippery, ambiguous, and often inaccurate. He describes the camera as belonging to an "absolute" realm: "an ice-cold, some ways limited, some ways more capable, eye, it is, like the phonograph record and like scientific instruments and unlike any other leverage of art, incapable of recording anything but absolute, dry truth." This emphasis on the absolute objectivity of photography echoes the American visual artist Paul Strand's statement in 1917 that "objectivity is the very essence of photography, its contribution and at the same time its limitation." For Agee, if handled "cleanly," photography could provide a documentary record unsurpassed in other media. However, he was aware that the artist's tendency to interfere with the subject, or to make aesthetic choices in terms of framing, would distort the truth of the moment or transform it into something else. In *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, Agee displays his modernist colors by insisting that "truth" lies in the photographic image, but he also goes beyond conventional documentary form by juxtaposing a range of texts and opening an interpretative space that encourages the reader to engage with the processes of composition.

MARGIN HALLIWELL

See also **Flaherty, Robert; *Man of Aran*; *Nanook of the North*; Vertov, Dziga**

Biography

James Agee was born in 1909 in Knoxville, Tennessee. He was raised in the Cumberland mountain region and used the topography of his childhood as the basis for his two autobiographical novels: *The Morning Watch* (1951) and the unfinished *A Death in the Family* (1957), for which he was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1958. Graduating from Harvard University, Agee became a feature writer for *Fortune* magazine. The research for one feature on sharecroppers in Alabama led to the publication of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) with the photographer Walker Evans. Agee published his first collection of poetry, *Permit Me Voyage*, in 1934 and spent the 1940s as a film reviewer working for *Time* and *The Nation*. In 1948 he worked as a scriptwriter in Hollywood, producing scripts for *The African Queen* (1951) and *The Night of the Hunter* (1955). Agee died in 1955 at the age of 45.

Selected Films

1949 *The Quiet One*: scriptwriter
1951 *The African Queen*: scriptwriter
1952 *Crin-Blanc* (Fr); *White Mane* (US): commentary
1952 *Face to Face*: scriptwriter and actor
1955 *The Night of the Hunter*: scriptwriter

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AGLAND, PHIL

Phil Agland is known to be an unusual filmmaker in the landscape of television documentaries. Agland's theory and techniques are often compared to those of a careful and detailed painter or a patient hunter. His films are often referred to as poetical and epical accounts of life.

Agland's first film, *Korup—An African Rain Forest,* was a five-year enterprise. Agland, a wildlife enthusiast, concerned about the plight of the

endangered species in the rain forests, had ventured to make the documentary in an attempt to raise awareness of the problem. Despite having no cinematography experience and with a very small budget, he went into the depths of the rain forest in spells of three months over a period of five years. This endeavour resulted in a poetic film containing images never to be seen on screen before and in an award-winning documentary.

Since that time, Agland has turned his focus to people. He returned to Cameroon's rain forest to spend two years living among the Baka people with a small crew of two, filming *Baka—The People of the Rain Forest*. In the Western world, the Baka people are considered pygmies. Yet, Agland's impression was that this was in no way how the Baka perceived themselves. Agland's feelings were that the Baka's perception should be reflected in his camera work. Had he kept the camera on his shoulder, he would be filming the Baka from up high, giving cause to view them as pygmies. It was in the attempt to be truthful to the Baka's own image of their height that Agland developed what became his unique camera technique. Instead of perching the camera on the shoulder, Agland cradled the camera at waist height. This technique enabled him to film the Baka people from below their eye-level for a more intimate and nonpatronising viewpoint. Later on, Agland kept to this technique, claiming that by avoiding direct eye contact and by avoiding pointing the camera lens directly at his subject, he can minimise the presence of the camera.

Agland's theory is that in order to achieve genuine and intimate moments, the camera and crew should be as invisible as possible. He uses a radio microphone technique that enables the sound recordist to stay at a fair distance and away from the scene. This radio microphone technique not only enables removal of the sound recordist from the scene but it also eliminates the presence of a third and sometimes a fourth person holding a somewhat intimidating boom pole, minimising the crew to two members or sometimes even one. The invisibility, claims Agland, is crucial in this observant, unobtrusive type of documentary making, allowing the people in front of the camera to become oblivious to its presence.

Agland believes in observant documentaries rather than interview-based ones. His theory is that genuine stories or emotions will not emerge during an interview but rather in the small, sometimes insignificant and usually unpredictable moments in life; when the subjects are unaware of the camera and, hence, do not feel obliged to deliver or to satisfy. Agland also believe that the audience should feel part of the scene yet not in the middle of it. The centre of attention should be the story, the moment and the feelings within it rather than the camera or the audience. Agland therefore minimises his camera movements and often favours static camera shots.

Allowing for time and film stock is also a crucial aspect in Agland's careful work of portrayal. He avoids setting up situations and prefers to wait for moments and stories to emerge. Spending time with his characters allows them to get used to the presence of the camera and enables Agland to explore and capture rare and intimate moments in their lives. The structure and story are revealed throughout the filming process and during the editing period rather than in the scripting stage.

In his documentaries Agland creates scenes that follow the grammatical rules and language of a fiction film rather than adopting a documentary style of filming. Using a considerable coverage and carefully thought out editing ideas, both during and after filming, Agland creates rich and round scenes, covered with wide shots, close-ups and details and, hence, creating an illusion of fiction style multi-angled scenes.

Though his films appear not to be focusing on a specific place or a certain subject matter, Agland's passion and curiosity lie in people and in the small matters of life. Despite some views that would claim that Agland has an anthropologist's eye, Agland himself claims the very opposite. His aim is to emphasise the similarities between humans wherever they may live or come from; regardless of religion, cultural background or life circumstances. Agland strives to show the audience the familiar in the stranger on the screen.

Agland, therefore, comes back to the common subjects—family structure, sibling jealousy, parents' concern for their children, and the mutual need for attention and love. He deals with questions of age, health, and death as well as love, friendship, and community life. In *Baka—The People of the Rain Forest*, the focus of the film is four year old Ali and his family; his father's concern preparing him for life, his parents' relationship, and Ali's reaction to the newborn baby. Through these themes Agland explores the issues common to all humans and paints a portrait of what life is about, beyond the backdrop of place and time.

In *China: Beyond the Clouds* set in Lijang, a small rural town located in the southwestern

region of China, it seems that Agland furthers his attempt to paint a rich and full portrayal of life. He creates an epic about the small, familiar details of life. Agland interlaces different stories; a loss of a child alongside a lifetime friendship, a juvenile crime in a small town alongside a young mother's struggle to heal her child who suffers from cerebral palsy. Maintaining a fine balance between the tragic and the comic in life, Agland offers a complex and multilayered picture.

In his only fiction film so far *The Woodlanders*, which is based on a nineteenth-century novel by Thomas Hardy, Agland challenges his audience to the same themes of finding the similarities beyond the differences by taking the audience on a journey to a different time, rather than to a far away place.

SHIRA PINSON

Biography

Born in Weymouth, England in 1950. Read Geography at Hull University, Yorkshire, England. 1982 Completed his first documentary film—*Korup—An African Rain Forest*. 1982–1986 Coproduced and Codirected a six hours series—*Fragile Earth*, associated with Michael Rosenberg of Partridge Films. 1987 completed *Baka—The People of the Rain Forest*. 1992 Executive Producer of *Turmid Hed—Sound Stuff* produced by Agland's company – River Films. 1994 completed a seven hours series *China: Beyond the Clouds* Produced by River Films for Channel 4. 1997 completed his first fiction feature *The Woodlanders* based on a novel by Thomas Hardy. 1999 completed *Shanghai Vice* a seven hours documentary Produced by River Films for Channel 4 and Discovery Communications. 2003 completed a three hours series *A French Affair* Produced by River Films for Channel 4.

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Broadcast, November 8, 1982, p. 12.
TV Times, November 6, 1982, pp. 26–27.

AKERMAN, CHANTAL

Like Pasolini, members of the French New Wave, Sembène, Kiarostami, and others, Akerman has found her own way to push the boundaries of film realism. She has made a number of creative observational films, or documentaries. Yet the fiction films, for which she is best known, repeatedly allow in, or call forth, a documented reality that turns the film inside out, or makes the viewer ask: Where is it really grounded, in imagination or in fact? In the third and final episode of *Je tu il elle* (1974), two young women make love in a bed, rendered in three long takes with three different fixed camera positions. Are the women acting? *Can* they be? In a way, it seems that the earlier part of the film—a woman at home writing and thinking, and then a road journey through the night—is brought to earth by this ultimate dose of reality. Everything must be judged by the standard set here. Everything previous seems, in retrospect, fanciful. In another way, the first part of the film seems an ordinary experience, tied to reality, waiting for the sexual and emotional explosion that goes beyond imagination. In Akerman's most acclaimed film, *Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles* (1975), Delphine Seyrig gives a consummate, highly poised performance as the housewife, mother, and prostitute of the title. But the film has her assemble a meatloaf from scratch, or peel all the potatoes necessary for a meal, or wash all the dinner dishes, each action

filling one extraordinarily long take with a fixed camera. The pure act, documented as such, takes over the film. *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna* (1978) begins with a long-running fixed shot of a railway platform, where a train arrives, a crowd of people leave it, and a woman enters a phone booth fairly far away from us, makes a call, and then leaves the area. Akerman is fond of the long distant look at a place, where the visual and aural environment seems to absorb people and their particular stories. Throughout this film, memories of 1930s and 1940s history, as well as personal problems of the present, struggle to find voice against the all-but-overwhelming documentation of Europe's cities, trains, train stations, and hotel rooms. In *Toute une nuit* (1982) the many characters, whose lives we see bits of in and around Brussels through a hot summer night, are never named, and their dialogue is largely inaudible; they are parts of the city and the atmosphere.

Akerman has said that she does not believe in the distinction between documentary and fiction. A film is made to project feelings and understanding, and the film may use an invented story and characters to do this, or it may take the world more or less as found, arranging a meeting of facts with what the filmmaker knows in her soul. Akerman's films without story and characters are perhaps best regarded in light of this denial of special documentary status, as personal, poetic works, which of course have the potential to reveal the world, to be true. *Hotel Monterey* (1972) is a silent film, giving us mostly fixed, long-held shots of the lobby area, elevator, hallways, and guest rooms of a modest old New York hotel, perhaps a residence for pensioners. People come and go in the shots, mysterious, ordinary, seemingly defined by their 1950s-ish attire and by the once stylish, now a bit desolate, clean atmosphere of this place they inhabit. The camera finds an abstract fascination in details of architecture or in the changing lights on an elevator-call panel, suggesting forces that shape people's lives, that may not usually be acknowledged, and that may not even be fully understandable. The silence adds to this sense of incomprehensible power in some things we see. Late in the film the camera begins moving forward and back in a hallway, peering out a window at the end, as if curious and seeking escape. In the film's final moments the camera is up on the roof, panning across the New York skyline and Hudson River. The outdoors, the daylight, and the vistas accentuate by contrast the lurid light, the hothouse quality, something even gothic about the hotel interior. The film becomes a comment on the in-bred comforting worlds people make for themselves, or allow themselves, to live in.

Varied nonfictional work followed, including portraits of artists (choreographer Pina Bausch, pianist Alfred Brendel) and in *Aujourd'hui, Dismoi* (1982) a forum for older women to talk about their grandmothers and the Polish Jewish community that was obliterated or displaced by the Holocaust. Two of Akerman's most interesting observational films of the 1970s and 1980s show a great contrast in style. *News from Home* (1976) is a New York film kin to *Hotel Monterey*, this time with sound, giving us a succession of color shots of lonely alleys, streets busy with traffic and pedestrians, subway stations, subway cars with the camera inside among people, and a nearly empty diner restaurants at night. From time to time Akerman in voice-over reads letters from her mother in Brussels, at moments drowned out by the sounds of the city. The letters may be made up—but why be sceptical? or what difference does it make? With the reading there is a wonderful tension created between the pull of family ties, something going on in the head and heart, and what we otherwise see and hear in the film, evidence of the daughter artist confronting a multifarious new urban world, huge and forbidding, but where she can find an uncanny beauty. *Les Années 80* (1983) is about preparation for the making of Akerman's romantic musical *Golden Eighties* (1986). We see auditions and rehearsals, with Akerman's voice giving instruction from off screen. At one point the director appears in a recording booth to do her own version of one of the film's songs. We see acting and filmmaking prepared and executed. And the series of *Golden Eighties* fragments of scenes, some rough and very much in preparation, others perfected, takes us more and more into the world of the fiction film to come. The documentary, with its consciousness about performance, is another version of the fiction's exploration of the psychology of love and the moods of loss.

With *D'Est* (1993) Akerman's documentary work takes a serious turn into history and geography. This is her most impressive film in the observational mode and one of her very best films altogether, a grand two-hour study of eastern Europe and, mainly, Moscow, just watching and listening, offering no commentary and registering no one's words. Here, as a traveler, Akerman seems to find material she has always deeply known and understood, with which her filmmaking connects powerfully. The film opens with images of

space—empty roads and intersections, and flat fields—and one never gets over the impression that human life in this East is lived against a background of emptiness. We see people sitting in their apartments, seeming to have agreed to pose for a portrait, exposing their somberness. Some eat a meal alone. And there are long mobile shots—one a full ten minutes—as if looking at an endless world, moving through the streets of Moscow taking in crowds waiting for buses, or moving through railway stations where crowds sit quietly on benches, bundled up in the cold, as if displaced from home and waiting forever. Much of the film is shot at night, with all its beauty and uncertainty, and most of the film in winter, where the physical world weighs heavily. It is a picture of life lived against the void, of a sameness with little sign of change. The many faces are intriguing, but do not show much; they acknowledge the camera, but only obliquely. People seem experienced and complex, but closed off. At the end of the film we are at a concert and hear a full solo cello piece by Boris Tchaikovsky, which is greeted with a strong ovation. This old-fashioned, soulful music, with some painful modernist twists, one feels could be playing inside the heads of all the people we see in the film.

Recent films of Akerman's continue to look at places and the cultures associated with them. *Sud* (1999) journeys across the American South, staring at the lush vegetation and the air's heat waves that surround all activity, and listens to people talk about poor lives and racial problems. The journey comes to an uneasy rest in Jasper, Texas, gathering information on the then recent murder by dragging of James Byrd, a black man, at the hands of whites. Twice, the camera, looking back at the road, travels over the route the man was dragged behind a truck. It is a simple, unnerving gesture, confronting the event in a way only film could do. *De l'autre côté* (2002) centers on the Mexican/U.S. border in the Sonoran desert/southern Arizona region. The problems of economically desperate Mexicans trying to cross into the United States come into the film in interviews and monologues, as do the attitudes of fearful white Americans. But the film mostly contemplates the *place*, the beautiful and threatening desert spaces, the skies in various light, the ugly endless border wall, the ramshackle buildings that have grown up in the region, and, viewed at night, the fence lights and search lights, roads or desert paths traversed by the camera like a migrant or the pursuer of migrants, barely revealing what is there, and finally the view through the night-vision device of an airborne surveillance mechanism or weapon. Human pressures have made this place what it is, yet the place takes on a life of its own, as if it is a destiny that has drawn people into it. As always in Akerman, film registers an inhuman power of place and things, which, of course, is all too human.

Charles Warren

Biography

Born in Brussels on June 6, 1950, Akerman was inspired to take up filmmaking after seeing Godard's *Pierrot le fou*. She studied for several months at the Belgian film school INSAS in 1967, completed her first film, *Saute ma ville*, in 1968, and won recognition when this was shown at the Oberhausen Short Film Festival in 1971. From 1971–1973, Akerman spent time in New York doing odd jobs, seeing avant-garde films, and making films. She won international acclaim for *Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* in 1975, and was given a retrospective at the Venice Film Festival that year. With *Aujourd'hui, Dis-moi*, 1980, she began making films for television, which would sponsor much of her future documentary work. With *Hall de nuit*, 1991, she began writing plays, several of which were produced over the next decade. In 1995, her *D'Est* traveled to several museums in the United States and Europe. Two years later, she was given a retrospective at the Pesaro Festival in 1997. Akerman then taught filmmaking at Harvard University from 1997 to 1998. In 1998, she published *Une famille à Bruxelles*, a memoir/fiction centering on her mother, 1998. She used *De l'autre Côté* for an installation at Documenta 11, 2002.

Selected Films

1968 *Saute ma ville (Blow up My Town)*
1971 *L'Enfant aimé ou je joue à être une femme mariée (The Beloved Child, or I Play at Being a Married Woman)*
1972 *Hotel Monterey; La Chambre 1 (The Room, 1); La Chambre 2 (The Room, 2)*
1973 *Le 15/8; Hanging Out Yonkers 1973*
1974 *Je tu il elle (I You He She)*
1975 *Jeanne Dielman, 23 Quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*
1976 *News from Home*
1978 *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna (Meetings with Anna)*
1980 *Dis-moi (Tell Me)*
1982 *Toute une nuit (All Night Long)*
1983 *Les Années 80 (The Eighties); Un jour Pina m'a demandé (One Day Pina Asked Me); L'Homme à la Valise (The Man with the Suitcase)*
1984 *Lettre d'un cinéaste (Letter from a Filmmaker)*
1986 *Golden Eighties/Window Shopping; La Paresse (Sloth); Le Marteau (The Hammer); Letters Home; Mallet-Stevens*
1989 *Histoires d'Amérique (American Stories/Food, Family, and Philosophy); Les Trois derniéres sonates de Franz Schubert (The Last Three Sonatas of Franz Schubert);*

Trois strophes sur le nom de Sacher ("Three Stanzas on the Name Sacher" by Henri Dutilleux)
1991 *Nuit et jour (Night and Day)*
1992 *Le Déménagement (Moving In); Contre l'oubli (Against Forgetting)*
1993 *D'Est (From the East); Portrait d'une jeune fille de la fin des années 60 à Bruxelles (Portrait of a Young Girl at the End of the 1960s in Brussels)*
1996 *Un Divan à New York (A Couch in New York); Chantal Akerman par Chantal Akerman (Chantal Akerman by Chantal Akerman)*
1999 *Sud (South)*
2000 *La Captive (The Captive)*
2002 *De l'autre côté (From the Other Side)*
2004 *Demain, on déménage (Tomorrow We Move)*

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AKOMFRAH, JOHN

John Akomfrah was one of the founders of the Black Audio Film Collective in 1982, a group that went on to produce *Handsworth Songs* (1986). As a member of this cooperative, Akomfrah performed the role of director and writer alongside other writers and producers within a cooperative mode of production. The group's audiovisual practice was marked by a preference for discursive interrogation and recontextualization of archival documentary sources over documentary realism. After Black Audio ceased working as a collective in 1995, Akomfrah set up production of a company called Smoking Dogs with former members of Black Audio Lina Gopaul and David Lawson. The company produced television documentaries such as *Goldie: When Saturn Returnz* (1998) and *Riot* (1999) for United Kingdom's Channel 4 and *The Wonderful World of Louis Armstrong* as part of the *Omnibus* season for the BBC.

Akomfrah has frequently favored the documentary form as a means of formal innovation, while also making feature-length films that invoke the relation between drama and documentary. The resources of drama and archival documentary are called on as a means of articulating the diasporic experience in *Testament* (1988), whereas in *Who Needs a Heart* (1991), the combination is used to highlight the cultural politics of the 1960s and a figure rather overlooked by history in the form of Michael X. The style of documentary demonstrated in *Handsworth Songs* involves a nonlinear structure, modernist techniques of juxtaposition and layering, and, in collaboration with Trevor Mathison, a dissonant and contrapuntal relation between sound and image. The interrogation of the relation between narrative, the poetic expression of diasporic memory, and the documenting of history in *Handsworth Songs* is recast via a female dramatic protagonist to Ghana in *Testament*. As a result, the referent for Akomfrah's filmmaking is not only black experience but also an ongoing exploration of form that looks into the problematic form of the bounded categories of fiction and nonfiction and simultaneously raises recurring questions concerning historiography. The concern with materializing history through documentary is underlined in *The Cheese and the Worm* (1996), featuring the historian Carlo Ginsberg and addressing Christianity, heresy, and witchcraft in Italy during the sixteenth century.

Akomfrah documents the diasporic experience of black British subjects in *Touch of the Tarbrush* (1991), which revisits J. B. Priestley's *English Journey* of 1933 as a starting point from which to enquire how the mixed race community of Liverpool describes its own routes to a hybrid identity. Here, Akomfrah fuses his personal and remembered history as a black English subject with the memories of some members of the mixed race community that is "rooted and located in Liverpool."

The expositional documentary and the tradition of surveying the condition of a particular place and time through history is annexed by Akomfrah in order to represent "the lives and histories that represent the hope for another England."

Akomfrah has produced work focused on significant cultural and political figures such as Malcolm X, Michael X, and Louis Armstrong. *Who Needs a Heart,* commissioned by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom, combines archival footage of the life of Michael X with a dramatic portrayal centered on a group of black people and white people who are caught up in the politics of black power and the culture of the 1960s. The dramatic element of the docudrama is supported by reportage. Diegetic sound and dialogue are frequently muted into silence and replaced by fragments of official voices denouncing the compromised life of Michael X. *Who Needs a Heart* emphasizes the problem of history as narrative and an approach to documenting a relatively undocumented political figure, where the outcome of historical knowledge and truth is rendered less secure and cannot be guaranteed.

Seven Songs for Malcolm X (1993) was produced for and broadcast by Channel 4 in the United Kingdom at the same time as the release in the UK of Spike Lee's film *Malcolm X* (1992). This documentary takes the form of a tableau, in which various black personalities and members of his family present a range of perspectives on Malcolm X. It is comprised of a combination of expositional testimonies, eyewitness accounts, archival footage, and dramatic reenactments. Sound is again used as a mechanism for drawing the viewer's attention to the relation between the different elements that constitute the documentary, and the different manifestations of Malcolm X within African-American culture.

In *The Mothership Connection* (1995), Akomfrah attempts to understand the African diasporic experience of displacement through the vehicle of science fiction and new technology. Connections are suggested between the musical sources of George Clinton and Sun Ra, the history of the blues, and science-fiction narratives of abduction and transportation. *The Mothership Connection* questions the boundaries that separate the history of the African diaspora from the scenarios of narrative fiction.

Akomfrah's documentary output spans both television and film. Productions for Black Audio, such as *Testament* (1988) and *Seven Songs for Malcolm X* (1993), were exhibited and awarded prizes at international film festivals—for example, at the African Film Festival of Perugia, where *Testament* received the Special Jury Prize in 1989. In the United Kingdom, his films are generally either broadcast on television or receive a limited cinematic release. As a result, the critical context for Akomfrah's filmmaking is, somewhat problematically, a combination of the documentary tradition and European Art Cinema rather than the black communities in Britain (Gilroy, 1989).

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Akomfrah extended his reach beyond the context of black British experience, emphasizing the internationalism of the African diaspora. *Testament* (1988), *The Mothership Connection* (1995), and the *African Political Broadcasts* (1995) together represent a documenting of pan-African experience. Akomfrah's contribution to documentary represents both a formal interrogation of the materials and limits of documenting, and a significant contribution to the cultural representation of the black diaspora. Akomfrah, in collaboration with the members of the Black Audio Film Collective, opens up and places in doubt the language of documentary, while simultaneously exposing the gaps, silences, and blind spots of official, recorded history.

IAN GOODE

See also **Black Audio Film Collective; *Handsworth Songs***

Biography

Born in Ghana in 1957 to parents who had met in England and had returned to Ghana, where Akomfrah's father was a member of the government under President Kwame Nkrumah. Raised in London. Attended Portsmouth Polytechnic, where he met some of the future members of Black Audio Film Collective. Returned to London and helped to establish Black Audio Film Collective in 1982. Formed Smoking Dogs production company in 1995 with Lina Gopaul and David Lawson. Member of PACT Cultural Diversity Panel (The Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television). Appointed governor on the board of the British Film Institute in October 2001.

Selected Films

1986 *Handsworth Songs* (director)
1988 *Testament* (director)
1991 *Who Needs a Heart* (director, writer)
1993 *Seven Songs for Malcolm X* (director, writer)
1996 *The Cheese and the Worm* (*director*)

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ALEXANDER, DONALD

Donald Alexander was a typical representative of the 1930s generation, which—shocked as it was by the human waste caused by the Depression—welcomed the social changes begun during the war and ending in the British Labour government's welfare program. After graduating from the University of Cambridge, he gained his first film experience in the South Wales coal fields in 1935. Using a borrowed 16mm camera, he and his companion filmed such typical sights as miners looking for coal high upon the slagheaps. Once the film was finished it was shown to Paul Rotha. He invited Alexander to be his assistant at Strand Films—an offer that was immediately accepted.

Rotha ensured that Alexander learned all the tricks of the trade by having him work with the company's more experienced staff. For *Today We Live*, commissioned by the National Council for Social Service, Alexander, acting as assistant to director Ralph Bond, personally reshot on 35mm stock the sequence from his novice film on the Tylorstown slagheap. The footage would be incorporated in countless historical documentaries.

In 1937, Alexander was ready for his first directorial assignment: *Eastern Valley*, about a substance farm for unemployed miners in Cwmavon, run by the Order of Friends. In his last prewar film, about the city of Dundee, he made use of the more complex narrative structure that would become so characteristic of his 1940s documentaries. The frame story for *Dundee* is provided by a group of people meeting by chance on the ferry crossing the Tay; each character is used to impart factual information to, and derive empathy from, the spectator.

In December 1940, Alexander was asked by Paul Rotha to return to London. In response to the plans of former Shell publicity officer, Jack Beddington [now head of Films Division at the Ministry of Information (MOI)], to involve outside units in the production program, Rotha had the idea of setting up a new unit. Its aim was making "films of social importance with an eye to the future" (Alexander), in line with the "war aims," presented in the very first issue of *Documentary Newsletter* (1940), which demanded that "the Educational system, Public Health Services, Child Welfare, the Housing Problem" be reviewed and reformed.

In 1941, Alexander was first introduced to Bridget (Budge) Cooper, who would soon become his (second) wife and close companion in film production. While working at Paul Rotha Productions (PRP), they tackled several social and health topics in films about day nurseries, rural local government, rehabilitation, female agricultural labor, and the contributions of West Indians to the war effort. But it was Cooper's *Children of the City* (1944), analyzing the social roots of child delinquency, that epitomized PRP's social approach to documentary. Alexander acted as the film's producer, but it was Rotha who got the credit. It was out of resentment against this and similar incidents that Alexander, Cooper, and eight others decided in 1944 to break away from PRP. They formed Documentary Technicians Alliance (DATA), a cooperative recognized by the Co-operative Productive Federation. Until his departure in 1950,

Alexander was annually elected as chairman by the DATA shareholder-employees.

To a large extent, the new unit was dependent on the MOI. When Labour won the 1945 general election by a significant majority, DATA felt proud in having contributed to this beginning of a new era through their films. However, Labour showed little concern for the documentary. It disbanded the MOI, replacing it with a common service department, the Central Office of Information. This remained the biggest sponsor of DATA, but its nongovernmental status proved a growing source of friction. By 1948, DATA, now employing more than 40 technicians, had changed its direction by looking for other sponsors such as the National Coal Board (for which it produced the monthly *Mining Review*) and the Steel Company of Wales.

In 1950, Alexander left DATA. The next year he was asked to take over the one-day-a-week job of Films Adviser at the National Coal Board (NCB). He discovered that there was a great need for technical, training, and safety films, and argued for the setting up of an in-house technical film unit. In 1953, the unit was operative. Over the years, the volume of its work increased and Alexander, whose NCB job gradually became a full-time one, had to hire more employees. It was his policy not only to give young people the chance to learn the trade but also to make sure that there would always be a place for those who had already "paid their dues" in documentary.

After a twelve-year stint at the NCB, Alexander decided to step down. He continued working for the Coal Board, and made several films, including *The 4 M's*, a film that NCB Chairman Alf Robens personally used in his presentations. In 1969, Alexander became Director of Audiovisual Aids at the University of Dundee. Being back in his beloved Scotland offered him the chance to get involved in the (second) Films of Scotland Committee. In 1979, he retired from the University of Dundee. Donald Alexander died July 20, 1993.

BERT HOGENKAMP

See also **Documentary Technicians Alliance; Rotha, Phil**

Biography

Born in London, August 26, 1913. Graduated from St. John's College Cambridge, reading classics, and later modern and medieval languages, in 1935. Joined Strand Films in 1936 as an assistant. Joined Film Centre in 1939. Director at Paul Rotha Productions, 1941–1944. Founding member and first chairman of the film production cooperative Documentary Technicians Alliance (DATA), 1944–1950. Secretary of British Documentary, 1947–1949. Films Adviser to the Steel Company of Wales, 1950–1951. Films Adviser to the National Coal Board and later head of the NCB Film Unit, 1951–1963. Director of Audiovisual Aids at the University of Dundee, 1969–1979. Died near Inverness, Scotland, July 20, 1993.

Selected Films

1936 *Rhondda*: director, photographer
1937 *To-day We Live* (Bond, Ruby Grierson): assistant director
1937 *Eastern Valley*: director
1938 *Wealth of a Nation*: director
1939 *Dundee*: director
1944 *Children of the City* (Budge Cooper): producer
1948 *Here's Health*: director
1958–1962 *Experiment: Workstudy Experiment at Nafodynyrys Colliery*: producer, director, editor
1966 *The 4 M's*: director
1974 *Tayside*: treatment, written commentary

ALLÉGRET, MARC

Although often remembered as the long-time companion and protégé of eminent French novelist André Gide, Marc Allégret was also among the most prolific directors of his generation. Between 1927 and 1970, he made nearly 80 films, including fifteen documentaries clustered at the beginning and end of his career. His only two feature-length offerings were his most important: *Voyage au Congo* / *Travels in the Congo* (1927), a portrait of life in central Africa that played a

seminal role in the emergence of cinematic ethnography, and *Avec André Gide* / *With André Gide* (1952), an affectionate retrospective of the writer's life and work.

In July 1925, Allégret and Gide embarked on a ten-month expedition across French Equatorial Africa. Allégret was in charge of all logistical details, foremost among which was crafting a written, photographic, and cinematic record of the journey. He had no formal training as a photographer or filmmaker, but he practiced extensively prior to the trip under the guidance of the renowned surrealist artist Man Ray. In contrast to both Robert Flaherty's influential *Nanook of the North* (1923) and Léon Poirier's hit *La Croisière noire* / *The Black Journey* (1926), Allégret wanted his film to be an objective record of African cultures that informed and explained rather than entertaining through adventure and exoticism. To that end, the first-time director deliberately excluded references to the trip itself, the many technical challenges he faced, his own presence behind the camera, and grotesque elements of African culture, such as the large wooden discs worn in the lips of Massa women.

Voyage au Congo presents scenes of daily life among eight distinct ethnic groups, focusing on agricultural practices, hunting and fishing techniques, architectural styles, and key collective rituals—all of which are carefully contextualized with didactic inter-titles (over 150 in the 80-minute montage that survives today) and detailed maps (ten in all). In so doing, Allégret rejected the sensationalism and racial stereotyping that had long characterized newsreel and documentary representations of so-called primitive cultures. Instead, the film promoted intercultural understanding by appealing to spectators' intellect and steeping them in knowledge. This approach, which reflects Gide's biting assertion that "the less intelligent the white man is, the dumber he perceives Blacks to be" was nothing short of revolutionary, for it revealed the potential of cinema as a legitimate ethnographic tool.

Perhaps most important, Allégret realized the impossibility of ever achieving total objectivity because of the inherently unequal power dynamic that exists between the filmmaker and his or her subjects. His travel diary, which first appeared in 1987 under the title *Carnets du Congo* / *Notebooks from the Congo*, charts the emergence of a precocious self-reflexivity that would inform the later work of anthropologists such as Michel Leiris, Jean Rouch, and Claude Lévi-Strauss. In order to minimize the contaminating impact of his presence, Allégret shot much of the film with a long-range telephoto lens and whenever possible accustomed his subjects to the camera through repeated pantomime before taking any actual footage.

Whereas Gide's written accounts of the trip, *Voyage au Congo* / *Travels in the Congo* and *Retour du Tchad* / *Return from Chad*, sparked a national debate over colonial policy by exposing forced labour, crushing taxes, starvation, and insufficient medical care throughout central Africa, Allégret's film was more subtle in its politics, eschewing invective in favour of a primitivist aesthetic that celebrated African physical beauty, vitality, and moral purity. This brand of primitivism—which had its origins in the Enlightenment philosophers' critique of modern civilization and idealization of "natural man"—had a significant influence on French art (particularly sculpture and painting) throughout the 1920s as concerns over European decadence and the need for cultural rejuvenation intensified in the wake of the First World War.

In this regard, Allégret's footage of athletic competitions and dances is particularly striking. His long, graceful shots of contracting backs, arms, legs, and breasts create living, neo-classical sculptures reminiscent of the Renaissance. From today's perspective such scenes are disturbingly objectifying and voyeuristic, yet as an exercise in visual aesthetics and eroticism their appeal remains undeniable. Moreover, in the context of the late 1920s they constituted a powerful, if at root equally stereotypical, corrective to the widely held European prejudice that Blacks were ugly, brutish, and unworthy of artistic attention.

The film's potentially incompatible aesthetic and ethnographic dimensions in fact complement each other, culminating in a sixteen-minute segment that dramatized courtship and marriage customs among the Sara people near Lake Chad. Although the practices represented on screen are sociologically accurate, the story of a young couple who meet by the river, fall in love, and struggle to satisfy their families' demands is entirely fictional. As Allégret's *Carnets* reveal, he carefully managed all aspects of the production, from scouting picturesque locations and choosing his actors among the local population, to directing their movements on camera and writing the explanatory inter-titles. The result is a primitivist melodrama disguised as a documentary that uses the universal theme of love to inform European viewers about African cultural differences.

Although *Voyage au Congo* did not enjoy commercial success or have a substantial impact on

popular mentalities, it received praise from critics and it launched Allégret's career as a filmmaker. During the following year he made short documentaries about native culture in Djerba, a small island off the coast of Tunisia, life in the region surrounding Tripoli, and a publicity film for the Belgian National Railroad Company. He then embarked on a successful career as a fiction film director, returning to documentary over twenty years later with *Avec André Gide*.

Released in early 1952 during a series of official ceremonies commemorating the first anniversary of Gide's death, the film was the first feature-length cinematic biography of a French writer. Its first two parts provide a historically contextualized overview of Gide's life and work through a smoothly edited montage of newsreel footage, photos, and voice-over narration. The narrative is accurate but highly selective and at times superficial, omitting major novels such as *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* / *The Counterfeiters* and *Les Caves du Vatican* / *Lafcadio's Adventures*, as well as allusions to Gide's homosexuality and its crucial place in his work.

The third and final section, shot in Gide's small Paris apartment during the last months of his life, is an intimate portrait that awkwardly attempts to humanize the Nobel Prize winner and to ensure his legacy for posterity. Rather than conveying nonchalance and spontaneity—as Allégret clearly intended by filming Gide reading aloud from his works in slippers and robe, playing with his grandchildren, and smoking at the kitchen table while reflecting on his career—this part of the film comes off as pretentious, transparently disguised hagiography. It is obvious that many scenes have been scripted, rehearsed, and edited in order to paint Gide as both the quintessential French intellectual whose genius enlightens the world and, quite inaccurately, as a devoted family man with whom everyone can identify. The film ends pointedly on that note as Gide paraphrases the final lines of *Thésée* / *Theseus*: "I have built my city, which is to say my writing. Through it my thought will live eternally."

In 1952, the film bitterly divided critics as Gide's work always had, eliciting lavish praise and sarcastic denunciation. Despite its obvious flaws, in retrospect *Avec André Gide* can be appreciated as the innovative forerunner of a film genre that is now a standard part of television programming. Also, despite its flaws, on a meta-textual level the film exemplifies Gide's penchant for self-reinvention and the growing role that cinema would play in shaping celebrity and public memory during the last half of the twentieth century. Allégret gave up fiction film in 1963 under the influence of the New Wave, whose exponents heavily criticized his traditional style. However, several years later he returned to directing with a series of well-crafted television documentaries based on the Lumière newsreel archives from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In the end, Allégret's contribution to the development of documentary film is quantitatively modest but qualitatively significant for his pioneering experimentation with form and genre. Though *Avec André Gide* was an ambitious failure, *Voyage au Congo* stands as a masterpiece of early ethnographic cinema and the most influential film of Allégret's entire career.

BRETT BOWLES

See also ***Voyage au Congo***

Biography

Born in Basel, Switzerland, 23 December 1900, son of a French Protestant pastor. Trip to England and beginning of lifelong relationship with André Gide, 1917–1918. Organized short-lived performing arts festival known as *Les Soirées de Paris*, 1924. Graduated from the prestigious Ecole des Sciences Politiques with a concentration in diplomacy, 1925. Traveled through central Africa with Gide, 1925–1926. Release of *Voyage au Congo* and emergence as a director, 1927–1939. Continued making fiction films in Nice during the Second World War, 1940–1945. Pursued various film projects in Switzerland and England, 1946–1950. Returned to France to make *Avec André Gide*, 1950–1951. Joined Cannes Film Festival Jury and received Chevalier des Arts et Lettres award, 1960. Named President of the Cinémathèque Française, 1966. Died in Paris, 3 November 1973.

Selected Films

1927 *Voyage au Congo* / *Travels in the Congo*: director
1927 *En Tripolitaine* / *Around Tripoli*: director
1928 *L'Ile de Djerba* / *The Island of Djerba*: director
1928 *Les Chemins de Fer Belges* / *The Belgian Railroad System*: director
1952 *Avec André Gide* / *With André Gide*: director
1952 *Occultisme et magie* / *Occultism and Magic*: director
1967 *Exposition 1900* / *The 1900 World's Fair*: director
1967 *Lumière* [Lumière, part 1]: director
1968 *Lumière* [Lumière, part 2]: director
1968 *Début de siècle* / *Beginning of the Century*: director
1968 *Jeunesse de France* / *French Youth*: director
1968 *La Grande Bretagne et les Etats-Unis de 1896 à 1900* / *Great Britain and the United States from 1896 to 1900*: director
1969 *L'Europe continentale avant 1900* / *Continental Europe before 1900*: director

1969 *L'Europe méridionale au temps des rois* [*Southern Europe in the Time of the Kings*]: director

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ALVAREZ, SANTIAGO

Santiago Alvarez was not only the man who put Cuban documentary on the world map but he also was one of the most powerful and innovative documentarians in the history of cinema. Politically a supporter of Fidel Castro (he was once described as Castro's poet laureate for his loving film portrayals of the Cuban leader), his aesthetics were anything but conventional. Not only did Alvarez became a master of agitprop, whom many have compared with the Russian Dziga Vertov (although Alvarez himself knew nothing of Vertov's work until later), but he also extended the art of documentary in several directions. He did this through a highly personal style with huge visual impact, in which a rough-hewn lyricism was carried along by montage work that was often satirical or ironic, frequently using animated titles in place of commentary, and backed by the iconic use of music. In the 1950s, Alvarez worked as a record librarian in a television station, and he developed a keen sense of the possibilities of matching—and mismatching—music and images.

One of the founder members of the Cuban film institute ICAIC (Instituto Cubano de Arte e Industria Cinematográficas), which was set up in 1959 in the first year of the Revolution, Alvarez was already 40 years old when he was put in charge of the newsreel section and made his first short films. He once called himself a product of "accelerated underdevelopment" and was always grateful to the Cuban Revolution for making him a filmmaker and enabling him to fulfill his youthful dreams. Born in the working-class district of Colon in Old Havana, he was the son of immigrant parents from Spain. When he was 5 years old, his shopkeeper father was arrested for anarchist activities and spent two years in prison, while the young family struggled to survive on their own. Alvarez started working at the age of 15 as a compositor's apprentice, became active in the union of graphic arts workers, went to night school, and set up a students' association.

At the end of the 1930s, he went to the United States, working as a coal miner in Pennsylvania and as a dishwasher in New York. Back in Cuba in 1942, he joined the Communist Party and got a job in radio, and later in television. He also attended a film club in Havana run by the Young Communists, which became a recruiting ground for the new film institute. At ICAIC, he was put in charge of newsreels and quickly proceeded to turn them into a veritable art form, as well as a training ground for several generations of young filmmakers in how to make films quickly, cheaply, and using whatever materials were at hand. Perhaps it was his anarchist susceptibilities that gave his aesthetics their particular slant: a healthy disapproval of schools, conventions, and orthodoxy, together

with a penchant for the deployment of pithy, intelligent, didactic montage. These susceptibilities rapidly induced him to discard the conventional language of the newsreel, and turn the format inside out. Instead of an arbitrary sequence of disconnected items, Alvarez combined them into a political argument, or turned them into single topic documentaries. He used this technique in the first of his films to win international awards, *Ciclón* (*Hurricane*) in 1963, and *Now* (1965), a denunciation of racial discrimination in the United States.

The newsreel job gave Alvarez the chance to film abroad, and here too he took a radical approach. In 1966, he accompanied Cuban athletes to the Pan-American Games in Puerto Rico, using the opportunity to turn out his longest film yet (thirty-four minutes), a biting satire of U.S. imperialism named after the ship that took them there, *Cerro Pelado*. ICAIC was still at this time filming newsreels on mute handheld 35mm cameras, but Alvarez was already at the height of his creative powers and using only a few inter-titles to convey basic information, eschewing a verbal voice-over and instead using music to narrate the events. At one point in *Cerre Pelado*, shots of a training center for Cuban counterrevolutionaries (as a caption describes it) are juxtaposed with a band arrangement of Rossini's "William Tell Overture," which naturally recalls the use of the same piece as the title music of the television series *The Lone Ranger*; thus Alvarez presents the counterrevolutionaries as imitation cowboys, an image both satiric and deflating. In 1967 came *Hanoi Martes 13* (*Hanoi, Tuesday 13th*), a lyrical and wordless forty-minute portrayal of what daily life was like in war-torn North Vietnam (Tuesday the 13th is the Spanish equivalent of Friday the 13th in English). Here, the music was an original score by Leo Brouwer, who was emerging as Cuba's most original film composer.

The same experimental approach produces both *LBJ* (1968), a stunning satire on U.S. political assassinations, and *79 Primaveras* (*79 Springtimes of Ho Chi Minh,* 1969), a deeply poetic tribute to the Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh. *LBJ* uses the three letters of President Johnson's initials to stand for Luther, Bob, and John—Martin Luther King and the two Kennedys—in a bold play on the strange coincidence that the corpses of these three men littered Johnson's ascent. Visually, the core of the satire is the image culled from a North American newspaper cartoon of Johnson as the incarnation of the Texan cowboy on his bronco. Alvarez doubles this up with Johnson as a medieval knight in armor astride his mount, reinforced with clips from two classic Hollywood genres—westerns and the historical adventure—which appear distorted. (They came from wide-screen films that had been copied directly without using the appropriate lens to unsqueeze them.) The film is thus as much a deconstruction of the imagery of the mass media as of U.S. politics, in which assassination became an almost accustomed weapon that remained veiled in misinformation and mystery. Except for some linking animation and a few shots in the sequence on Martin Luther King, almost everything in this twenty-minute film is found material. As Alvarez put it himself, it was the U.S. blockade of Cuba that prompted this approach by denying Cuba access to new live material, so instead he raided the archives and used cuttings from newspapers and magazines.

One of his best-known films of these years, *Hasta la victoria siempre* (*Always Until Victory*) was made in only 48 hours, so it could be shown in the Plaza de Ia Revolución in Havana before Castro delivered his eulogy for Che Guevara. Less well known abroad are the films that Alvarez made on internal politics, including the forty-minute *Despegue a las 18:30* (*Take off at 18:00,* 1969), which confronted the failures of the Cuban economy, although it was made in a Guevara-like spirit of moral exhortation rather than as criticism. Even here, Alvarez eschews conventional narration in a long opening sequence that portrays the lines of potential customers at the food shops and the despondency of "No hay!" ("There isn't any!").

A series of longer films in the 1970s brought Alvarez's style back toward reportage. In *Piedra sobre piedra* (*Stone Upon Stone,* 1970), Alvarez goes to Peru to report on the radical military regime that had just restored diplomatic relations with Cuba, and is interrupted by a major earthquake, from which he draws a metaphor: an equation between the 60 seconds of the earthquake whose effects he films, and the earthquake of underdevelopment that lasted for 365 days a year. Then came three films that chronicled Castro's foreign tours of the 1970s (to Chile in 1971, Africa and Eastern Europe in 1972, and Africa again in 1977), where Alvarez developed a unique style of informal, observational filming that evidently took the Cuban leader's fancy. (Castro gave Alvarez a Russian Lada car for his sixtieth birthday.) *De América soy hijo* (*Born of the Americas,* 1972), the film of Fidel's visit to Chile, is by far the longest—195 minutes in the full version. The length is justified by taking the cue from Castro's oratory; Alvarez used Castro's speeches as entry points to sequences analyzing aspects of Latin American history and the Cuban experience, which Castro explained to his Chilean audiences, and a similar

technique was used for *Y el cielo fue tomado por asalto* (". . . *And Heaven Was Taken by Storm*"), which covers Castro's 1972 tour of ten different countries in just over two hours, except that here the interpolated sequences concerned the histories of the countries visited. As one commentator put it after a retrospective of Alvarez's work in London in 1980, these lengthy films have an easy pace and "a certain discursive quality which can be deceptively innocent"—especially *De América soy hijo*, which is "loose-jointed but powerful in its cumulative effect and its insistent contextualization of the Chilean situation" (Hood, 1980). At the same time, these films offer a rich collection of glimpses of Fidel Castro in a large variety of circumstances, both formal and informal. There is no denying that Castro greeting crowds and crowds greeting Castro can become repetitive, but such images are frequently offset by moments of individual interaction, such as an exchange he has with a working woman at a rally in Chile, or by the habit Alvarez has of leaving in the scenes that many editors would wish to leave on the cutting room floor (Castro fidgeting with the microphones on the podium in front of him, for instance).

Alvarez himself was a man of unflagging energy, until he was slowed by the onset of Parkinson's disease. His filmography is enormous. In the 1970s alone, important titles included two more films on Chile, *¿Como, por que y para que se asesina un general?* (*How, Why and What for Is a General Assassinated,* 1971), and *El tigre salto y mato, pero morira . . . morira* (*The Tiger Leaps and Kills But It Will Die . . . It Will Die,* 1973), which are both rapid responses to events using a montage of library and archive images. Other notable achievements include the two-hour portrait of Vietnam, *Abril de Vietnam en el año del gato* (*April in Vietnam in the Year of the Cat*), commissioned by the Vietnamese to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic, and *Mi hermano Fidel* (*My Brother Fidel,* 1977), an intimate portrait in which Castro meets a man of age 93 who had met the Cuban patriot José Martí when he was 11 years old, shortly before Martí was killed in battle.

Elected to the Cuban national assembly for the Havana district where he lived, Alvarez remained a significant figure at ICAIC, and in 1991, was one of the signatories of the unprecedented letter of protest with which ICAIC's film directors greeted the suppression of the controversial film *Alicia en el pueblo de Maravillas* (*Alice in Wondertown*) and the threat, later withdrawn, to merge ICAIC with Cuban television.

MICHAEL CHANAN

See also ***LBJ*; *Now*; *79 Springtimes of Ho Chi Minh***

Biography

Born in 1919. Died May 20, 1998, in Havana, Cuba.

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AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY

In 1960, documentary filmmakers Robert Drew, Richard Leacock, and D. A. Pennebaker convinced then United States Senators John F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey to allow the filmmakers access to every facet of their campaigns in Wisconsin for the Democratic Presidential nomination. Stressing the historical value of such a record, Drew promised the candidates that nothing would be staged and no dramatic suggestions would be made. The filmmakers would simply observe and record. In the end, both candidates agreed. The final product, though occasionally flawed, is still astonishing to watch today. No film before or since has captured in such an illuminating way the thrills, triumphs, and exhaustion of a political campaign.

At the time, network television had strict policies regarding the broadcast of "outside" work, but *Primary* (1960) was telecast by several local stations. The film so impressed the board at the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) that it immediately offered a contract to Drew and his associates who were then employed and financed by Time, Inc. The result of the merger gave Drew, Leacock, and Pennebaker the financial backing needed to create some memorable documentaries and provided the group with an audience once the work was completed.

The first important film made by the group for ABC was *Yanki No!* (1960), a vivid and ominous picture of Latin American unrest and the rise of Fidel Castro. As they had with *Primary*, the filmmakers effectively captured the strife and struggles of people engaged in political warfare.

With *Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment* (1963), Drew and company returned to the United States to document then Governor of Alabama George Wallace's decision to deny two black students admittance to the University of Alabama. As President Kennedy urges the Governor to stand down, cries rise from both sides of the controversy. The film is fascinating and truly remarkable. Drew and company effectively captured all the elements and were given access to all principals involved: Governor Wallace, President Kennedy, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, and others. At the time, Alabama was the only state in the union that had not fully integrated its university system. The University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa approved the admission of the two students when Governor Wallace vowed to stand at the entrance and prevent the students from entering. The film creates real drama and tension as the viewer is witness to the plans of the federal government as it attempts to enforce the integration. Although at times Governor Wallace appears to know that he cannot win, he never denies access to the filmmakers. The filmmakers give an overpowering sense of history to the film as they make the participants very human by showing Robert Kennedy and George Wallace at home with their families. This documentary is one of the finest ever made and is a testament to the civil rights movement.

Although not as successful as *Crisis*, Drew and company's *The Chair* (1963) is an interesting look at capital punishment. The film follows attorney Louis Nizer and others in a crisis over an appeal involving a man sentenced to die in the electric chair. Although ABC aired the program, the pact between the network and the group was weakening. Sponsors were not always comfortable having their names associated with the politically charged documentaries. The network wanted to keep sponsors happy, but at the same time, it did not want to impose on the creativity of Drew and his team. The most interesting element of the series was its unpredictability. For the network to step in and begin dictating the course of the programs would defeat the purpose of having the program. But resistance from the sponsors continued and eventually a break was inevitable.

In 1963, Drew, Leacock, and Pennebaker joined the rest of the country and descended on the small town of Aberdeen, South Dakota. The Fischers, a young husband and wife, had recently produced quintuplets. All five children were happy and healthy and the news circled the world. Aberdeen, a small market town with an unstable economy, suddenly found itself famous. The Chamber of Commerce had meetings and began to plan for the long procession of tourists who would begin to visit the small town. Promotions were planned and souvenirs manufactured. Although solemn speeches about protecting the privacy of the Fischer family were delivered, the town council began to set up press conferences, banquets, parades, and reviewing stands. Corporations began to shower the family with gifts, and reporters and photographers flocked to the town and the Fischer's home. With Leacock in the director's chair for this project, the crew tried, as unobtrusively as they could, to film and record the family's reactions to their new lifestyle. The crew enlisted the help of Joyce Chopra to keep the story human and tried to remain conscious of the fact that they were part of the problem afflicting the Fischers.

When completed, *Happy Mother's Day* (1963) won awards at both the Venice and Leipzig film festivals. It also received airplay on European television and was widely discussed and debated in European film journals. However, it never made it to American television. ABC could not find a sponsor willing to support the film in its current state. The network felt that the Fischers were portrayed as victims at the hands of a merciless town that simply wanted to cash in on the children's fame. However, the quintuplets were such a big story that the network had to produce something from the efforts of Leacock. Using the same footage, the network edited out all shots that might suggest an overeager zeal on the town's part. Many of the mayor's more inane remarks were cut out, and the Chamber of Commerce meeting was eliminated entirely. All speeches made in defense of the privacy of the Fischers were retained, and any shot or sequence that implied that the town

would not abide by these pronouncements were left on the cutting room floor. To fill in the noticeable gaps, a voice-over narration was added, and at other times, an on-camera newsperson provided statistics on the community and its business, and conducted interviews with town officials and hospital personnel. Retitled *The Fischer Quintuplets* (1963), ABC's version of the film became an assurance to viewers that when quintuplets are born in an American town, everyone in the country will rally around them to make sure all goes well. When aired, the program was sponsored by Beechnut baby foods.

No longer able to agree on the future of their programs, Drew, Leacock, and Pennebaker parted ways with ABC. The filmmakers went on to produce, together and separately, other important documentaries, including *Don't Look Back* (1966) and *Monterey Pop* (1968). Even when the group disbanded, they continued to carry on the techniques and style they had helped to develop. Even though ABC never really returned to the successful form of the early programs produced with the group, the network helped to pioneer a new genre: a regularly televised documentary series that dealt with current and up-to-date issues and that was, above all, real.

CHARLES BANE

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AMERICAN FAMILY, AN

(US, Gilbert, 1973)

The twelve-part 1973 PBS series *An American Family* marked the culmination of the direct cinema movement in the United States. Producer Craig Gilbert's decision to move his crew into the home, positioning living cinema in the living room of middle-class suburbia, and then broadcasting it into the living rooms of America, erased the divide between public and private, a recurrent dream of *cinéma vérité*. Instead of revealing the private moments of public figures as the Drew Associates had in *Primary* (1960), Alan and Susan Raymond reversed the logic, making public the very private rituals of bourgeois family life as found at 35 Wood Dale Lane, Santa Barbara, California, thus acknowledging it to be an institution as open to surveillance as that of welfare recipients. Joining direct cinema documentary methods with television sitcom format, *An American Family* created a hybrid that fascinated its viewers.

In Pat and Bill Loud, Gilbert found a family defined, because of their cultural, economic, and political centrality, by their lack of definition. Seemingly raceless and classless, they were nevertheless marked by changing sexual mores, divorce, and homosexuality. The serial exposure of the Loud family on television revealed the suburban home as a central institution of postwar, middle-class experience. Filmed over seven months, the saga of the Louds, "not *the* American family, but *an* American family," in the introductory words of Gilbert, begins with only the sketchiest background about the family prior to the moment of filming; the show, like all living cinema, features present-time experience shorn of sociological or historical context. The opening

credits focus the series: First the house appears, then, in succession, Bill, Pat, and each of the children frozen in the middle of doing some typical activity. Their portraits surround the house, which dominates the frame. The sun-drenched family home becomes a spectacle, a source of envy in a consumer culture. Incredibly successful, Bill has built his own business forging replacement parts for heavy-mining equipment, marketing his products worldwide. Thus his home is linked to a global economy that makes possible the expansive ranch house with a pool and ocean view and the comfortable lives of his wife and children, who pursue their interests, secure in the knowledge that he will foot the bill for dancing lessons, apartments in New York City, musical instruments, and a horse and stable.

Yet, for all his economic centrality, Bill is not the center of the home. Rather, Pat, his wife and mother of his five children, dominates and maintains the family, and the footage. In her early forties, she is always perfectly made-up, her hair neatly done, wearing matching outfits and strands of gold around her neck and wrists. During the first episode, which includes both the end of the marriage (surrounded by friends, Pat tells Bill she is seeking divorce in the midst of drunken party at a restaurant) and the first day of filming, Pat is up at 6:30, poaching eggs and pouring mugs of coffee for her large family; however, the substance of the film is the emotional labor Pat expends in caring for her children. With the exception of the voluble and "flamboyant" Lance, her oldest son, the Loud children are barely articulate teenagers. They mumble about Michelle's horse, Delilah's tap dancing, Grant's band, Kevin's movies, and Lance's acting career.

An American Family, The Loud Family (Top row: Lance, Michelle; Middle row: Kevin, Delilah, Grant; Front row: Pat, Bill), 1971.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

The close monitoring that goes on in the Loud home (everyone checks in with the others about the day's activities, Lance calls long distance from New York frequently, parents discuss problems relating to their children) reflects the scrutiny of Alan and Susan Raymond's camera and microphone. It also typifies the emotional intensity of the postwar middle-class family. During the first episode, as the camera follows Lance unpacking after his move into New York's Chelsea Hotel, he describes his siblings. Kevin is "humane, the only one to buy presents for the others' birthdays." Delilah "lives a very Tammy existence, like Trisha Nixon with spice." Michelle is selfish and bratty, "made in the image of me," and Grant is "talented but arrogant." Summing up what will become clear over the course of the next eleven weeks, Lance's astute eye has been trained by gauging the emotional timbre of the home in which he was raised. The community he finds at the Chelsea Hotel, and continues to make in Copenhagen and Paris, becomes yet another form of this intimate social world.

This televised family saga codified a new political grammar, the rhetoric of celebrity. Both Lance and Pat launched careers from the series: Pat got her own talk show, and Lance became a minor star at Warhol's factory. HIV-positive since 1983, he died of complications from Hepatitis C in December 2001, as the Raymonds were filming his last days in a Los Angeles hospice.

PAULA RABINOWITZ

See also ***Cinema verite*; Drew Associates; *Primary***

An American Family (USA WNET/13, 1973, 720 mins.). Produced by Craig Gilbert. Jacqueline Donnet, coordinating producer, Susan Lester, associate producer. Director: Craig Gilbert. Camera: Alan Raymond; additional camera, Joan Churchill and John Terry. Sound: Susan Raymond; assistant sound, Tom Goodwin; additional sound, Peter Pilafian and Alber Mecklinberg.

Editor: Eleanor Hamerow (Episode 1); David Hanser, Pat Cook, and Ken Werner (Episodes 2–12).

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AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE

After 1965 legislation passed during the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was created, and a subsequent study for the NEA by the Stanford Research Institute identified the necessity of a film institute in America. As a result, the formation of the American Film Institute (AFI), a nonprofit organization, was announced on June 5, 1967. The United States was ''one of the last of the major producing nations to establish such an organization,'' after ''Britain, France, Italy and India'' (Canby, 1967). Among other objectives, the AFI ''was created to train the next generation of filmmakers and to preserve America's fast-disappearing film heritage'' (''History of the AFI''). The AFI's initial funding budget of $5.2 million was divided equally between grants from the National Council of the Arts, the Motion Picture Association of America, the Ford Foundation, and fund-raising. Starting with one office in Washington, DC, the AFI expanded into numerous regional locations throughout the years and now has three additional central locations in Los Angeles, Orlando, and Silver Spring, Maryland.

There have been only two AFI directors since its inception. George Stevens, Jr., son of Hollywood director George Stevens, was named the first director in 1967. In 1980, Jean Picker Firstenberg became the second director and CEO, and remains at this post today. Actor Gregory Peck was the first chairperson of the original Board of Trustees. Other notables on the twenty-two member board included actor Sidney Portier (vice-chair), actress Elizabeth Ashley, experimental/documentary filmmaker Richard Leacock, Hollywood film directors Francis Ford Coppola and Fred Zinnemann, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Jack Valenti, President of the Motion Picture Association of America.

The AFI originally started with four general goals—filmmaker training, film education, film production, and film archiving, but has expanded into countless film-related activities, including film festivals, special screenings, special awards, publication of books and reports on film topics, and so on. Among the many benefits to the film industry AFI has established and developed over the years are: the five-semester Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) program at the AFI Conservatory (1969), which is now a formally accredited educational institution; the AFI Filmmaker-in-Residence program (director John Cassavetes was the first in 1972); the AFI Lifetime Achievement Award (the first recipient was director John Ford in 1973); the Director's Workshop for Women (1974); acquisition of the AFI Conservatory campus in 1981 (four buildings on eight acres that was originally the Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles); the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival (beginning in 1987); the 7,000-square-foot AFI Showcase at Disney World in Orlando, Florida, (1996); the yearly AFI 100 Years Series listings (1998); and the *AFI Almanac* (2000).

The AFI is responsible for a profuse amount of publications concerning various film topics. Among the publications is the bimonthly *American Film* magazine (started in 1975). The AFI also publishes numerous reference volumes, which include the *AFI Catalog of Motion Pictures* and *Filmmakers on Filmmaking: The American Film Institute Seminars on Motion Pictures and Television* (edited transcripts of their seminars).

The institute has recently established the competitive SILVERDOCS: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Film Festival (2003), based out of their newly acquired and restored AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring,

Maryland. Additionally, the AFI Conservatory has expanded its program to include education in previously ignored film disciplines (such as marketing and distribution) and to require internships for students in the original coursework disciplines of Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Production Design, Producing, and Screenwriting.

Today, the AFI's mission differs from its four original goals—it now emphasizes filmmaker training, presentation of the moving image to national and global audiences, preservation of the American film heritage, and redefinition of the moving image as digital technology advances, recently developing new activities related to advanced technology.

Although the AFI has been a valuable organization for film concerns in the United States, it has not existed without controversy and criticism throughout the years. Early criticism of the organization as it was forming included worries over strong Hollywood connections that might possibly deter benefits to other segments of the film industry—such as documentary, educational, and corporate filmmaking, as well as the youth and assumed inexperience of AFI Director George Stevens, Jr.'s leadership abilities in establishing the first programs for the institute. Additionally, beneficiaries of AFI production grants, educational fellowships, and internships in the first three years of its existence were mainly male. Even after pressure to grant more opportunities for women came from a Women for Equality in Media protest march and sit-in at the AFI West Coast headquarters in 1970, the AFI responded slowly to women's demands. It was not until a funding grant for $30,000 to $35,000 from Dr. Matilda Krim, a board member of the Rockefeller Foundation, came through in 1974 that the AFI Directors Workshop for Women (DWW) was finally developed and grew under the dedicated direction of Jan Haag. Nineteen women were chosen to participate. However, AFI funds were found to be inadequate for proper financing of the women's films. Reactions to the first DWW were mixed. Criticism of the workshop included issues such as selection of participants by committee rather than open applications, insufficient funding for the number of participants, and some participants who felt they were more knowledgeable about filmmaking than the instructors were. Completion of the films by the participating women was uneven and some films never received a public screening. One participant, scriptwriter Joanna Lee, dropped out early, thus leaving eighteen in the group. Among the more notable, high-profile participants were Maya Angelou, Ellen Burstyn, Lee Grant, Margot Kidder, Lily Tomlin, and Nancy Walker. Today, the DWW is one of AFI's many solidly entrenched programs. Other recent discussion and criticism has stemmed from omissions or inclusions of certain films on the AFI 100 Greatest Movies list and the other listings that followed—perhaps the best evidence of the success the institute has had in generating a knowledgeable national audience of film lovers with a continuing interest in and passion for film and motion pictures.

D. Jae Alexander

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ANAIS NIN OBSERVED

(France, Snyder, 1974)

Released in 1973, *Anais Nin Observed* is one of a number of films directed by Robert Snyder that takes an intimate look at the lives and personalities of celebrated artists. Snyder describes his films as "voyages of discovery," and openly admits that he knew very little about Nin's life or works before he began the film. He was introduced to her in 1968, when filming *The Henry Miller Odyssey* (1974), and after a prolonged period of acquaintance she agreed to let him film her for a separate documentary, of which she would be the focus. The two films make up a kind of unofficial diptych: Nin not only features in the work on Miller, as he later would in the Nin documentary, but she also helped Snyder to edit the film, providing encouragement and advice, just as Miller spent a long time with Snyder editing *Anais Nin Observed*.

Snyder's film follows Nin through her daily life, as she takes tea, swims in her pool, works on her journal, and chats with friends. The vast body of the documentary consists of her conversations with Snyder, as well as with friends such as Frances Steloff and students from UCLA. Although frequently categorised as biography, *Anais Nin Observed*, like the majority of Snyder's works, makes no attempt to give a comprehensive historical account of Nin's life and works. The film is aimed rather at providing accessibility to the writer for an interested audience without the barriers of experts. It does not delve into her personal life, but is rather a mouthpiece for her musings on art, literature, and her own life. This is Anais Nin in her own words. She is, as the title states, observed.

To this end, the film sets out to reflect qualities of Nin's personality and work within its form. Snyder's signature as a documentary director, paradoxically, tends to consist of a deferral to the artistic stamp of the documentary's subject, with whom he works very closely. In this regard he calls to mind the many female critics of Anais Nin who have adopted her prose style, writing about her as she wrote about herself. The film echoes the quality in Nin's writings that the literary critic Edmund Wilson describes as "half . . . story, half dream" and recreates the "special world, a world of feminine perception and fancy" that is the circumscribed universe that Nin's characters inhabit. His success in this area is due in no small part to the work of the film's director of photography, Baylis Glascock, who uses soft focus and filters to recreate the aura of mystery that surrounds Nin. Repeated shots of light catching on glasses and water create a lilting quality that echoes that of Nin's writing. The film is edited in slow rhythms; conversations are conserved in their actuality rather than edited for highlights, so that, for example, when Nin finishes a thought, and gazes off into the distance before beginning her next conversation, the pause resonates with Nin's careful, well-thought out intellect.

Snyder's film mirrors Nin's diary in other ways—a fact he comments on in his notes on the film. At the time of filming, Nin was editing her journals for publication. The editing of the film echoes the process by which Nin selects material from her books: "We could always pick up new material in the future and—together with material of our current film—make another one . . . that's how diaries work!" Nin refers to the diaries constantly within the film: They are, she says, her "cultural landscape," and she dips back into them daily. Snyder's film echoes this dialectic between past and present, opening with the contemporary Nin, before moving backwards to look at her past life and then forward again into the present (Snyder, 1976).

While *Anais Nin Observed* is unmistakably part of Snyder's oeuvre, at the same time we might consider it to be coauthored by Nin. The film is by no means an academic or historical study made *about* the subject, but is rather an experience *of* her: The director's authorship is in many ways secondary to Nin's, both in form and in content. In keeping with Miller's request for Snyder to "mythologise" her, the director gives a very positive portrayal of Nin that might not be as objective as a more conventional biography, such as Coky Giedroyc's *Spy in the House of Love—Anais Nin*, shown as part of the UK's Channel 4 *Arthouse* series on in the late 1990s. Snyder's film is certainly

a lot more flattering, portraying Nin as gracious, unpretentious, and intelligent. Unlike Giedroyc's film and the numerous written biographies of Nin, there is little mention of her infamous sex life, and a great deal more emphasis is placed on her intellect and artistic merit. It is perhaps no coincidence that Nin agreed to the documentary at approximately the same time as Miller, Sherwood Anderson, and a group of other intellectuals were campaigning to have Nin nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Until 1963, Nin was relatively unheard of as an author in the United States and had been very frustrated by it. In many ways, the film provides her with the artistic recognition that had so long eluded her.

As an objective history, Snyder's film certainly leaves gaps. Nin's husband, Rupert Pole, for example, who was sharing the house in which Nin was filmed (unbeknownst to her other husband, Hugo Guiler), is omitted from the film altogether, as if he never existed (probably for Guiler's sake!). But as a portrait of Anais Nin as she saw herself, or more importantly as she wanted others to see her, Snyder's film complements content with form elegantly. Through the film, Anais continues the constant process of seduction that has characterised her life and writing, reaching out to new audiences through the screen. In this respect, Snyder's documentary is an almost perfect replica of the diaries in intent and content. Even before the editing process begins, a great deal has been cut out, leaving us as mystified as to who the real Anais Nin is as she has always wanted the world to be.

HELEN WHEATLEY

Anais Nin Observed (USA, Masters & Masterworks Productions, 1973, 60 mins.). Distributed by The Grove Press. Produced by Robert Snyder. Directed by Robert Snyder (Associate Director: R. A.Fitzgerald, Jr.). Cinematography by Baylis Glascock. Editing by R. A. Fitzgerald and Tom Schiller. Sound recording by John Glascock and Leslie Shatz. Re-recording by George Porter, Ryder Sound Services Inc. Colour by DeLuxe.

Selected Films

1973 *Anais Nin Observed* (dir. Robert Snyder)
1974 *The Henry Miller Odyssey* (dir. Robert Snyder)
1990 *Henry and June* (dir. Paul Kaufman
1998 *Anais Nin: A Spy in the House of Love* (dir. Coky Giedroyc)

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Both *Anais Nin Observed* and *The Henry Miller Odyssey* are complemented by books written by Snyder, which incorporate photo-stills and transcripts of interviews, some featured within the films and some not, along with Snyder's descriptions of the filming and musings on the subjects:
Snyder, Robert, *This Is Henry, Henry Miller from Brooklyn*, Chicago: Swallow Press Incorporated, 1975.
Snyder, Robert, *Anais Nin Observed*, Chicago: Swallow Press Incorporated, 1976.

ANDERSON, LINDSAY

Lindsay Gordon Anderson, a Scottish director, critic, and cofounder of the Free Cinema movement, played a seminal role in postwar British filmmaking. When Anderson entered the film world in 1947, British filmmakers had largely forsaken art for propaganda because of the utilitarian demands created by World War II. Accustomed to making movies that served a national purpose, British directors churned out works that, to Anderson's eyes, lacked aesthetic appeal. Preferring romanticism to realism, he urged documentarians to abandon the studios, abstain from sophisticated technology, and rediscover the freedom found in the harmony of expression and substance. His search for high art led him to direct low-budget documentaries in the 1940s and 1950s and to create the Free Cinema movement, which encouraged other filmmakers to slip out of their political and social chains. The naturalistic look at the working classes promoted by Anderson would culminate in the British new wave.

As an editor with the influential film magazine *Sequence* in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Anderson championed film as art and the director as the master of the medium. He argued that only the director was in a position to determine cinematic expression. On the basis of his reputation, he received a commission to make a series of industrial films for a Yorkshire conveyor belt company, Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. He accepted the offer because he wanted to learn how to make films and he believed that documentaries offered an avenue to larger projects. Anderson's first documentary, *Meet the Pioneers* (1948), focused on the firm's underground conveyor system that brought coal from the mines to the pithead in Yorkshire. This series of films share a characteristic common to Anderson documentaries, in that the subject is work itself, with the director focusing on how things are made and how processes are set in motion.

Anderson's first nonindustrial film, the thirty-minute *Wakefield Express* (1952), was commissioned to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the newspaper. Shot as usual with 16mm film, the documentary begins in typical Anderson fashion—not with background information, but with people. Although the history of the paper is provided, the director focuses on the work of producing an edition. Aiming to capture the dignity of ordinary Britons, Anderson follows a reporter as he interviews local people in search of stories, shows communal activities such as children playing, and has a final sequence of the paper going to press. Anderson was an admirer of Humphrey Jennings, and this film reflects Jennings's influence in its poetic style and focus on common subjects. By showing a reporter interviewing a 95-year-old woman, Anderson imitates Jennings's manner of linking person to person to show the relationship of the past to the present. Nothing about the film is impartial—another Anderson trait. The subjects frequently play to the camera, while the director does not attempt to hide his affection, respect, and occasional exasperation for the Wakefield community.

For his next film, Anderson collaborated with Guy Brenton, an Oxford acquaintance, to direct *Thursday's Children* (1953), about the Royal School for Deaf Children in Margate, UK. Named after the old nursery rhyme in which "Thursday-born children have far to go," the twenty-minute documentary follows Anderson's adage that to make a film, one must create a world. Immersing the viewer fully in the lives of the children, he shows them in their boarding school as they receive lessons and explains how they came to live away from their families. Without informing the filmmakers, the British Office of Information in New York submitted the film to the Motion Picture Academy and it won an Oscar for best short subject.

Not far from the deaf school was the most popular working-class amusement park in the south of England, called "Dreamland." Anderson paid it a visit, and was fascinated by exhibits such as "Torture Through the Ages" and "Famous Executions." He reacted harshly to the passivity of the audience in the face of the unimaginative diversions, sad exhibitions, and pitifully caged animals. It is his anger at the undemanding aesthetic criteria of the crowd that makes this documentary an aggressive criticism rather than the positive affirmation found in his other films. The thirteen-minute *O Dreamland* (1953) was the first film that Anderson directed with no other impetus other than his own wish to make it.

Every Day Except Christmas (1957) is a forty-minute portrait of the workers who sold fruit, flowers, and vegetables 364 days year in London's Covent Garden market. The bustling workers, who occasionally mug for the camera, were generally filmed in long shot or close-ups to show both their coordinated physical activity and their unique personalities.

Once Anderson developed a mastery of filmmaking, his impatience with the mediocrity and prescriptive narrative style of most British films of the era increased. To encourage social realist films and freedom for the filmmaker, Anderson helped develop the small Free Cinema movement. This British group presented six programs of films at the National Film Theatre from 1956 to 1959, including *O Dreamland* in 1956, *Wakefield Express* in 1957, and *Every Day Except Christmas* also in 1957. In the broadest sense, Free Cinema had two objectives: to show what it valued in the cinema, with the emphasis on the work of the young contemporary filmmakers, and to show films to encourage other similar films to be made. Anderson coined the phrase "Free Cinema," wrote most of the movement's propaganda, and directed the greatest percentage of documentaries in the programs.

Anderson always refused to give his definition of a documentary, arguing that the term limited discussion of the film in question. He cherished freedom, and his films both reflect and examine this concept. In all of his works, Anderson explores the ways in which subjects interact, and the ultimate impossibility of being subjective. Poetic and lacking technological tricks, his documentaries are unvarnished portrayals of British life during the mid-twentieth century.

CARYN E. NEUMANN

See also ***Every Day Except Christmas***; **Jennings, Humphrey**

Biography

Born in Bangalore, India, to a South African mother and Scottish father in the Royal Engineers, April 17, 1923. Parents separated in 1926; moved to England with his mother. Graduated from Wadham College, Oxford University, reading classical studies, in 1942. Drafted into the Army, serving with the King's Royal Rifles as a clerk in India, 1943–1945. Graduated from Oxford with a Master of Arts in English, 1948. Cofounder and editor of *Sequence,* 1949–1951. Directed industrial films for Richard Sutcliffe, Ltd., the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service, and the Central Office of Information for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food, 1948–1955. Wrote *Making a Film: The Story of "Secret People"* in 1952. Directed and acted in feature films and television commercials, 1963-1987. Wrote *About John Ford* in 1981. Died of a heart attack in Angoulême, Charente, Poitou-Charentes, France, August 20, 1994.

Selected Films

1948 *Meet the Pioneers* (director,editor, commentator)
1949 *Idlers That Work* (director, commentator)
1952 *Three Installations* (director, commentator)
1952 *Trunk Conveyor* (director, commentator)
1952 *Wakefield Express* (director)
1953 *Thursday's Children* (co-director)
1953 *O Dreamland* (director)
1955 *Green and Pleasant Land* (director and scriptwriter)
1955 *Henry* (director and scriptwriter)
1955 *The Children Upstairs*: (director and script-writer)
1955 *A Hundred Thousand Children* (director and scriptwriter)
1955 *£20 a Ton* (director)
1955 *Energy First* (director)
1955 *Foot and Mouth* (director and scriptwriter)
1957 *Every Day Except Christmas* (director)

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ANGELA: PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY

(US, du Luart, 1971)

Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary paints a picture of the educator Angela Davis from the point of view of one of her students at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1971. It explores the challenges Davis faced because of her political activism, and shows the consequences of her being a Communist. Shot entirely in black and white, this low-budget, student-produced documentary film is nonetheless ambitious. It tries to capture the essence of Angela Davis, lending a multidimensional view to the person behind the picture on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted poster. Yolande du Luart, the film's director, takes a sympathetic view of Davis, while at the same time presents the story from a number of different perspectives. The film is du Luart's attempt to legitimize Angela Davis personally, politically, and professionally.

Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary begins with sound images of police car sirens combined with footage of Angela Davis's arrest in New York for her alleged involvement in the failed attempt to free Black Panther George Jackson, who was on trial for allegedly killing a prison guard at Soledad Prison in California. This scene is followed by a sound image of a cell door crashing shut against a totally dark screen. The camera then focuses on the Women's House of Detention on December 5, 1970, with a voice-over by Angela Davis stating that she is "now

being held captive.'' Next, the camera focuses on still shots of her supporters rallying outside of the Women's House of Detention, carrying posters saying, ''Free Our Sisters in the House of D'' and ''Free Angela Davis.'' Angela Davis is thus painted as a political prisoner, not a common criminal.

The film then flashes back in time to the autumn of 1969. The viewer is given an insider's look at Angela Davis, the academic, who is preparing for, and then teaching, a class in the philosophy department at UCLA. This scene is followed by one of two interviews with the Chairperson, Professor Donald Kalish, who is filmed in the middle of the screen behind his desk in his office, thus presenting an authoritative image. He discusses in a measured way why and how Professor Davis was hired, and he is quick to point out that her appointment was based on her outstanding academic credentials and the needs of the department.

Later in the film, Chairperson Kalish explains why the Board of Regents fired Professor Davis, and he concludes that it was because of her membership in the Communist Party. The film also includes a voice-over by Max Rafferty, a member of the Board of Regents, giving his rationale for her dismissal (Professor Davis had yet to earn her doctorate). It is important to note that the film uses more than one voice to tell the story. This use of multiple points of view ultimately gives credibility to Chairperson Kalish's account. He explains how Max Rafferty is misinformed about higher education, since a completed doctorate is not a requirement for the job of Assistant Professor in the early 1970s at UCLA. In addition, toward the end of the film, Angela Davis herself tells the story of her dismissal. This scene gives Davis ownership of her story. In sum, by illustrating her academic credentials and demonstrating the reasons for her dismissal, the film invites its audience to look at the politics behind the Board of Regents' decision.

Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary also illustrates Davis's core beliefs. In it, Davis tries to spell out the difficulty of not only organizing a

Angela Davis: Portrait of a Revolutionary, Angela Davis, 1972.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

movement for social change and equality but also struggling to maintain that movement. The film seeks to merge the political with the personal with a series of carefully spliced scenes that move between private spaces Davis occupies in her home and study, for example, and public spaces where she teaches, lectures, and gives political speeches. These scenes do justice to the idea that the personal and political cannot be separated. Finally, the film demonstrates how repression comes in many forms by linking the killing of two students at Jackson State College, the war in Vietnam, the killing of four white students at Kent State University, the trial in Connecticut of Bobby Seale, and the Soledad Brothers facing the gas chamber.

Other techniques include the use of sound images to remind viewers of what is not visually present (e g., police car sirens with gunshots ringing in the background while pictures of the bloody police raid on the Black Panther Party Office in South Central Los Angeles on December 8, 1969, are shown in still shots). This series of still shots serves to imprint police brutality of African Americans on the viewer's mind, especially since it is quickly juxtaposed with still shots of posters declaring "Feed Hungry Children" and "Free Breakfast for School Children," representing a Black Panther Party humanitarian initiative for inner-city poor children. By juxtaposing images of mainstream atrocities and Black Panther activism, not only are Davis's political views illustrated but also the notion that Jonathan and George Jackson and other Black Panthers are simple thugs who should be locked up, is challenged.

Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary was little noted nor long remembered. Angela Davis herself, now a Professor of Social Consciousness at the University of California in Santa Cruz, neither owns a copy of it nor has she stayed in touch with its filmmaker, Yolande du Luart, who is now translating mysteries from French to English. Yet, to use a 1960s term, *Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary* seems "relevant" to those interested in experiencing a pivotal moment in the life and work of the controversial and iconic Angela Davis, and in the production of student documentary films rooted in the political milieu of the early 1970s. Not only is the film Davis's story of struggle but it is also a political act in and of itself. In the end, it powerfully demonstrates the means and methods by which Angela Davis dedicated her life to the struggle against fascism and racism.

THERESA C. LYNCH

Angela: Portrait of a Revolutionary (USA, New Yorker Films Release, 1971, 60 mins.). Distributed by New Yorker Films. Produced by Mae Mercer. Directed by Yolande du Luart. Cinematography by Roger Andrieux and Lynn Merrick. Music by Yolande du Luart. Editing by Jacqueline Mappel. Sound direction by Nancy Dowd. Filmed in New York and California.

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ANIMATION

The art and freedom of animation and the realism and social purposes of the documentary would seem to be forever diametrically opposed, but in fact the two forms have often connected to great effect. In the discussion of documentary, animation has scarcely been mentioned. Bill Nichol's *Blurred Boundaries,* which "explores decisive moments when the traditional boundaries of fiction/nonfiction and truth/falsehood blur" (Nichols, 1994: 190) never visits animation. Nor have critics attended to the historical role that animation has played in the illustration or elucidation of actuality.

A precise definition of an animated documentary might be one where a larger part, perhaps

over 50% of the work, is animated, where animation is defined as an illusion of movement created through manipulating objects or artwork at a certain number of frames per second, such as would satisfy the artistic aims of the filmmaker to reproduce an illusion of movement that is clearly not "actuality" (see also Strom, 1995: 362). Given that, it is effectively impossible to define documentary with an absolute precision (see Plantinga, 1997 passim).

It is clear that mere technical definitions will not suffice and that intention must be taken into account. Although there are few examples of animated films dealing with real happenings as they happen, nevertheless Norman McLaren's *Neighbours* (1953) and Saul Bass's *Why Man Creates* (1968) both won Oscars as Best Short Documentary.

If documentary intention were an adequate portmanteau definition for animated documentary, then Winsor McCay's attempt in 1914, *The Sinking of the Lusitania*, is an attempt to present a realistic (hand drawn) interpretation of the actual World War I tragedy that would certainly count as both animation and document. But then, Pathe's earlier attempts, such as *The Mont Pele Volcano* (Pathe, France, 1902) might also count (using models and a miniature 'sea') as animated documentary, except that it is not an interpretation of reality but an imitation of it undertaken with a clear intention to hoodwink the public.

In this broader definition, *Walking with Dinosaurs* (BBC, 1999), with its seamless melding of real scenery and CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), would also qualify. But in the end these are more like spectacles in the Grand Guignol (shock theatre) tradition of actuality-inspired melodramatic re enactment. Gunnar Strom notes:

> "when we see the film today we are struck by the authentic feeling of the drawings. However, it is much harder to accept the highly propagandistic content in the written text panels which provide extra information . . . In this film the animated scenes stand out as more authentic than the written text."
>
> (Strom 2001: 2)

It is upon this distinction between the "actual" and the "constructed" that the debate around the creative interpretation of actual events has circled. It is a dead end in philosophical terms. The argument is better advanced by looking at works where there is no attempt to distort, but rather a clear aim at emotional and artistic authenticity.

It is significant that, at the height of the work of the GPO Film Unit in Britain in the 1930s, documentary pioneer John Grierson actually raised money for the groundbreaking animator Len Lye to produce and screen highly experimental abstract color animations (although some used live action in much the same way as in surrealist films such as *Un Chien Andalou*). These short subjects, often illustrating a GPO subject, such as the proper addressing of mail, were greatly influential in animation circles rather than documentary ones. Nevertheless, they served a clear documentary, or educational, purpose.

Lye had developed a technique of painting designs onto raw film stock. Films such as *Colour Box* and *Rainbow Dance,* with jazzy modernist sound tracks, were very popular with audiences, including some specialist (film buff) American crowds, on Paul Rotha's publicity visit to the USA in 1937–1938. Lye's work was artistically most influential, though never penetrating the populist cinema chains to any extent. These films attracted great interest and comment and Lye was later to work at the Canadian National Film Board producing equally experimental animation.

Works that aim at a more personal view of the world and use animated techniques to reflect a realist vision are closer to any satisfactory definition of animated documentary, which mimics as precisely as possible the human actions presented on screen. The anecdote-based animations of Nick Park's Aardman studios from the 1970s onward clearly share the impulse to present small personal stories. More recent works to combine this documentary impulse and realist animation using animation as the illustrative medium are *Colours of My Father* (Canada, Joyce Berenstein, 1995) and *Cousins* (Australia, Adam Benjamin Eliot, 1998) which, like Nick Park, uses claymation.

Among the most remarkable and internationally successful "documentary animations" are the later works of Australian animator Dennis Tupicoff. *The Darra Dogs* (1993) combines personal reminiscence with realist and expressionist techniques, and *His Mother's Voice* (1998) deploys live actions overlaid with rotoscoped sketch animation to produce effects both naturalistic and hyper-real.

In taking as its text and audio track a recorded news interview with the mother of a youth shot by police during a bungled robbery interview, and building an animated narrative, in *His Mother's Voice*, Tupicoff has moved beyond the "authentic" power of his own suburban memories in *The Darra Dogs*, to create something both more particular and yet more universal, powerfully capturing the terrible moment when a parent realizes she has outlived her child. Using videotaped actors to enact the "actuality" sound track,

in a style that recalls Russian Heroic realism, Tupicoff's *His Mother's Voice* marks out new territory for animation, a space that intersects with the traditional photographed realism of TV and film narratives, yet is powerful and politically subversive.

It is in these latter, highly personal works, rather than in the possibilities of a perfect mimicry of life that CGIs (computer generated images) offer, that the real achievements of animated documentary, or documentary in animation, truly lie.

JONATHAN DAWSON

See also: **GPO Film Unit; Grierson, John; Lye, Len; Pathe**

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ANSTEY, EDGAR

Edgar Harold Macfarlane Anstey OBE, a documentary film director, producer, and critic, was perhaps one of the most versatile documentary filmmakers of the twentieth century, moving easily between the aesthetics of his time and its science.

Living in the shadow of John Grierson's desire to reshape society with ideals of social and ethical cohesion, Anstey was the only member of the Empire Marketing Board with a technical and scientific training, and he urgently felt a need to make technological processes comprehensible. Anstey instantly recognized the value of the informational film for the purpose of training and educating. He sought an opportunity to follow through this conception of the informational film, and worked on the report that brought into being the Shell Film Unit. He produced Shell's first film, *Airport* (1934, Roy Lockwood, UK), an observation of a day at Croydon Airport and the systematic examination and refurbishment of an aeroplane engine.

> The film lasted only seventeen minutes, but nothing could quite compare with aircraft, and everything associated with them, for excitement. Many people had never seen an aeroplane, yet everyone recognised the exotic glamour of flight. *Airport* informed, entertained and educated while simultaneously indicating Shell's own position in the vanguard of modernity.
>
> (Howarth, 1997)

Anstey shared John Grierson's view that documentary must both criticize the agents of state and represent the interests of the exploited worker. He became frustrated and unhappy with the rate of progress at Shell and resigned to pursue his ideology.

Anstey found his opportunity with the Gas, Light and Coke Company, and (along with Arthur Elton) brought to the screen *Housing Problems* (1935), which focused on the plight of a Stepney (in London's East End) slum-dweller. In doing so, he sparked a new approach to documentary filmmaking. *Housing Problems* marked the beginning of Anstey's long commitment to social change. The film was well-received, although Joris Ivens, a fellow documentary filmmaker, commented in hindsight:

> There have been cases in the history of documentary when photographers became so fascinated by dirt that the result was the dirt looked interesting and strange, not something repellent to the audience.
>
> In my opinion . . . *Housing Problems,* fell into this error of exotic dirt. You could not smell these London slums.
>
> (Ivens, 1969)

However, John Betjemen, film critic of the *Evening Standard*, praised this new style of filmmaking and in 1935 wrote movingly of these "films without sex." Betjemen came later to admire

Anstey's perceptive gifts as a critic with the BBC and *The Spectator*.

Grierson, too, later praised *Housing Problems,* and noted that both Anstey and Elton had "taken the documentary film into the field of social problems and keyed it to the task of describing not only industrial and commercial spectacle, but social truth as well" (Grierson, 1938).

Housing Problems convinced Anstey of the power of documentary, and he followed it with *Enough to Eat?* (1936), an examination of the problem of malnutrition. Pushing for social change, Anstey claimed the film was a contribution to ongoing national research on nutrition and nutritional issues. Its success can be attributed to the media coverage it received, rather than the quality of the filmmaking displayed. The *Catholic Herald*, for example, wrote on October 10, 1936:

> The film does not show the terrible ravages that undernourishment has created in England. Director Edgar Anstey has chosen the better method of revealing the tragedy of poverty and the consequent semi-starvation which is the result of a cheap diet chosen more for its filling qualities than for its nutritive value.

Like Grierson, Anstey believed that documentary could act as an effective medium of communication between the government and the working classes. During World War II, while at Film Centre, he made an abundance of films for the Ministry of Information to encourage more intensive cultivation of urban gardens and mixed farms throughout Great Britain.

It was during this time that the Scientific Film Association was formed. Anstey and Arthur Elton were convinced that film had a singular power to impart information. Anstey believed passionately that the scientist and the technologist shared the imagination and insight of the artist, and after the war he and Elton created the International Scientific Film Association to disseminate a wider corroboration of their outlook.

Anstey, like Grierson, had established himself at the forefront of documentary production. From the early 1940s he largely settled into the role of producer. His appointment as Films Officer and Producer in Charge to the British Transport Commission in 1949 allowed him to use his gifts and abilities to satisfy his vision for documentary film.

STEVEN R. FOXON

See also **British Transport Films; Documentary Film: Britain; Elton, Arthur; EMB Film Unit; *Enough to Eat?*; GPO Film Unit; *Granton Trawler*; Grierson, John; *Housing Problems*; *Industrial Britain*; *March of Time*; MOI WWII; Shell**

Biography

Born February 16, 1907, in Watford, England. Educated at Watford Grammar School and Birkbeck College, University of London. Married Daphne Lilly (Canadian documentary filmmaker NFBC) in 1949. Joined Grierson's Empire Marketing Board Film Unit after answering to an advertisement in the *Times* in 1931. Started the Shell Film Unit in 1934. Joined the March of Time Film Unit, initially as London Director of Productions, later Foreign editor in New York from 1936 to 1938. Member of the Board and Producer at Film Centre (UK), 1940–1948. Regular member of BBC radio program "The Critics," from 1949 to 1966. Organized and acted as producer-in-charge of British Transport Films from 1949 to 1974. In 1956 and in 1967, served as Chairman of the British Film Academy; President of the International Scientific Film Association from 1961 to 1963. Won an Academy Award for *Wild Wings* (1965) in 1966. Chairman, British Industrial & Scientific Film Association from 1969 to 1970. Board of Governors at the British Film Institute from 1974 to 1975. Chairman of Children's Film Foundation Production Committee from 1981 to 1983. Died September 25, 1987, in London, England.

Selected Films

1931 *Industrial Britain* (Editor)
1934 *Granton Trawler* (Editor)
1935 *Housing Problems* (Director/Producer [with A Elton])
1936 *Enough to Eat?* (Director)
1943 *Crown of the Year* (M.O.I., Associate Producer)
1947 *Caller Herrin'* (Scottish Home Dept., Producer)
1950 *Berth 24* (B.T.F., Producer)
1954 *Elizabethan Express* (B.T.F., Producer)
1957 *Journey Into Spring* (B.T.F., Producer)
1961 *Terminus* (B.T.F., Producer)
1965 *Wild Wings* (B.T.F., Producer)
1970 *Site in the Sea* (B.T.F., Producer)
1975 *Age of Invention* (B.T.F., Producer)

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ANTONIO, EMILE DE

Emile de Antonio is best known for his innovations in the approach to documentary filmmaking. His works engage viewers in pointed political discourse through the clever arrangement of images, historical footage, interviews, text, sound, and other elements compiled to create a story without the use of a narrator. Although he came to filmmaking in his forties and made relatively few major films, de Antonio is a significant figure in the history of documentary. Nearly all of his films are explorations of the Cold War, its legacies, and its effects on U.S. culture and values systems.

Perhaps the most fascinating thing about de Antonio's work is his challenge to the idea of truth being told about historical events. De Antonio is quite willing to accept that any story may have as many explanations and meanings given as it does witnesses. The notion of direct address of the witness championed by de Antonio is a simple principle with extremely complex implications for the understanding of history. This concept was well illustrated by his pioneering use of found footage. Television images are used to strengthen the inherent arguments about power and human nature that surface in his work.

De Antonio's first film was formulated in this way. *Point of Order* (1964) used historical footage of the McCarthy hearings to illustrate the trajectory of the tale. De Antonio employed distinctive editing techniques to create meaningful juxtapositions. He continued to explore the recontextualization of previously filmed material for the next few films, honing his skills in the compilation images. Although this is interesting as a formal technique, it is ever more intriguing when the content is considered as well. The films of Emile de Antonio are largely about sociopolitical concerns, and this is well supported by the use of the televised image as a storytelling device. In a 1971 interview, de Antonio spoke of his impetus for creating the film:

> The Army-McCarthy hearings were a peak in American political theater. And there were lessons derived from it . . . . You get something like the Army-McCarthy hearings on television—in all its body, all of it—and something is revealed about the nature of our governmental structure, our society, where the real power is . . . because the whole thing about American politics is that it's a game, a game whereby you hide what's really happening from the American people while its happening. And that's part of what the film is all about, to show that game.
>
> (Weiner, 1971: p. 9).

This concept continued to propel de Antonio's work throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Among de Antonio's best-known works is 1968's *In the Year of the Pig*, a film comprised of found footage from many diverse sources designed to illustrate the high-level confusion of the Vietnam War. De Antonio skillfully organized images to raise difficult questions about the nature of U.S. involvement in the war. Composed of his own interviews and new footage—combined with material gleaned from a detailed study of footage shot by the National Liberation Front, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the French Army, the American Broadcasting Company, and the British Broadcasting Company—*In the Year of the Pig* examines a complex issue from many angles. At the time of the 1971 *Film Quarterly* interview, de Antonio spoke of the impact of the news media and the war that was still underway.

> There is nothing as bad that's happened concerning the war as the networks' coverage of it, because it seems as if they're covering the war whereas in fact, they're not. The networks have made the American people, in a final way, comfortable with the war—because it appears between commercials, every day; it's become part of our quotidian existence, like armpit commercials. There's never the question asked, ''Why are we doing this? What is this war about?'' It's never suggested by anything that occurs on television that we should even be interested in that type of question. Television is a way of avoiding coming to terms with the fact that we're in this war.
>
> (Weiner, 1971: p. 7).

It is intriguing that this statement has continued relevance today.

Perhaps the most unique of de Antonio's films is *Painters Painting* (1972), in that it is unlike any of his other work. This exploration of several artists' thoughts and concerns in their working

environments is still compelling today for its direct approach to the artists and their processes. His first film in 35mm, this work sought to create a synthesis of form and content as it used this collage style of filmmaking to look at several artists who worked in collage painting. De Antonio stated:

> This is a film about the System of the art world in the words of the people in that world: [Willem] de Kooning, [Robert] Motherwell, Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Stella, Barney Newman . . . and so on. Most of these are people I've known and who are friends of mine, but the film also includes the collectors, the manipulators, and the museum people and how an art market is created.
>
> (Weiner, 1971: p. 14).

The film is entertaining and insightful, like other de Antonio works, but its political inquiry is less overt than in the rest of his catalog.

Emile de Antonio remains an important figure in documentary filmmaking. In recent memory, his works have taken on a renewed sense of social poignancy and verve. As documentary film has become more mass produced and widely screened throughout the world, the significance of de Antonio is heightened.

TAMMY A. KINSEY

See also **In the Year of the Pig**

Biography

Born 1919. Studied History at Harvard University. Figure in New York Art scene. Began making films at age 40. Pioneered use of found television footage as documentary filmmaking tool. Died 1989.

Selected Films

1964 *That's Where the Action Is*
1965 *Rush to Judgment*
1968 *In the Year of the Pig*
1969 *America Is Hard to See*
1970 *Millhouse: A White Comedy*
1976 *Underground*
1989 *Mr. Hoover and I*

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APTED, MICHAEL

Michael Apted has been involved in documentary filmmaking since the early 1960s. He has long been known for his patient, probing interviews and the simple truths revealed through them. Apted is perhaps best known for his *Up* series, a remarkable continuation of a project he worked on as a researcher in 1963. Directed by Paul Almond for Grenada TV, this film (*Seven Up*) was the start of what is now clearly an idea that is uniquely Apted. Fourteen British boys and girls were interviewed for this work, and the thoughts and hopes of seven-year-olds were revealed. Apted endeavored to continue this notion in 1970, when he interviewed the same set of youngsters (now 14 years old) in his *Seven Plus Seven*. At seven-year intervals, Apted has interviewed these same people, producing *21 Up* (1977), *28 Up* (1985), *35 Up* (1991), *42: Forty Two Up* (1998), and now production has begun on *49 Up*. This is unlike any other cinematic endeavor on record, and although a few of the original fourteen have dropped out of the project, those who remain have become very close to Apted and to each other. This careful study of human life, its simplicity, joys and sorrows, is indeed an epic documentary project.

Amid the years of this ongoing cinematic task, Apted has worked as a director for both independent and Hollywood features as well as continuing his documentary work. In 1985, he released *Bring on the Night*, a document of musician Sting and his tour experience, both backstage and in concert.

Apted's interest in political and social issues is evident in much of his work. His 1992 documentary, *Incident at Oglala,* explores the controversial case of two murdered FBI agents on the reservation at Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and the incarceration of Native American Leonard Peltier for these crimes. The film painstakingly investigates witnesses' accounts of the events of July 1975, showing testimonials from the legal proceedings, surveying evidence, and interviewing various players. Apted ultimately provides a study not only of the events themselves but also of the way people respond to the pressures of accusation, the role race plays in such a case, and the notion of justice itself. Apted's 1994 film, *Moving the Mountain,* continues with this political framework as it explores the Tienanmen Square student demonstrations of June 1989 in Beijing, China. The 1997 project, *Inspirations,* is not overtly political, yet it investigates ideas themselves in a very critical manner, a kind of creative activism at play in the film. Apted interviewed artists about the specifics of their process in art-making, with attention paid to the exercise of problem solving. Musician David Bowie, pop art painter Roy Lichtenstein, glass artist Dale Chihuly, dancer Edouard Locke, actress Louise LeCavalier, architect Tadao Ando, and ceramicist and poet Nora Noranjo-Morse answer questions regarding the nature of their creativity and the origins of their ideas. In an interview with Pamela Klaffke, Apted explained his views on filmmaking and art:

> You have to have a vision. That was why I was so interested in having an architect [in the film]. I felt a real sense of camaraderie with him because I felt both of our jobs are very public jobs, very collaborative, very man-management, very political jobs. It's a form of art, but not what I would call pure art of the blank page, the oil, the clay, the glass or whatever. It is a sort of art, but a wider view of art being a film director than being a composer, poet, painter or sculptor—because there are so many hands on your work.
>
> (Klaffke, 1998)

Apted continues this tack of social and political observation in his new serial documentary, *Married in America*. A production of A&E Television Networks, this 2002 work represents the second time Apted has used the notion of returning to a subject as a method of storytelling. *Married in America* explores the lives of nine diverse couples, including racially mixed pairs, those who were previously married or of different religions, and a lesbian couple. All of these couples live in or near Los Angeles, New York, or Birmingham, Alabama. Surely this regional specificity will allow for closer examination of the social issues at hand in these places and the things they create in these relationships. Apted intends to visit the couples every two years, whether they remain together or not, to see what has transpired in their lives. Of interest to him is the question of "family values" rhetoric in a society filled with divorce and single-parent households. Do age and class differences, past relationships, and family pressures complicate these unions in similar ways? (Chocano, 2002). The institution of marriage itself is examined here. Are there things that make a marriage work in today's world? Can the success of a union be predicted from the interactions between the people involved? Are the struggles of the early years always beneath the surface as the relationship continues? Apted is intrigued by these simple human dramas that shape society's attitudes.

TAMMY A. KINSEY

Biography

Born February 10, 1941, in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. Worked as a researcher for Grenada TV. Member of the Director's Guild of America since 1978. Received the International Documentary Association (IDA) Award for *28 Up* in 1985. Vancouver International Film Festival Best Documentary Feature Award, 1994, for *Moving the Mountain*. In 1998, *42: Forty-Two Up* received the Flaherty Documentary Award. Awarded the Doubletake Documentary Film Festival's Career Award in 1998. International Documentary Association's Career Achievement Award, 1999. Special Jury Award, Florida Film Festival, 2000, for *Me and Issac Newton*. Elected President of the Director's Guild of America, June 29, 2003.

Selected Filmography

1963 7 Up
1970 *7+7 (14 Up)*
1977 *21 Up*
1985 *28 Up*
1985 *Bring On the Night*
1991 *35 Up*
1992 *Incident at Oglala*
1994 *Moving the Mountain*
1997 *Inspirations*
1998 *42: Forty-Two Up*
2002 *Married in America* (TV)

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ARCAND, DENYS

Denys Arcand made his first film, *A l'est d'Eaton (East of Eaton's)*, 1959, with Stéphane Venne when he was 18 years old. A few years later, while studying history at the Université de Montréal, he co-directed *Seul ou avec d'autres (Alone or with Others,* 1962) with Stéphane Venne and Denis Héroux. *Seul ou avec d'autres* was a docudrama on the life of university students. Although Arcand did not intend to pursue a career as a filmmaker at that time, he applied for a summer job at the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) and was hired to research and write a screenplay for a documentary on the founder of Québec city, Samuel de Champlain. He was eventually hired to direct the short film *Champlain* (1964) and two other shorts on the history of New France, *Les Montréalistes/ Ville-Marie* (1965) and *La route de l'ouest (The Westward Road,* 1965). After working on a few generic shorts in the late 1960s, such as *Volleyball* (1966), he made his first feature-length documentary, *On est au coton* (*Cotton Mill, Treadmill,* 1970), an examination of the textile industry in Québec. The film was deemed subversive by NFB commissionaire Sydney Newman, and banned from distribution until 1976.

The controversy surrounding *On est au coton* brought attention to Arcand, and he was given the opportunity to direct three fiction films in the private sector: *La maudite galette (The Damed Dough,* 1971), *Réjeanne Padovani* (1973), and *Gina* (1975). The latter offers an intriguing commentary on the then-censored *On est au coton* by presenting a fictionalized account of the shooting of the documentary.

Before leaving the NFB to work in the private sector, Arcand had shot a film on the provincial electoral campaign of 1970. Released in 1972, *Québec: Duplessis et après . . . (Québec: Duplessis and After . . .)* argues that the right-wing ideology of Maurice Duplessis, who dominated the Québec political scene from 1936 to his death in 1959, was still present in the political discourse of 1970, even in the supposedly left-wing platform of the separatist Parti Québécois. With this film, Arcand managed to attract criticism from both sides of the political spectrum. He returned to the NFB in the late 1970s to make his last documentary, *Le confort et l'indifférence* (*Comfort and Indifference,* 1981), on the failure of the 1980 referendum on Québec's independence (60 percent voted against Québec's sovereignty). Arguing that pro-sovereignty Premier René Lévesque (in power from 1976 to 1985) misread the population's seeming enthusiasm for separation from Canada, Arcand was reproached by nationalists for his claim that residents of Québec were more interested in personal gratification than social and political issues.

Since the 1980s, Arcand has worked exclusively in fiction. *Le déclin de l'empire américain* (*Decline of the American Empire,* 1986) and *Jésus de Montréal* (*Jesus of Montreal,* 1989) enjoyed tremendous success both in Canada and abroad.

From *Champlain* to his latest fiction film, *Stardom* (2000), Arcand has consistently adopted a dialogic approach to his material, always articulating at least two discourses simultaneously as a means of "problematizing" any simplistic reading of his subject matter. For instance, although *On est au coton* carries out a Marxist examination of working conditions in textile mills, it also undermines Marxist teleology by demonstrating the proletariat's inability to improve its circumstances. Similarly, in *Le confort et l'indifférence*, he exposes the weaknesses of both the separatist project and the federalist status quo. Arcand rarely provides solutions in his films, but never fails to make his audience think.

ANDRÉ LOISELLE

Biography

Born 1941. Studied history at the Université de Montréal. Directed several documentaries before turning exclusively to narrative/fictional film, 1980s.

Selected Filmography (Documentaries)

1964 *Champlain*, 28 min. (director, screenwriter)
1965 *Les montréalsites/Ville-Marie* 27 min. (director, screenwriter)
1965 *La route de l'ouest / The Westward Road*, 28 min. (director, screenwriter)
1965 *Montréal un jour d'été / Montréal on a Summer Day*, 12 min. (director, editor)
1966 *Volleyball*, 13 min. (director, editor)
1967 *Parcs atlantiques / Atlantic Parks*, 17 min. (director, editor)

1970 *On est au coton / Cotton Mill, Threadmill*, 159 min. (director)
1972 *Québec: Duplessis et après . . . / Québec: Duplessis and After . . .*, 115 min. (director, editor)
1976 *La lutte des travialleurs d'hôpitaux / The Struggle of Hospital Workers*, 28 min. (director)
1981 *Le confort et l'indifférence / Comfort and Indifference*, 109 mins. (director)

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ARK, THE

(UK, Dineen, 1993)

The Ark of the title refers to the Regent's Park Zoo in London. Shot over the course of a year, Molly Dineen's four-part series won a BAFTA for its portrayal of the zoo as it struggled to find both financial security and a resolution to the often conflicting demands of being both a center of scientific research and a popular visitor attraction.

As producer, photographer, and director, Dineen is central to all aspects of the film. As in her previous work, Dineen uses a minimal contextualizing voice-over and develops an informal, dialogic relationship with her subjects. Dineen's direct interjections are also fairly minimal and used only where necessary to draw out further revelations. These are often interspersed with long observational sequences that reveal the workings of the zoo, and interactions between the staff and between keepers and animals. However, Dineen's presence is clearly announced. The "performance," both in terms of her own interventions and direction, as well as her subjects' response to her and the camera, provides the dynamic on which she builds her narratives (Bruzzi, 2000). By creating such clearly authored films, Dineen makes transparent the constructed nature of documentary filmmaking, and, to a certain extent, avoids the more extravagant claims for objectivity that normally accompany observational approaches. Rather than an attempt to disguise her presence, the films are a record of the developing and fairly informal relationship between Dineen and her subjects.

Episode one, *Survival of the Fittest,* establishes the basic financial crisis facing the zoo. The second episode, *Natural Selection,* illustrates the logistical problems facing the zoo after a round of layoffs, and the next phase of cost cutting—the reduction and dispersal of the animal collection. *The Political Animal* covers the complex negotiations surrounding the arrival of two giant pandas and establishes the growing struggle over the future of the zoo, underscored by the open challenge to management by a dissident group of keepers and the Fellows of the Royal Zoological Society. The last episode, *Tooth and Claw,* shows the final confrontation between the reform group and management, which leads to the departure of David Jones, the zoo's director.

The role and fate of public and cultural institutions in the face of neo-liberal economic theory was a central theme in the political discourse of the 1980s and 1990s. *The Ark* creates an intriguing picture of the internal workings of a venerable and seemingly unshakeable organization under threat in the shifting economic sands of the period. However, the wider issue of the place of zoos in relation to contemporary cultural mores and environmental concerns go unexamined in *The Ark*. Dineen's focus here, as in her other work, is primarily on character. As she states, "Through focusing on the human drama and trying to tell a story through character . . ., you can portray more of life's transparent complexities and contradictions" (MacDonald and Cousins, 1998: p. 365). In the crisis that overtakes the zoo, Dineen's sympathy appears to lie with the keepers, due mainly to their clear dedication to their work and attachment to the animals. Yet, they are presented either as relatively passive in their acceptance of layoffs, or—in the case of those who organize to oust

management—inappropriately conspiratorial. The dedication of the keepers is most dramatically revealed in the twenty-four-hour battle to save a sick koala bear. This emergency is contrasted with the ruthless politicking of senior management and the reform group of keepers and Fellows. However, David Jones, the zoo's director, who oversaw the cuts to the staff and collection, becomes a figure who, in turn, is treated with increasing sympathy as his own job is threatened. The eventual death of the koala is tellingly juxtaposed with news of Jones's redundancy.

Dineen's expressed determination to treat all sides with equanimity and to avoid stereotyping makes her appear uncomfortable at times with the very real conflicts made manifest as the crisis develops. Her frequent return in the final episode to seek the views of the world-weary, apolitical Senior Keeper of Birds, David Robinson, is perhaps indicative of the need to find expression for her own neutral stance to the situation (Bruzzi, 2000). Much of Dineen's work, such as *Home from the Hill* (BBC2, 1985) and *In the Company of Men* (BBC2, 1995), is overtly constructed around her relationship with male characters. This is also apparent in *The Ark*. Although the female staff members are approached, these interactions tend to be relatively formal in tone and lack the more familiar, even flirtatious, manner of her dealings with some of the central male figures. Her sympathetic treatment of Jones is perhaps symptomatic of the "glorifying and exonerating of masculinity" (Bruzzi, 2000: p. 169), which, it could be argued, is an underlying tendency in much of her earlier work. The final shots show the zoo's disused Bear Mountain, portrayed as a desolate wasteland. Shot in this way, this highly symbolic indicator of the zoo's well-being appears to reflect Dineen's own uncertainty about the situation, after the status quo has been disrupted by Jones's dismissal.

If Dineen's approach consciously glosses over the details and wider implications of the zoo's crisis, her ability to develop close relationships with her subjects, and to entreat them to speak openly about themselves before the camera, allows for a revealing glimpse of the zoo to be communicated. *The Ark* is also memorable for the finely observed relationships between the keepers and their animals, providing moments of real affection and humor.

DAVID CHAPMAN

See also **Dineen, Molly; Docusoap**

The Ark (UK, RTO Pictures for BBC2, 1993, 4 × 59 mins.). Photographed, produced, and directed by Molly Dineen. Executive producer, Edward Mirzoeff. Associate producer, Margaret Young. Sound by Phil Streather. Editing by Edwards Roberts with Heather Morley. Graphics by Christine Büttner. Music by John Keane.

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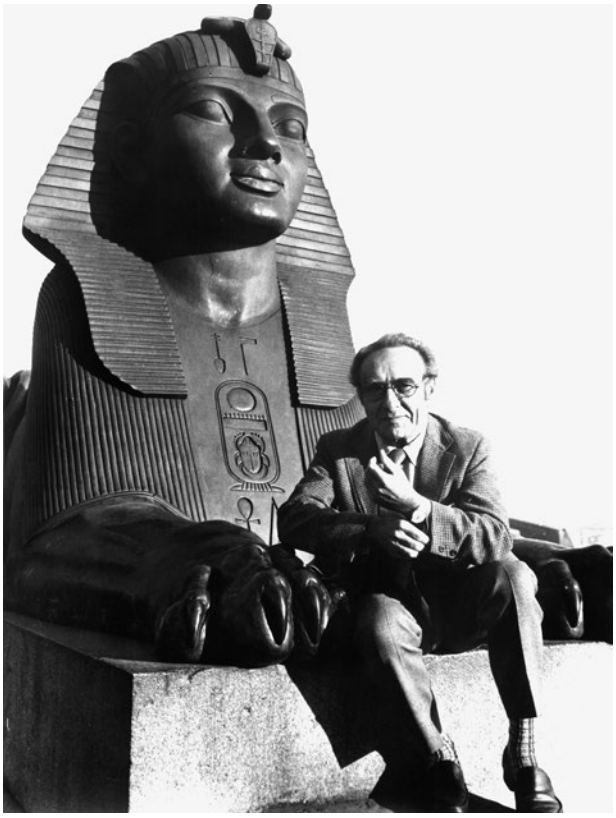
ASCENT OF MAN, THE

(UK, 1973)

The Ascent of Man (1973), the BBC-TV's critically acclaimed major television documentary series of 13 × 50 minute parts, is a television history of scientific ideas from prehistory to the late twentieth century. Its central organizing metaphor is the optimism of the "long childhood" of the growth of human intelligence. The BBC saw the series as the scientific counterpart of *Civilisation,* its impressive series on Western art and architecture. *The Ascent of Man* was written and narrated to camera by the late Dr. Jacob Bronowski, a scientific humanist whose aim throughout was to portray science as a

historically contextualized human achievement and progress, made possible by evolving human biology and intelligence, and not as a dry, abstract, and depersonalised array of scientific theories and facts. For example, in Part 5, "The Music of the Spheres," Bronowski humanizes mathematics: "Calculation was an endless delight to Moorish scholars. They loved problems." Similarly, in Part 6, "The Starry Messenger," he observes: "There are good Renaissance reasons—emotional, rather than intellectual—that made [Copernicus] choose the golden sun" as the centre of the universe. Late in life, Bronowski wrote: "All that I have written . . . turns on the same centre: the uniqueness of man that grows out of his struggle (and his gift) to understand both nature and himself" (O'Conner and Robertson, 2003).

Although remembered mainly as a scientist and mathematician, Bronowski was also an accomplished writer and poet. His first book, *The Poet's Defence* (1939), examined the relationship between scientific and poetic or human truth. Bronowski's integration of biology and physics is the central motif of *The Ascent of Man*. In the final chapter of the book of *The Ascent of Man* series, Bronowski states that he moved from physics to biology when it occurred to him that "justice is part of the biological equipment of man," that we are "ethical creatures" and that "knowledge is not a loose-leaf notebook of facts." In his *Science and Human Values* (1956, revised 1965), Bronowski addressed the two-culture debate between science and humanism. He believed that through science the human mind has always sought to find unity in the chaos of nature. Bronowski's instinct for presenting his ideas as strong, interesting narratives is central to his desire to make abstract and normally difficult notions lucid, and to facilitate narrativity, he organised the vast amount of content thematically. Sir David Attenborough, Director of Programmes for the BBC when the series was made, commented, "Bronowski was nothing short of inspired . . . [He] understood that one of the secrets of programme-making is great story telling."



The Ascent of Man, Dr. Jacob Bronowski, writer-narrator, 1973. PBS 13-part series.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

Permeating Bronowski's script is his rejection of the subject-object dualism that characterised scientific rationality up to the nineteenth century and that was discarded in the twentieth century with the revolution in philosophy toward a relational reality: In *The Ascent of Man* he states, "Physics becomes . . . the greatest collective work of art of the twentieth century." In episode 11, "Knowledge or Certainty," Bronowski prioritises humanity over scientific preoccupation in an unforgettable sequence where, as he wades into the ashes pond at Auschwitz death camp, he says to the camera, "We have to cure ourselves of the itch for absolute knowledge and power. We have to close the distance between the push-button order and the human act. We have to touch people." He then reaches into the water and pulls up a handful of mud in a sequence of stop motion shots. The effect, in context, is a sudden, emotionally charged move from cognition to emotion. Another example from Part 11 is when Bronowski states to the camera, "There is no absolute knowledge. And those who claim it, whether scientists or dogmatists, open the door to tragedy. All information is imperfect. We have to treat it with humility. That is the human condition; and that is what quantum physics says. I mean that quite literally." His statement is followed by actual images of what the world would look like if seen successively through each band of the electromagnetic spectrum, not only from infrared to ultraviolet but also through the radio waves of radar, X-rays, and the electron microscope. He concludes that, in seeking the ultimate image of reality, there is no ideal wavelength: "Even the hardest electrons do not give a hard outline. The perfect image is still as remote as the distant stars."

Responses to the series also reflect the old tension between Education and Media Studies over assumptions that television is so constrained that it can say nothing that is not intrinsically superficial. This is part of the continuing contest for cultural authority between conceptual knowledge derivable from the printed word and the kind of knowledge of actuality derivable from pictures. Prior to making *The Ascent of Man,* Bronowski had shown considerable ability in both writing and broadcasting for television and radio and he believed that the written word had advantages over the audiovisual medium in the amount of detail of data that can be presented. But as both poet and scientist, Bronowski was interested in successfully reconciling abstraction and actuality: Previously in BBC-TV's *Insight* he had won a reputation for being able to express abstract and difficult ideas in science (e.g., entropy), mathematics (e.g., probability), human intelligence, and philosophy. He similarly approached *The Ascent of Man* with a strong sense of the need for television to acquit itself as a medium capable of effectively representing abstract ideas. The title of the series is ironic: The work of male scientists abounds but the contribution of women to the history and philosophy of science is lacking.

Critically, *The Ascent of Man* is still regarded as a *tour de force* among television documentaries. Dunkley of the *Financial Times* wrote that it was the "most colossal concept I have ever come across in television," and the *Daily Telegraph* described its form as "splendid." Another observed that *The Ascent of Man* is a series "looked up to by every producer of factual, educational programmes" and that it is made "in a style much copied since." *The Ascent of Man* is number 65 in the British Film Institute's list of the top "TV 100" and number 7 on its list of the "Top 20" in the "Factual Category." The series continues to be broadcast—for example, in June 2004 on UKTV cable network.

BRUCE HORSFIELD

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ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES DOCUMENTARISTES

"The documentary film is in a sorry state, and I think it would be a good idea to do something about it." With these words, Danish filmmaker Jrgen Roos turned to his Italian colleague, Gian Vittorio Baldi, head of the Istituto del Documentario Italiano (IDI), in March 1963. According to Roos, the remedy was a global organization of documentary filmmakers. Later that year, Baldi met his Belgian colleague, Henri Storck at the Festival dei Populi in Florence. Both reached a similar conclusion and decided to set up an international organization. In October 1964 the Association Internationale des Documentaristes (AID) was launched at the Mannheim Film Festival. The AID was registered in Belgium, for purely practical reasons, as it was the only country where an international association could be set up by Royal Decree, without going through complex procedures. John Grierson was elected president; Joris Ivens, Georges Rouquier, and Richard Leacock were named vice-presidents; and Storck was named treasurer. The secretariat was in Rome, at Baldi's IDI office.

Roos and Baldi believed that the AID should avoid the most glaring mistakes made by the World Union of Documentary (1947–1950). Therefore, no effort was made to define the genre, as such undertaking would, it was believed, only cause divisions. Members joined on an individual basis,

paying an annual fee of $10. Jean Rouch, Mario Ruspoli, Don Pennebaker, Edgar Anstey, Erwin Leiser, Bert Haanstra, Albert Maysles, Pierre Perrault, and Luc de Heusch were among the first to join. They represented the widest possible variety in styles and approaches with regard to documentary filmmaking. When East European filmmakers reported that they were not permitted to join on an individual basis, efforts were made to find some form of accommodation, but the AID leadership persistently refused the membership of national organizations from the Socialist countries. Given that such organizations often had up to 1,000 or more members, they would inevitably have dominated the AID, a consequence that the AID's leaders, remembering the fate of the WUD, wished to avoid. Still, Karl Gass (German Democratic Republic, or East Germany) and Roman Karmen (Soviet Union) managed to actively participate by traveling to the festivals where the AID met. Marianne Szemes (Hungary) circumvented the problem by setting up an AID section in her country. Her interesting proposal, inspired by Cesare Zavattini and his Cinegiornali Liberi, to have members exchange "letters" shot on 16mm film stock, failed to materialize.

At the start, the AID's presence was largely restricted to the growing number of film festivals. In Leipzig, Mannheim, Oberhausen, Tours, and Florence, AID members met and held heated debates about the merits of cinéma vérité, the social role of the cinema, and other issues. In February 1968, the first and only Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place in Algiers. AID members were flown in by charter plane from Rome, assured of luxury accommodations and taken on excursions to exotic places. But Baldi, who had put this package together with the support of the Algerian government, came under fire for using AID funds to meet his personal ends. Furthermore, the meeting was overshadowed by heavy-handed attempts by the Algerian government to prevent its own filmmakers from speaking out freely.

After the AGM, Baldi was forced to resign from his position as secretary. Rouquier was his successor (with Basil Wright taking over the presidency from Grierson), but it was only after Marion Michelle took over administrative affairs that the AID regained its sense of purpose. Originally a photographer, Michelle had been Ivens's assistant and secretary of the International Federation of Film Archives. Her Paris apartment became the new center of the AID. From 1971 to 1972, three issues of *AID News*, a cross between a newsletter and a serious journal, were published. Rouquier, who had started his professional career as a typographer, was a great help in this regard. Among the numerous contributors were Grierson, Wright, Haanstra, Storck, Hurwitz, Ivens, and other members. The academic Jean-Claude Batz discussed the implications of the introduction of the videocassette, while critic Gideon Bachman raised serious questions on the issue of television and truth.

By 1972, the AID had more than 130 members. Michelle's role was taken over by the Zürich-based documentarist Erwin Leiser and Moritz and Erika de Hadeln. This couple (i.e., Moritz and Erika de Hadeln) had founded the Nyon Film Festival, the location of which in neutral Switzerland seemed ideal for meetings between East and West. There were plans for an international centre to distribute the films made by AID members. Moreover, the Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR offered to build up a documentary film archive. Although the AID leadership admitted that the archive in East Berlin had possibly the best storage facilities in the world, they were wary of the political strings attached to the offer. Neither the distribution center nor the documentary archive ever materialized. Instead, a meeting on the ethics, aesthetics, and dramaturgy of the documentary was organized in conjunction with the Nyon Film Festival in October 1974. For five days filmmakers and critics discussed a range of issues related to the topic of the meeting, using films that were screened at the festival as examples. It turned out to be the last big event held under the auspices of the AID. In the second half of the 1970s, the association slowly came to an end. Many members continued to meet each other informally at the increasing number of film festivals, while some put their energy in building national networks, such as AG Dok in Germany. In May 1999, the AID was officially disbanded.

BERT HOGENKAMP

See also **Baldi, Gian Vittorio; Roos, Jørgen**

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AUBERVILLIERS

(France, Lotar, 1945)

Aubervilliers was made early in the post-World War II period by the director Eli Lotar. The French provisional government under Charles de Gaulle had some communist representatives, and the Fourth Republic, the Marshall Plan, and the prosperity and baby boom of the late 1940s and 1950s were yet to come. In the film, the narrator asserts that the ruins of Aubervilliers, a suburb of Paris, "are not the brand new ruins of the war," but rather "ancient, commonplace ruins, the mere ruins of workers' misery."

Appearing ten years after Anstey and Elton's *Housing Problems, Aubervilliers* embraces the documentary forms of its time. Shot with no

Aubervilliers, 1945.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

synchronous sound, it relies on commentary and music to maintain its discursive function. The narrative is driven by both the commentary and a song performed by Germaine Montero, both written by Jacques Prévert. The essentially denunciative intention intertwines with nostalgia, irony, humanism, and optimism. This approach recalls the feature films of French poetic realism. Lotar had previously worked as a cameraperson with Jean Renoir (*Une Partie de Campagne*), Pierre Prévert (*L'Affaire est dans le Sac*), Luis Buñuel (*Las Hurdes*), and Joris Ivens (*Zuiderzee*).

In a firm demonstration, sustained by striking and often shocking images, the film rises up in protest before misery, siding with workers and paying tribute to their strength and dignity. The commentary, as well as the song, salute repeatedly the "good children of Aubervilliers, good children of proletarians, good children of misery, good children of the whole world." At the end, the voice-over states, "It is once again the simple, rude hand of the worker that will shake up this stiff and depressed world, this world that badly needs to change, that will finally change some day."

The documentary strategy employed by *Aubervilliers* is threefold. An unconcealed camera presents shots and scenes that depict the general mood of the time. Short sequences are obviously reenacted, such as one of a girl walking to a water fountain. More specifically, persons working at home are filmed frontally, as if posing for a photographer, in a collaborative relationship. Their words, failing to be recorded, are reformulated off screen.

Aubervilliers is the major work of a minor filmmaker.

JEAN-LUC LIOULT

See also ***Housing Problems*; Ivens, Joris**

Aubervilliers (France, Lotar, 1945, 24 min.). Directed by Eli Lotar. Co-directed by Jacques Prévert and Joseph Kosma. Narrated by Jacques Prévert. Filmed in Aubervilliers, France.

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AUSTRALIA

From the very birth of cinema, successive Australian governments had observed and developed strategies to explore and use the possibilities of film as a means of national projection. Before 1912, the Commonwealth Government contracted private production companies to film official events and produce short nonfiction films for theatrical release. Following the appointment of an official cinematographer in 1912, the Cinema and Photographic Branch was established on a temporary basis with the brief "to film anything of interest."

On 27 May 1913, the Department of External Affairs sent a letter to cinematographer Bert Ives: "Sir: in confirmation of my telegrams of yesterday's date I have the honour to inform you that the Minister has approved of your appointment as cinematographer and photographer in this department at the rate of pounds five per week." Ives was now the official cameraman to the nation (he remained in the position until 1939), with the more specific brief to make films promoting Australia abroad and to record major events.

The new department developed along predictable lines. During the 1920s and 1930s, the Melbourne Cinema Division increased its staff and produced newsreels and short features, much as the Empire Marketing Board under John Grierson would a decade later in Britain. Wheat, beef, and tobacco were featured in a series, "Know Your Country," using a simplistic flat-on film style and using the mantra of Australia—"the vast and rich land."

From 1915 to 1930, approximately one reel of film per week was produced by the Branch for theatrical release. During the 1930s, sound films were released less regularly. There are several of these in the National Film and Sound Archive Collection, including *This Is Australia*, *Mineral Wealth,* and *Australian Sugar*. Such films were

typically overburdened with long-winded commentaries that were still the official mode of address until the war years when there was something to be portentous about. The stereotypes of the nation thus projected were directly in line with the views of national character advanced by historians such as C.E.W. Bean and film studios (Efftee and Cinesound) producing epic and pastoral features or rural comedies like *Dad and Dave* (1932).

Documentary features were also intermittently produced, notably featuring the location cinematography of pioneering documentary maker Captain Frank Hurley. Hurley was celebrated for his sweeping romantic nature still photography and film work in the heroic style of colonial painters like John Glover. Hurley established an early international fame with his Antarctic films *Home of the Blizzard* (1913) and *In the Grip of the Polar Pack-Ice* (1917), which contained much sensationalisation of "cannibal attacks" but was a huge touring success in England and the United States as well as later tropical adventures documented in *Pearls and Savages* (1921).

The now-developed tradition of filming in exotic or dangerous locations would, sixty years later, be a feature of the political documentaries of Gil Scrine and David Bradley (*Chile Hasta Cuendo*, *Frontline* qv). During World War II, it saw the rise of a generation of war correspondents. Damien Parer won the Best Documentary Oscar in 1942 for his coverage of Pacific action in World War II in *Kokoda Front Line* (Cinesound Review, 1942). Following an invitation by the Australian government, John Grierson visited Australia in 1940 to report on the setting up of a more responsive and creative film production arm of government along the lines of the Crown Film Unit.

Grierson strongly recommended the nontheatrical use of 16mm film for general purposes. The Commonwealth Government established the ANFB (Australian National Film Board) in 1945 with the principal task of overseeing the production and distribution of documentary films and the importation of overseas documentaries. The National Library, in collaboration with the state libraries, became the national distributor of 16mm films for nontheatrical, educational use.

Instead of being set up as an independent statutory authority along the lines of the Canadian National Film Board, the ANFB in Australia soon came under the direct control of the Department of Information. In 1946, Stanley Hawes was appointed to the new position of Producer-in-Chief, a position he held until his retirement in 1970. Hawes was effectively a Grierson appointment, having worked with the GPO Film Unit in London and later with Grierson in Ottawa before accepting the new post in Australia.

The key films produced by the Film Division in this period were *Native Earth* (John Heyer, 1946), *Journey of a Nation* (John Heyer, 1947), *School in the Mail-Box* (Stanley Hawes, 1947), *Born in the Sun* (John Heyer, 1947), *The Cane Cutters* (Hugh McInnes, 1948), *The Valley Is Ours* (John E. Seyer, 1948), *Goldtown* (R. Maslyn Williams, 1949), *Mike and Stefani* (R. Maslyn Williams, 1951), and *Outback Patrol* (Lee Robinson, 1952). All of the films of this period were very much in the GPO Film Unit mold, but featured mobile and fluid camera work (influenced by the successful Cinesound and Movietone Newsreels) and a keen sense of a plastic landscape molded by heat and time to very different forms and vistas than the familiar European models. Cities might look much alike the world over but the documentary filmmakers of this period were concerned, in line with nationalist literary movements, to express the difference of the Australian landscape and its unique challenges. Thus, *School in a Mail-Box* (1947) dealt with the unique outback correspondence school systems developed to serve far-flung rural communities and the ouevre of the filmmakers taken as a collective expressed a coherent vision of Australia as a country where highly urbanised cities clung to the rim of a harsh and unrelenting (the favourite adjectives of voice-over) inland.

The outstanding filmmaker of this period was to be John Heyer, whose best work was with the ANFB and whose most iconic and successful work was *Back of Beyond* (Shell, 1954), a lyrical film about the overland delivery run of the mail and provisions truck driver, shot entirely on location often in the most difficult circumstances—a decision rewarded with some of the finest location cinematography of the period and an outstanding film dealing with a vanished outback world that still has resonance today.

The aims and styles of the ANFB production slate changed little throughout the 1950s and 1960s, The 1964 film, *From the Tropics to the Snow,* however, dealt in a self-reflexive way with the efforts of a team of ANFB producers to showcase Australia's tourist attraction. It provided a humorous insight into the production system and it introduced many of the key figures of the postwar period. The film is now considered an essential research aid for any film historian rather than a great piece of documentary work, indicating an institution more interested in self-perpetuation than breaking new ground—or the rules.

Public Broadcasting and Documentary Practice

The national broadcaster ABC (Australian Broadcasting Commission to 1983, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation thereafter) provided both the training and the showcase for more innovative documentary practice from the introduction of television in 1956.

The tradition of Australia's Public Broadcaster as major producer of documentaries, inherited from the BBC in the early 1960s, continues today in diminished form. In the 1960s, outstanding documentary filmmakers like director Bill Fitzwater (*Boom Radio*, 1967) and Geoff Barnes (until recently head of Documentary at the ABC) all shot their early films with the national broadcaster. Oscar-winning cinematographers Dean Semmler (*Dances with Wolves*) and John Seale (*The English Patient*) both trained as news and documentary cameramen) at the ABC.

The best work of salaried ABC directors and crew was often to be seen in cinema-verite documentary series such as *Chequerboard* (1968–1972). Other series that used documentary techniques and often tackled major subjects were *A Big Country* (1968 and continuing) and *Four Corners* (1961 and continuing), based on the BBC Panorama series, which on occasion continues with its one-hour format to produce and break major investigative stories, beginning with a controversial feature documentary on the Returned Services League (RSL) in 1963 and continuing to disturb the status quo to this day. As a documentary forum, *Four Corners* has consistently produced programmes that have effected more social and political change than any comparable series in the media history of the nation.

Outside the Public Broadcasters: Independent Documentary and Dramatised Documentary

Today, the market and creative development systems are now dominated by a near monopoly on larger budget film funding by the (Australian) Film Finance Corporation. Some documentaries continue to be produced by both the ABC and the multicultural broadcaster, SBS, under various banners (*The View from Here*, ABC) through the late 1990s, and some fine documentaries are still being produced in-house—notably and most regularly, the short weekly documentary series *Australian Story* (1996 and continuing).

Former ABC producers such as Jenny Brockie continue to contribute personal evocations of the Australian (mainly suburban) zeitgeist with series like *Our Street* (2000–2001). Here, personal style and involvement painted a striking series of portraits of Australia in cinema verite style, focusing on lives as far apart as those of the middle class in the larger coastal cities to the wilder eccentricities of hot and coastal Darwin.

The most influential free-to-air filmmakers of the period work outside the main channels as freelancers and include the writer Ian David, whose research and obsession led to the making of two dramatised documentaries of great influence, politically as well as aesthetically. The first was *Police State* (Chris Noonan, 1989), which mixed transcripts and newsclips to project a detailed and powerful vision of Queensland as a police state under the long surviving rightist government of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. David writes dramatised documentary films that stylistically and thematically have much in common with Errol Morris's *Thin Blue Line* (1988) in their handling of suppressed materials and silenced witnesses. *Blue Murder* (Michael Jenkins, 1995) moved from a collagist approach to a more dramatised and character-driven style, documenting corruption within the New South Wales police force that had major legal repercussions and was partly responsible for the establishment of a Royal Commission. Few writers, however, have been as influential as David, and his writer-director (auteurist) mode of work remains the norm as well as the most likely to be funded under the rubric of "director's vision" obsessively employed by all the major bodies (both Federal and State).

SBS and its independent production arm, SBSi, have also become key players in factual film production from experimental and arts programming to documentaries commissioned to reflect the multicultural remit of the channel. Arguably the most successful and important initiatives from SBS came with a season of documentaries on aboriginal dispossession (*Unfinished Business*, 2000) from which grew the outstanding films *Stolen Generations* by Tom Zubrycki and Sally Browning and *Cry From the Heart* (Jeni Kendall). Both films examined the disastrous effects of the policies of forced removal of aboriginal children that had been the subject of a national inquiry (published as *Bringing Them Home,* released in 1997. These and similar films on Aboriginality and cultural identity have been produced and screened by SBS at a steady rate and seem set to continue as a core activity for the broadcaster as long as it survives under its current charter.

The Independent Sector Up to the Present

The most consistently interesting and provocative documentary makers of the last two decades have been those filmmakers who engaged with the margins of political and social themes.

David Bradbury's documentary ouevre has proved paradigmatic of many Australian filmmakers' fascination with international political trouble spots and the exotic. Works echoed the much earlier work of Frank Hurley and Damien Parer and the more recent outstanding work of front-line war zone cinematographers like Neil Davis, who was himself the subject of a film by Bradbury.

"Keep the camera rolling, no matter what" was Neil Davis's motto, and in 1985 he literally filmed his own death. Bradbury's powerful tribute, *Frontline*, was an account of the Vietnam War as seen through the camera of Neil Davis and is a fine recor, full of astonishing action footage of a life lived on the edge—Davis's own death and legend echoing Damien Parer's death while filming in a war zone forty years before. The more political films of Bradbury include *Public Enemy Number One* (1980), an examination of controversial Australian journalist Wilfred Burchett who chose to report from the "other side" in the Vietnam War and whose unorthodox views and activities caused him to be labeled a traitor by many. Burchett was the first Western journalist to report on the devastating aftereffects of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Nicaragua—No Pasaran (Bradbury, 1984) tracks from 1978 the postrevolutionary Sandinista movement and the past, present, and future of this small Central American nation—another strongly personal portrait of a brutal military dictatorship made during a three-month visit to Chile. The footage reveals a country torn with civil strife and political unrest; military intimidation of the population, and indiscriminate arrests, murder, torture, and disappearances. Bradbury's personal involvement in his subjects and his sharp sense of irony are nowhere more apparent than in the opening scenes showing a wealthy right-wing couple in their Santiago mansion pontificating uninterrupted on the excellence of Augusto Pinochet's attitude to and actions against dissenters (especially young students). Bradbury often narrates his own work, diary style, and his work overall has a spare quality that makes overt political comment unnecessary. *South of the Border* (1988) examines how the political and economic struggle in Central America is expressed through the music of the people south of the U.S. border. Recently, Bradbury has turned to more local Australian themes with films such as *State of Shock* (1989), which deals with a notorious court case involving the dispossessed semi-tribal aborigines.

Tom Zubrycki is widely respected as one of Australia's leading documentary filmmakers. He has worked consistently over the last decades as director of a series of films with strong social and political themes. *Waterloo* (1981), *Kemira: A Diary of a Strike* (1984), and *Friends and Enemies* (1987) were all shot in an offhand style.The subjects were allowed free expressive rein and thus remained valuable documents of Australian union and class struggle in confrontations in what were primarily heavy industry and inner-urban settings. *Lord of the Bush* (1989), *Amongst Equals* (1990), *Homelands* (1993), and *Billal* (1996) continued Zubrycki's role as diarist of social upheaval and issues-based filmmaking. Later he was to become equally influential as a producer of equally edgy films ranging from the migrant experience, as relived through the filmmaker's return to a war-shattered former Yugoslavia in *Exile in Sarajevo* (1997) (International Emmy 1998) as well as more quirky local subjects like *Dr Jazz* (1998), and social documents such as *Whiteys Like Us* (1999) and *Stolen Generations* (2000).

Arguably Zubrycki's own most "international" film was also his most internationally successful: *The Diplomat* (2000) follows East Timor's freedom fighter and Nobel Peace Prize winner José Ramos Horta in the final tumultuous year of his campaign to secure independence for his country. This feature-length film takes up Ramos Horta's story in the final dramatic stages of his long journey—the fall of Indonesia's President Suharto, the referendum to determine East Timor's future, the overwhelming vote for independence, the devastating carnage that ensued, the intervention of United Nations peacekeepers, and Ramos Horta's final triumphant return to his homeland.

Dennis O'Rourke, the most internationally recognised of recent Australian independent documentary filmmakers, for example, began his career with two films dealing with the early days of Papua New Guinea (Niugini) independence: *Yumi Yet* (1976) and *Ileksen* (1978), featuring striking handheld cinematography by Dick Marks. The films are distinguished by unusual access to key figures of power, such as the first Prime Minister of Niugini, Michael Somare.

O'Rourke had now attracted international funding as well as critical acclaim. His next film, *Yap . . . How Did You Know We'd Like TV?* (1980), dealt with the total corruption of local Solomon Islands' culture by a wholesale bombardment of American daily television (flown in daily from Los Angeles). The film revealed a sardonic streak in O'Rourke's later projects that became a recognisable trait in all his work as he has moved into edgier territories with *The Shark Callers Of Kontu* (1982), *Couldn't Be Fairer* (1984), and the fine *Half Life: A Parable for the Nuclear Ag*e (1985), which established O'Rourke as a world filmmaker whose filmmaking and sociological interests were now outrunning the Pacific Rim.

Nevertheless, O'Rourke returned to Niugini with *Cannibal Tours* (1988), a witty examination of European tourists juxtaposed with the "authentic" lives of the Niuginians held up for their entertainment.

With (again government funded) *The Good Woman of Bangkok* (1991) O'Rourke became the centre of an international controversy as the film documented his relationship with a Thai prostitute, Aoi. The resulting outcries circled the globe through every means, both at academic conferences and at professional associations, and raised issues of gender, sexism, third-world politique, and exploitation.

O'Rourke's work continues to provoke and attract audiences and his film *Cunnamulla* (2000) played to a wide art house audience in Australia and has garnered interest and acclaim internationally. Although it deals for the first time with O'Rourke's own very personal '"backyard"—the people who live in the fast-failing outback town of Cunnamulla—the film, with all the irony and quiet savagery, is O'Rourke's best work.

Bob Connolly was another filmmaker to have developed his skills at the ABC (1964–1978), first as a foreign correspondent and later as a documentary filmmaker. He and Robin Anderson (as cameraman-director and sound recorder, respectively) worked from a base of strict social observation and deep research, using on location a remarkable degree of ability to relax and literally live with their filmic subjects. Anderson also had worked at the ABC, as a researcher, and both he and Connolly left to begin work as independent filmmakers with the masterful interweaving of themes of colonialism and kinship with *First Contact* (1983). The film was an anthropological study of the impact of the pioneering Leahy brothers in New Guinea Highlands in the 1930s, leading to a consideration of both the cultural impact of their visit and the effects produced on Old Joe Leahy's scarcely acknowledged son, Joe, the child of a liaison with a tribal woman. This subject and associated themes developed further in three years of filming that produced *Joe Leahy's Neighbours* (1989) and the richly ironic and ultimately tragicomic *Black Harvest* (1992). These films, like the earlier parts of the trilogy, won many international and local awards and enjoyed successful cinema releases, setting a pattern that has now become quite common for at least two or three major documentaries a year—creating an broad audience where none had really existed outside the academy since the 1950s. Anderson and Connolly have become the exemplars of the nonpurist anthropological style that has helped raise both public appreciation and, in association with independent cinema owners, much broader cinema screenings and good box office returns for most of their films in the commercial film market. Their success has also interacted with that of other equally accessible filmmakers' works, notably those of Dennis O'Rourke, in being able to guarantee good audiences by strength of reputation alone.

Rats in the Ranks (1996) was also the product of Connolly and Anderson's ability to win the trust of their subjects. This film, also running for a long season in cinemas before becoming a best-selling video, deals with the machinations and power struggles in an inner-city municipal council led by a Machiavellian mayor who will do anything to stay in power. The extraordinary access to all parties to the back-room death struggles leading up to an internal party schism and the next election are as powerful and revealing as Pennebaker and Hegedus' *War Room* (1992) (which, along with *Rats in the Ranks*, makes a perfect Australian political primer).

Equally successful and also the result of nearly a year of filming is *Facing the Music* (2001), another multiple award winner that also penetrated the independent cinema market, indicating that Connolly and Anderson now had a steady following and a "brand name" among audiences. Shot inside Sydney University's Music Department and focusing on the travails of Department Head Professor Anne Boyd (herself also a noted Australian composer), this film actually treads deeper waters of unconscious irony than even the filmmakers may have realised. Their portrait of a threatened university department reveals a group of apparently self-serving academics—and, in one shocking scene, a young woman composer is both verbally and artistically assaulted by a

teacher. However, the positioning of the film seems to be on the side of the "threatened" teachers. What are perceived by the filmmakers as the strengths of the focus of the film, the professor and the role of the Music Department, are never interrogated.

The subsequent selling of the film by the filmmakers as unproblematic suggests that Australian documentary or its audiences are not necessarily possessed of a wide range of analytical or comparative tools. If shot and screened in Europe, for example, this film might well have been pitched as a satire on academic self-absorption and the dysfunctional approach taken by so many teachers working in "creative" departments to their very raison d'etre, the hapless students. For these reasons, of course, *Facing the Music* is the most tantalising and intriguing work yet from Australia's leading cinema verité team.

Few documentaries have dealt in detail with the supposed Australian national obsessions of sport and drink. Remarkably, only one major documentary has penetrated the mystique of a sporting club, but Michael Cordell's *The Year of the Dogs* (1997) manages to sum up an Australian ambivalence to sporting heroes with cinema vérité filming and a laconic and undercutting editorial style. As with the work of Connolly and Anderson and Dennis O'Rourke's later projects, *Year of the Dogs* proved a success at cinemas. Audiences were composed in roughly equal parts of sports enthusiasts and those in search of the more complex pleasures of the well-made cinema vérité film in a society where subjects are often surprisingly candid and articulate about their obsessions.

Although the supposed wry self-deprecating defining characteristics of Australians are not always in evidence in documentary (feature films have appropriated that territory), two film have become small national treasures by stressing the darker aspects of living in contemporary Australia: David Caesar's *Bodywork* (1989) and Mark Lewis's *Cane Toads* (1987).

Bodywork is a cool and subtle gaze at the undertaking profession and Australian attitudes to death and what follows, shot in a Candide-like (wide angles) shooting style. The international success of the film is in part due to Caesar's great directorial control over the carefully composed "look" of the film. Caesar uses the interviewees as dramatis personae and often interviews two or more at a time to increase the sardonic effect. This documentary, still very influential as a model for film students of the full possibilities of the carefully constructed documentary, led Caesar directly into a career as a maker of sharp and satirical feature films.

Cane Toads, too, was a success and won numerous awards. It took a bleak view of the disastrous attempts of overly optimistic scientists to solve ecological problems. The film is aobout the introduction in the 1930s of the Bufo Marinus (Cane Toad) to Queensland (in semi-tropical northern Australia) to control small insects annoying the crops. Toads multiply and then assume a horrific and unending advance from the northern Australia slowly throughout the nation. Bleak, yet very funny, *Cane Toads* remains influential and indicates a road down which Australian documentary may profitably stray.

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See also ***Cane Toads*; *Good Woman of Bangkok*; Heyer, John; O'Rourke, Dennis; Zubrycki, Tom**

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AUSTRIA

The Origins: 1895 to 1918

In the summer of 1895, a moving pictures machine was installed for the first time in Prater, an amusement quarter that continues to exist in Vienna today. Five machines were placed in a "Kinetoscope Hall," where documentary pictures from American Thomas Alva Edison and his assistants were exhibited (Fritz, 1980). The Viennese Prater was one of the first sites of the Habsburg monarchy Austria–Hungary, where moving pictures were projected; also, Prater was a popular film location during the beginnings of film history. On March 26, 1896, Eugene Dupont, collaborator of the firm Lumiere, organized the first public performance in Austria: Documentary films about Vienna were shown in the building located at Kaertnerstrasse 45 (later in the contiguous building number 39). The work of Charles Moisson, principal operator of Lumiere, was presented there. In the exhibition programme were the films *Feuerwehr-Centrale am Hof*, *Kaertnerstrasse Le Ring,* and *Freudenau, Sattelraum nach dem Pisek-Rennen*. Pictures of Prater—such as *Der Volksprater, Der Prater,* and *Die Hauptalle (Main Avenue)*—were among the scenes that Alexander Promio and his assistant and interpreter Alexander Werschinger were shooting in Vienna on behalf of Lumiere in mid-April 1896. These pictures belong to the earliest examples of Austrian cinematography. The company Pathe Freres's produced in 1908 two documentary films: *Blumenkorso in Mai (Flower Parade in May*) and *In der Prater Hauptallee (In Prater's Main Avenue)* (Buettner/Dewald, 2002: p. 22).

Pioneer documentary films, which have been referred in this way only since 1926, joined images together without tying them into a story. Different film types, such as newsreels, scientific films, and educational and cultural films, were later developed from this technique. At the beginning, the camera viewer played the role of a passive observer; afterwards, the camera viewer was converted into a tourist or researcher (Büettner and Dewald, 2003). The camera reflected the world exactly like it was: The Viennese places filmed between 1896 and 1910 by Lumiere, Pathe, and other directors staged representation rooms for the Viennese bourgeoisie. The Opera House, the "Ring," the "Trabrennplatz," and the "Burgmusik" staged theatrical rooms in the film *Wien um 1908 (Vienna around 1908)* (director: Pathe Freres) within the frame of related patterns between time and behavior. The early documentary film showed principally the large city and the bulk as admiring spectacles in themselves. In this sense, in the film presented in 1896 by Lumiere (Kaerntnerstrasse 45) *Verkehr bei dem Cinematographen (Traffic by the Cinematographer)*, the spectators convert themselves into their own performers. "Open to the public" is an understood political institutional kind of openness that serves only to create a specific audience (around 1900, only 4 percent of the inhabitants were elective). The early (documentary) film created a carefully selected image of the city and therefore did not show only a sensory real picture in which the spectacle is based. At the turn of the century these early film pioneers were followed by other filmmakers who produced "scientific films." As examples we can cite the ethnologist Rudolf Poech and the Viennese teacher Alto Arche. The first attempts took place from 1904 to 1908. The beginnings of the "racial research" in Austria are associated with the ethnographic film pioneer, the Viennese doctor, and the anthropologist Rudolf Poech (1870–1921). The central themes of Poech's first film about the so-called *Buschmaenner der Kalahari (Kalahari Bushmen*), which was produced between 1908 and 1909, were technical aspects of specific works, such as culling and trampling on grass and bulbs, fabricating ropes, and/or sparking off a fire. The external characteristics of the people created by Poech's camera categorized him as a specific "people classificator."

In 1909, the first Austrian full-length documentary film was shown as an independent film in Viennese movie theaters: *Die Kaisermanoever in Maehren (The King's Maneuver in Moravia)*. The film *Se, Majestaet Kaiser Franz Josef I auf der Gemsjagd (Majesty Kaiser Franz Josef I at the Gem Hunt)* was shown in the Viennese Prater in the cinematographic exhibition "International Hunt Exhibition Vienna 1910" (Pathe Freres,

August 1909). Besides feature films, film pioneers such as the couple Kolm (*Der Faschingzug in Ober-St. Veit, Der Trauerzug Sr. Exzellenz des Buergermeisters Dr. Karl Jueger) [(The Carnival Train at Ober St. Veit, The Funeral Procession Sr. Exzellenz of Mayor Dr. Karl Jueger),* 1910], regularly produced documentary films. In 1910, Graf Alexander "Sascha" Kolowrat—he later founded the *Sascha Film*—also began with the production of documentary films *(Die Gewinnung des Erzes am steirischen Erzberg in Eisenerz) (Ore Extraction at the Ore Mountain in the Iron Ore, 1912)*. Hans Theyer shot cultural films about glassblowers, painters, and carpenters; his works lead to the creation of the "Central Office for Scientific and Educational Cinematography."

This function of the documentary film had also been used to give pictures another conscious meaning, which was deliberately created, particularly during war time. In August 1914, the war department commissioned film producers *Sascha-Filmfabrik, Wiener Kunstfilmindustrie-Gesellschaft,* and *Oesterreichisch-ungarische Kinoindustrie-Gesellschaft,* the production of war film propaganda based on war archives. The first serial of the *Kriegs-Journal (War Journal)* produced by *Wiener Kunstfilm* appeared in September. At the end of 1914, *Sascha-Film* in cooperation with *Philipp und Pressburger* and the *Oesterreichisch-Ungarischen Kinoindustrie-Gesellschaft* presented a war newsreel titled *Oesterreichischer Kino-Wochenbericht vom noerdlichen und suedlichen Kriegsschauplatz (Austrian Weekly Report from Northern and Southern War Theater)*. Until 1918, field cinema was limited to showing the world of upstate images. Front-line experiences could not find a visual expression any more.

In 1918, *UFA* started the production of documentaries in Berlin with a popular scientific content. This concept was imitated in Austria by Kurt Koefinger in his tourist films of the 1920s and later in the controlled propaganda documentary films of the *Wien-Film* (1938–1945). The newsreels had combined characteristics of newscast and chronicle documentaries in its theme mixture of politics, sports, and culture, which actually were sometimes presented in Newsreel-Cinemas (since 1936 as nonstop cinemas in Vienna and also in Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck). The Viennese documentary film was presented as a "war journal" for the first time in 1914, followed in 1930 to 1933 by *Sascha-Messter-Wochenschau (The Newsreel of Sascha Messter),* an international newsreel production based on the Austrian "Selenophon" technique (*Selenophon* together with *Gustav-Mayer-Film* produced a newsreel from 1930 to 1932) and from 1934 to 1938 by *Oesterreich in Bild und Ton (Austria in Vision and Sound)*.

Austro-Fascism / Third Reich: 1933–1945

In 1927, cameraman Rudi Mayer shot a three-piece documentation about the burning of the palace of justice in Vienna. The 10-minute documentary titled *Die Schreckenstage in Wien (The Horror Time in Vienna)* shows objectiveness: The destruction of a national institution is in the foreground, and the film compares the national values (order, security) with the crowd's bestiality (disorder, chaos).

On a traumatically staged world picture, the burning of the palace of justice represents a sign of imminent danger of civil war and collapse of the government's power and control. Since the historic event of 1927, the documentary practices and stylistics were invaded by Austro-Fascism propaganda concepts, which eventually became the rigorous standardized type of newsreels and documentary films (Achenbach and Moser, 2002). Since then, documentary films had to be systematically concerned on increasing the credibility and authenticity of the government's image. Just three weeks after the parliaments release, the Dollfuss-Regime deliberated on a central organization for film propaganda. One of the most important productions of this propaganda machinery was the Austro-Fascistic newsreel *Oesterreich in Bild und Ton (OEBUT) (Austria in Vision and Sound)*. It was created by the initiative of the federal chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss and produced between June 1933 and March 1938 by the *Vaterlaendischen Tonfilmgesellschaft* of the enterprise *Selenophon Licht- und Tonfilm Ltd.* OEBUT worked principally on the establishment of the authoritarian regime's legitimacy. To spread catholic values, reinforce the Austrian identity, and counteract the annexation to the German Reich were among the principal objectives of OEBUT.

Beginning in November 1934, all movie theaters had to show in their preliminary programs a "cultural movie." These were sometimes art and nature documentaries but very often they were also propaganda movies about racial doctrine, political parties, and military matters. The newsreel became the most important propaganda instrument during war time and its screening became mandatory every night at every showing of a movie. The center point of these educational and advertising short films was always Austria—its cultural, scientific, and political autonomy, together with its tradition and historical legacy.

Marshall Plan Movie and "Documentary Films": 1945–1965

During the first two decades of the postwar period, documentary productions were characterized principally by the creation of cultural and propaganda films that were produced either for the Wiener ECA-Mission (Economic Cooperation Administration, the local office for the distribution and translation of the European Recovery Program [ERP], better known as the Marshall plan) or for important cultural performances (screen adaptation of operas and theater plays).

The *Oesterreichische Produktivitaetszentrum* (OEPZ) *(Austrian Center for Productivity),* founded in spring of 1950, is a direct outcome of the American reconstruction program. The OEPZ's section "film office" was established in 1951 by the initiative of the U.S. administration in line with the "technical assistance" to effectively disseminate the pedagogy of the "productive managing and working" among the Austrian population. The "Marshall Films," distributed by the OEPZ, promulgated a capitalistic Europe befriended with America (Reichert, 2000: p. 83).

The Information Officer of the European film unit commissioned diverse documentary filmmakers to produce regional documentary films aimed at building consensus on specific local and regional needs. Austrian Georg Tressler, film officer of the ECA-Mission, was one of the most relevant documentary film producers of that time (Buchschwenter, 2003). The films *Gute Ernte (Good Crop,* 1950), *Hansl und die 200,000 Kuechen (Hansl and the 200,000 Kitchens,* 1952), *Traudls neuer Gemuesegarten (Traudls new Vegetable Garden,* 1952), *Ertagreicher Kartoffelanbau (Fruitful Potato Cultivation,* 1952, exhibited in the Documentary Film Festival in Venice), *Wie die Jungen Sungen (How the Boys Sung,* 1954), and *Rund um die Milchwirtschaft (Around the Dairy Farming,* 1954) followed the same objectives as the Marshall plan films from Tressler. These films focused on educating the public about techniques of effective management, promoting the identification with the concept "productivity improvement," and propagating the extension of the U.S. economic aid to broader population spheres.

An antique pedagogical film type of the so-called cultural films dominated until the 1960s. This type of film is still produced today, mainly for government-commissioned TV productions, such as tourism promotional films and Austrian historical reportages. These films were dependent on subsidies because they were not commercially viable. About 680 cultural films were produced during the period from 1945 to 1961. Most of them fell more into line with the style of the National Socialist (NS) cultural films than with the artistic evolution of the international documentary films. Tourism promotion was the principal motivation for regional and federal supporters. In this sense, Hans Pebahl produced the popular documentary film *Und neues Leben blueht aus den Ruinen (And New Life Blooms of the Ruins)* in 1953. In this film, like in other postwar films, the reconstruction of the old cultural monuments was overvalued. This overvaluation was based on a restorative cultural meaning, which simultaneously devalued the contemporary culture. In award-winning films such as *Wege in die Zukunft (Roads to the Future,* 1959, director: Erich Pochlatko) and *Die andere Seite (The Other Side,* 1958, director: Bruno Loetsch), a pathetic voice-over commented nice pictures that ritualized the NS suppression.

In 1955, prizes for documentary films were awarded for the first time. The films were divided into two categories: The first category was comprised of those films that were a baring representation of existing subjects; the second category consisted of the documentary films that went beyond the central theme, looking for a creative, imaginary, or artistic interpretation (Reichert, 2000: p. 84). Most of the movie theaters had to close at the beginning of the 1960s because of their low demand caused by the introduction of the television's "culture for the masses." Also, the documentary films experienced a decline in the market. Due to the overvaluation of civic education based on the projection of cultural images, the National Funding Policy for Documentary Productions was dedicated exclusively to the screen adaptation (in studio) of diverse performances presented in the Viennese Burg Theater between 1955 and 1965.

The New Documentary Film

At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s there was little structure for the production and commercialization of independent documentary films in Austria. Since the 1970s a tendency to produce films called "New Documentary Films" was identified, but they have had only a marginal importance in the film evolution. Most of these films were produced in personal studios of individuals who financed the productions with their own money produced from work in another job field (Bluemlinger, 1986). In this way Michael Pilz, who worked for three years on his five-hour

film essay, *Himmel un Erde (Sky and Earth,* 1979–1982), and lived one year of that time with the miners whom he filmed, could perform a project of this kind only as an independent producer. The controversial film *Bonjour Capitaliste* (1982) from Werner Grusch, which deals with the colonizing of white tourists in Black Africa, was also financed with private resources.

The Film Advisory Board of the Board of Education, founded in the 1970s, could implement a policy for the promotion of documentary films only until the creation of the *Oesterreichischen Filmfoerderungsfonds (Austrian Film Promotion Fund;* OEFF). The cultural film thereby faded into the background. In the early 1970s, Ferry Radax, who was involved with documentary film production since the 1950s, created some outstanding artist portrayals. After a great effort, he achieved the outstanding formal depiction of the painter *Hundertwasser* (1965), for which he was awarded with the Austrian State Prize [other films*: Konrad Bayer*, 1969; *Thomas Bernhard*, 1970; *Ludwig Wittgenstein*, 1975; and *Japan oder die Suche nach dem verlorenen Reis (Japan or the Search for the Lost Rice,* 1981/1982)].

At the end of the 1970s, the Filmladen (film store) and the Medienwerkstatt (medium workshop) were founded and a longer-term structure for independent documentary film and video work could be finally be created. Ruth Beckermann was cofounder of the rental-business "film store," which was founded in 1977 with the appropriate structure for commercialization and public distribution of documentary films beyond the Austrian television. During the beginning of the rental-business "film stores," a serial of so-called "Flugblattfilme" (flight sheet films) about sociopolitical and work-political themes came into existence. In this sense, the film from Josek Aichholzer and Ruth Beckermann, *Auf amol a Streik (On Amol a Strike,* 1978), expounded the problems of a more than three-week strike in Semperit in Traiskirchen. The film was presented on numerous union meetings and was enthusiastically accepted. The fight for the former Viennese slaughterhouse Sankt Marx was documented in 1977 by "Video Group Arena" in the film *Arena besetzt (Arena Occupied)*. The same year began the collective work *Wier kommen wieder (We Come Back)* from *Syndikat der Filschaffenden* about the Austrian movement against atomic power plants. From many *Medienwerkstatt (Media Workshop)* productions emerged important experimental and sociopolitical video work. From 1983 to 1984, Niki List filmed—without any public financial support—on 16mm/SW *Mama Lustig,* a sociocritical documentary about the daily life of a disabled young person, which caused a sensation all along Austria because of its wiggled scenes.

The films from Margarethe Heinrichs called "solidarity films" were devoted to the real production conditions in the revolutionary Latin American countries, unlike the ethnographic-oriented films about Black Africa from director Grusch. The 16mm film *Traum des Sandino (Sandino's Dream,* 1981) and the television reportage *No Pasaran (They Won't Get Through,* 1984), both subsidized by the government, describe without any formal experiments the alphabetization campaign in Nicaragua and the exploitation conditions in the so-called third world. The development of new documentary films has a connection with sociopolitical tendencies—essentially in the "Neue Linken" environment. They were involved with daily life, the world of workers, and emancipated projects. The primordial objective for the film organization for documentary productions was that the values of socially and politically segregated people, which were already faded out by the mass media, became visible.

Historical Archaeology into the Present Context

In the 1980s, the infrastructure of political groups (Peace Movement, Third World, Anti-Nuclear Power, Anti-Racism) and the search for opposing ideas gradually extinguished. Since then, a new trend in content and form emerged: an orientation toward contemporary issues, but also toward ordinary life and subjective themes. Since the early 1980s, the Austrian film has practiced historical archaeology, which was so meaningful that this film category revived and the past started to open up for the present (Beckermann and Blüemlinger, 1996). *"Wien Retour—Franz West 1924–34"* (1983) is the first Austrian documentary film to deal with contemporary history. The film *Erzschmerz (Ore Pain,* 1983), produced by Bernhard Frankfurter on behalf of ORF, tried for the first time to expose the long repressing time of fascism through some miners' experiences.

Axel Corti, motivated by the taboos of the historical development during the NS-Time, produced films such as *Die Verweigerung (The Refusal,* 1971), *Der Fall Jaegerstaetter (Fighter's Fall,* 1972), and *An uns glaubt Gott nicht mehr (God Does Not Believe in Us Any More,* 1985) with documentary film elements. Some techniques were the lighted blade, which provides the spectator with information about date and place; newsreel material insertions, which gave the film

a realistic note; and the use of black and white, which provided a more authentic reference. This mixture of fiction and reality may serve to remind the audience that that time was real and it did exist not only in films. In the 1980s, other documentary producers besides the remarkable precursor Corti, such as Josef Aichholzer, Ruth Beckermann, Karin Berger, Karin Brandauer, Eduard Erne, Bernhard Frankfurter, Andreas Gruber, Johanna Heer, Margareta Heinrich, Egon Humer, Wilma Kiener, Dieter Matzka, and Werner Schmiedel, undertook a memorial documentary work that the Austrian feature film was not capable of accomplishing because of melodramatic fictionalization. In 1997, Ruth Beckermann received the prize of the Bibliotheques at the Festival Cinema du Reel in Paris for the documentary film *Jenseits des Krieges (Beyond War,* 1996), which became very popular in the so-called Armed Forces Exhibition.

In the film produced by the multimedia performer Andre Heller and the documentary producer Othmar Schmiederer, *Im toten Winkel (On the Dead Angle,* 2002), the 81-year-old Traudl Junge narrates the time when she was working as private secretary of Adolf Hitler. In February, in the Berlin Film Festival 2002, ''On the Dead Angle'' was presented with great acceptance of the media and distinguished with the ''Audience Prize.''

In the 1980s, the ''oral history'' projects, which relied on the presence of speaking-time-witnesses and on the authenticity of the in-the-camera-speaking effect, became more popular within the documentary field. Angela Summereder used a radically different semidocumentary technique for relating a historical court case. The male discourse about jurisdiction was staged in the film *Zechmeister (Carousing Master,* 1981). The film does not reconstruct a ''case'' per se, but does recreate the history of a patriarchal law dominated by male representatives. The film *Zur Lage (To the Circumstance,* 2002), filmed by four directors (Barbara Albert, Michael Glawogger, Ulrich Seidl, and Michael Sturminger), is an ethnological study about the conservative and reactionary thinking that emerged in Austria after the change of government.

The Globalization of Documentaries

Numerous documentary productions of the last decade led filmmakers out of the country: *Megacities* (1998) from Michael Glawogger was the most successful Austrian documentary of the 1990s. Glawogger links his observations to portrayals of individual inhabitants in this film, which was shot in four ''mega cities'': Bombay, New York, Mexico City, and Moscow. *Megacities* is a documentary film that presents wigged images and refuses any statement that relates the social condition of individual persons with complex structures.

One of the most successful contemporary documentaries is *Hundstage (Dog Days,* 2002) produced in Austria by Ulrich Seidl. *Dog Days* consists of five independent stories of Viennese suburbs that had been arranged and interwoven together. It is a feature film that cleverly makes use of the documentary style of reality TV. *Dog Days* was awarded in the Vienna Film Festival with the ''Grand Prize of the Jury.'' Ulrich Seidl became famous because of his provocative documentaries in which he had exposed the unpleasant side of the Austrian soul. In his second film, *Der Ball (The Prom,* 1982), he staged the preparation of a high school's prom and thereby exposes the class conceit, smugness, narrow-mindedness, and prudish behavior of a town. In *Good News* (1990), he documents the living conditions of foreign newspaper salesmen. *Die letzten Maenner (The Last Men,* 1994) is a TV drama about men who have no self-confidence who look in a catalog for a Thai woman for themselves. In *Tierische Liebe (Animal Love,* 1995) Seidl senses the intimate relations of Austrian domestic-animal owners with their pets, and *Models* (1999)—a documentary film with wiggled scenes—tells of the daily degradation of a photo model's life.

In the last decade, films from Nikolaus Geyrhalter have found a significant cinema audience. The film *Pripyat* (1999), awarded with numerous international prizes, narrates the survival in the dead man's zone at the former atomic power plant Tschernobyl, evacuated in 1986. *Elsewhere* (2000), Geyrhalter's Opus Magnum, is a time protocol of the year 2000. Twelve 20-minute episodes, one for every month of year 2000, filmed at a remote, supposedly untouched, place of the globe, raises the consciousness that there could not be a single place on earth that is really unaffected by the tragedy. ''Phantom rides'' is the name that was given to those films (roller coaster travels, railway journeys) that created a subjective experience by installing the camera onto a moving object. Martin Bruch created in his film *Handbikemovie* (2003) a phantom ride of special kind: the audience sits to a certain extent on the tricycle handbikes, on which the film producer, diseased of multiple sclerosis, moves himself.

It can be concluded that the sensibility for symbolic images and the interest on different political cultures were developed during the second half of the 1970s, when the ''newer'' documentary film, which displaced the antiquated ''cultural film'' of

the 1950s and 1960s, make his appearance. Since the 1980s, contra-cultural references to established cultures and societies have been gradually expanded. During the last decade, a clear rejection to subjective-essayistic documentary productions was developed. In this sense, in the era of medium format reality TV, the Austrian documentary film production was characterized by the need of visualizing "reality."

RAMON REICHERT

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND DOCUMENTARY

From its beginnings, the documentary enterprise has been largely understood and practiced as a means of knowing the material, social world. From the earliest days of filmmaking, when the Lumière brothers sent cameramen worldwide, documentary has been associated with ethnography and empire. So, too, has documentary been considered a means of providing visible evidence of social injustice, and a powerful tool of national propaganda. Although the Lumière records of family domesticity made routine life public, few families had access to moving picture technology in the early twentieth century, and far more rare was any means of public distribution or exhibition of "home movies." As the century progressed, documentary's links to journalism, social science, and government deepened and, consequently, exploration of personal subjectivity was considered anathema to the documentary enterprise. Thus, curiosity about private or psychological worlds (outside of narrative film) found expression in experimental or avant-garde filmmaking.

As 16mm independent filmmaking developed in the late 1940s and into the 1950s in the United States, émigrés Maya Deren and Jonas Mekas and American Stan Brakhage merged formal experimentation and subjectivity in a cinema of personal revelation. The individual—and often idiosyncratic—filmmaker became subject matter. Her or his inner life—revealed by dreams, released by ritual, and universalized by myth—became the site of interest (Dyer, 1990). These independently produced films, exhibited publicly but narrowly, marked an important shift from traditional documentary impulses to create a hybrid cinema that combined documentation with creative interpretation (for example, Mekas's diaries and Brakhage's films of lovemaking and his children's births and growth). This experimental urge to explore subjectivity continues as a potent influence for contemporary film and video artists. Simultaneously, in the postwar years, making home movies, as a hobby, became an economic and technical possibility for many middle-class families (Zimmerman, 1995). Using amateur gauges and shown only in domestic environments, home movies of the 1950s and beyond would become important aesthetic and topical influences as well as rich archival sources

for autobiographical documentaries made by professional filmmakers.

A conflation of technical and social changes—the introduction of lightweight, relatively inexpensive 16mm equipment; a distrust of all things official; the burgeoning Women's Movement; and a heightened interest in the political dimensions of personal life in the late 1960s and early 1970s—led to a surge in autobiographical filmmaking, especially in the United States. One strain of autobiography employed direct cinema methods to create motion picture diaries that emphasized the immediacy, intensity, and unpredictability of experience—the mantra of direct cinema—but with one crucial difference: The typical self-effacement of the direct cinema practitioner was replaced by a focus on the filmmaker whose life became the film's subject. Thus, a potent configuration that was neither pure direct cinema nor journalistic cinema vérité was shaped from two dominant documentary styles of the period. Jim McBride's seminal, darkly comic *David Holzman's Diary* (1967) simultaneously introduced and satirized the form in a pseudo-documentary that has become a template for the possibilities and excesses of autobiographical documentary (and included in the [U.S.] National Film Registry). Callow, self-absorbed, by turns bullying and insecure, Holzman (as played by L. M. Kit Carson) is the quintessential film student who lives for filming and, consequently, has nothing in his life worth filming. He violates his girlfriend's privacy and bores his friends, but, amazingly, he did not destroy a willingness in other filmmakers to continue the format. Both the diary form and McBride's entanglements in sexual politics were embraced earnestly in Edward Pincus's multiyear exploration of open marriage and family life in *Diaries* (1971–1976), and comically in Ross McElwee's nervous journey to the American South in *Sherman's March: A Meditation on the Possibilities of Romantic Love in the South during an Era of Nuclear Weapon Proliferation* (1986). Pincus was drawn to autobiographical production (as many others have been) through interest in philosophy, phenomenology, and politics. His diary films have been influential in their exploration of the concept of "presence"; in their investigation of the interactive consequences of filming; and in their recognition of subjectivity as the great problem of film (Lane, 2002).

However, the diary form—shooting everyday events for a sustained period of time and the construction of a subsequent narrative in chronological order—has not been the dominant autobiographical documentary style. More commonly, autodocumentaries combine observational footage with interviews and archival materials to create life stories situated historically, often organized achronologically, usually with a voice-over narration by the filmmaker, and frequently bound by the parameters of family life. By the mid-1970s, the proliferation of film schools and the inauguration of feminist production and exhibition networks increased opportunities for women filmmakers. This situation produced a concomitant increase in autobiographical productions that centered on the complexities of intergenerational relationships among women. Joyce Chopra's *Joyce at 34* (1973), Amalie R. Rothschild's *Nana, Mom and Me* (1974), Michelle Citron's (partially) faux autobiographical *Daughter Rite* (1978), and Chantal Ackerman's *News from Home* (1991) all interrogate the complex, tenuous bonds between mothers and daughters, which were undergoing special strain during a historical moment when many Western women were resisting the values and expectations that had driven their mothers' lives.

Feminist critics have noted that patterns of openness and dialogic engagement characterize women's autobiographical production (Lesage, 1999). Intensified by the Lacanian turn in feminist film theory, autodocumentaries made by both women and men (who were often either part of academe or strongly influenced by it) demonstrated a heightened interest in the consequences of patriarchy and frequently saw childhood trauma as a defining autobiographical moment. Unsatisfactory relationships with fathers saturate autodocumentary. Maxi Cohen's *Joe and Maxi* (1978), Abraham Ravett's *Everything's for You* (1989), Su Friedrich's *Sink or Swim* (1990), and Marco Williams's *In Search of Our Fathers* (1992) are but a cluster from a far larger pool of films that confront the primal father-child bond and its lasting effects on the adult child.

Ethical issues of consent, an abiding problem in all documentary production, are repositioned, rather than avoided, in autobiographical productions that center on often volatile and fragile family relations (Katz and Katz, 1988). Some autodocumentaries, such as Alan Berliner's *Nobody's Business* (1996), are built around a family member's resistance to participation in the construction of a family portrait. In contrast to Oscar Berliner's pugnacious contempt for his son's project (albeit a disdain that never erases the old man's affection for his son), many autodocumentaries include a minor complaint, or a slight hesitation, or a look

of discomfort that is fleetingly included amid a general appearance of cooperation, leaving the viewer puzzled as to how strident off-camera resistance or edited objections from family members might have been.

Incentives toward self-inscription were numerous in the 1980s. Memoirs flooded the book market, confessional talk shows filled the airwaves, and autobiography seemed ubiquitous. A new expression, identity politics, gained currency. Some of the spurs toward self-representation were long in coming and well deserved. Widespread and sustained critiques challenged the assumptions and presumptions of traditional ethnographic work and fostered the growth of a documentary subgenre newly labeled autoethnography, in which members of (often maligned or ignored) cultures and subcultures took control of the politics of representation to produce work that investigated the cultural through the personal, and vice-versa. Individuals whose identities were partially constituted through membership in groups that had been disenfranchised by earlier documentary work—people of color, gays and lesbians, members of the working class, the chronically or terminally ill and their families—embraced autoethnography. Productions that joined the specificity of personal history with broader cultural concerns resulted in a vibrant, oxymoronic form: the collective autobiography. These collective autobiographies, or autoethnographies, were bolstered by targeted federal support in many nations in the West and made available to large audiences through new venues for exhibition (for example, the *P.O.V.* series on U.S. public television and specialized film and video festivals, such as gay and lesbian festivals, worldwide). Rea Tajiri (*History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige,* 1991), Marlon Riggs (*Tongues Untied*, 1989), Tony Bubba (*Lighting over Braddock,* 1988), Derek Jarman (*The Last of England*, 1987; *The Garden*, 1990; and *Blue*, 1993), Deborah Hoffman (*Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*, 1994) and scores of other producer/directors created provocative work that situated the individual within a decidedly cultural (and often historical) context.

By the mid-1980s, some documentary critics and producers considered reflexivity not only a stylistic choice, but an ethical imperative. Although all autobiographical production is by definition reflexive (that is, self-conscious), if not reflective (regarding its processes of construction) (Ruby, 1988), a strain of autobiographical documentary is particularly focused on its own construction process. Such is the case with *Silverlake Life: The View from Here* (1993), the poignant journal Tom Joslin made of his life, and death, which a former student and friend completed after both Joslin and his partner died of AIDS. Autodocumentaries structured as personal accounts of the difficulties a filmmaker faces in completing a project range tonally to work that is wry, intensely engaged with political struggle, and deeply sorrowful (for example, Jill Godmilow's *Far From Poland* [1987] and Elia Suleiman's *Chronicle of a Disappearance* [*Segell Ikhifa*, 1997]) to pieces that are light and comical (such as Renos Haralambidi's *No Budget Story,* 1997).

In the last decades of the twentieth century, both literary and cinematic autobiography was greatly influenced by western European postmodern theory. Many film and videomakers working in autobiographical registers challenged the concept of the unified self as autodocumentary became a means, and a method, for recognizing the construction of identity and for confronting the paradox of reality fiction at the core of all documentary production.

As confidence in realism diminished (arguably more for filmmakers than for their audiences), a performative turn permeated many types of documentary production, blurring boundaries between fiction and nonfiction. A growing number of producers of autodocumentary visualized their dreams, nightmares, and fantasies through nonrealist techniques such as animation, stylized performance, and theatrical set design, continuing to pursue goals established a half century earlier by experimental artists. Camille Billops and James Hatch's *Finding Christa* (1991) and Kidlat Tahimik's *Why Is Yellow the Middle of the Rainbow* (1981–1993) turn to expressive means to explore subjectivity, while still retaining many traditional documentary features. Tracey Moffat's stylized *Night Cries: A Rural Tragedy,* (1989), although informed by the filmmaker's autobiography, crosses an increasingly indeterminate line between performative autodocumentary and experimental psychodrama.

Autodocumentaries that explore the director's sexuality or gender identity frequently approach documentation of sexual activity through striking experimental methods that feature imagery of the filmmaker's body (and often the body of his or her partner[s]) as physical presence(s), but also attempt to visualize the phenomenology of erotic life. Carolee Schneemann's *Fuses* (1964–1967) remains a memorable example of this tendency that is continued in Barbara Hammer's *Women I Love* (1976) and Mindy Farber's *The Man Within Me* (1995).

Perennial documentary concerns of authenticity and credibility are both diffused and intensified

with autodocumentaries. Since subjects are usually not public figures, there are few reference points outside the autodocumentary text; trust between filmmaker and spectator is (relatively) automatic (until or unless disrupted). The fiction of *David Holzman's Diary* demonstrates how easily that trust can be exploited and violated. Counterfeit images in autodocumentaries are sometimes announced mid-film, as when Ruth Ozeki Lounsbury notifies viewers of *Halving the Bones* (1995) that she has "faked" archival family footage. Far more often reenactments or misappropriations are acknowledged in ending credits, as in Marlon Fuentes's *Bontoc Eulogy* (1995), which begs questions of authenticity in the tension between historical specificity (about Fuentes's actual grandfather) and cultural truth (about the display and mistreatment of Filipino men as World Fair exhibits).

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, production of autodocumentaries had proliferated worldwide, partly through the accessibility of increasingly inexpensive equipment and the global possibilities of Internet distribution systems. Imaginative young artists like Sadie Benning proved that even the most low-tech equipment (the short-lived pixel vision camera) could, in the right hands, be used to produce compelling, original (and in Benning's case, influential) autodocumentary. Easily operated equipment makes the production of video diaries feasible for amateurs. As digital production and distribution technologies expand, so, too, will the number and the variety of autobiographical documentaries.

CAROLYN ANDERSON

See also **Ackerman, Chantal; Berliner, Alan; Brakhage, Stan; Deren, Maya; Domestic Documentary; *Finding Christa*; Godmilow, Jill; Guzzetti, Alfred; *History and Memory*; Interviews; McElwee, Ross; Mocumentary; Moffatt,Tracey; *Nana, Mom, and Me*; Pincus, Edward; Reflexivity; Riggs, Marlon; Video Diaries**

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Avant-garde film. *See* **Modernism: Avant-garde and Experimental Early Silent European Documentary**

B

BACK OF BEYOND, THE

(John Heyer, 1954)

One of the most successful documentary films ever made in Australia, *The Back of Beyond,* was also one of the most significant productions of the Shell Film Unit during the 1950s. A dramatized documentary in the tradition of *Night Mail* and *Fires Were Started*, it won critical acclaim at international film festivals and was the most widely seen Australian film of the era, due to extensive nontheatrical distribution at home and overseas.

The Back of Beyond was produced, written, and directed by Tasmanian-born John Heyer, who had left the Australian National Film Board in 1948 to lead the newly formed Australian Shell Film Unit. Given a brief to make a "prestige" documentary that would capture the essence of the country, he undertook an extended three-month trip into the Outback, traveling through the Central Australian desert before returning to Sydney to prepare a detailed shooting script with the assistance of his wife, Janet, and writer Roland Robinson. Narration and dialogues were written in collaboration with the poet and playwright Douglas Stewart.

The Back of Beyond follows mailman Tom Kruse along the 300 miles of the Birdsville Track between Marree, South Australia, and Birdsville, in southwest Queensland. His two-week journey in a 1936 Leyland truck takes him across hazardous terrain to deliver the post and supplies to remote outposts, crossing sand dunes, flooded creeks, and featureless plains. Dramatized scenes with locals playing themselves alternate with fictional reenactments, such as the story of two girls losing their way in the desert following the death of their mother on an isolated farm. The narration alternates between the commentary, spoken by Kevin Brennan and a chorus of voices—the mailman, women chatting on two-way radio, and an aboriginal man reflecting on the abandoned Lutheran mission where he grew up—and the Birdsville policeman's laconic diary entry. The poetic, multilayered quality of the sound track is matched by the music of John Kay and complemented by the strong picture composition of cinematographer Ross Wood.

The Outback, the ostensible subject of *The Back of Beyond*, is seen in both a realistic and romanticized light. Beyond the obvious themes of

The Back of Beyond, 1954.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

communication (the mail run) and the battle against the elements, the film touches on some of the complexities of Australian identity, including not only indigenous people but also characters such as one of the very last Afghan camel-drivers in Marree. Heyer has a touch for comedy, a feel for evocative locations, and an eye for surreal details and recurring leitmotifs. Although some elements, such as the dubbed dialogues, might now seem somewhat wooden, the achievement of the film is the subtle interweaving of disparate story elements into a satisfying whole. Regarded as a minor classic of the genre, it was awarded the Grand Prix at the 1954 Venice Film Festival before being screened across Australia in theatrettes, town halls, schools, and traveling vans.

JOHN BURGAN

Back of Beyond (Australia, Shell Film Unit, 1954, 66 mins.). Distributed by National Film and Sound Archive, Australia. Produced and directed by John Heyer. Script by John Heyer, Janet Heyer and Roland Robinson. Cinematography by Ross Wood. Music by Sydney John Kay. Editing by John Heyer. Sound by Mervyn Murphy and John Heath. Commentary and dialogues by Douglas Stewart and John Heyer. Narrated by Kevin Brennan. Cast: Tom Kruse, William Buttler, Jack the Dogger, Old Joe the Rainmaker, the Oldfields of Ettadina, Bejah, Malcolm Arkaringa, the people of the Birdsville Track. Filmed on the Birdsville Track between Marree, South Australia, and Birdsville, Queensland.

See also **Documentary Film: Australia; Heyer, John**

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BALÁZS, BÉLA

Béla Balázs—a European intellectual who wore the hats of poet, librettist, critic, scenarist, teacher, and filmmaker—is best known as a film theorist and one of the most important early champions of the art of film. Hungarian by birth, Balázs also lived and worked in Austria and the former Soviet Union. At times he faced opposition, having been castigated for his supposedly idealistic and bourgeois artistic principles in Stalinist Russia and persecuted for unclear reasons in his home country after World War II (Zsuffa, 1987, p. 324). His reputation today as a formalist classical film theorist is secure, although overshadowed by the monumental figures of Sergei Eisenstein and André Bazin. With certain key exceptions, many of Balázs' claims, though no doubt innovative in their historical context, are accepted as common knowledge today in introductions to the art and techniques of film. Balázs' work on the documentary, however, is insightful and prescient, prefiguring many contemporary debates about the subject.

Balázs' first books of film theory—*Der sichtbare Mensch* (*The Visible Man,* 1924) and *Der Geist des Films* (*The Spirit of the Film,* 1930)—were originally published in German and have not been translated into English. In 1947, he completed *Filmkultúra*, later translated into English and published as *Theory of Film: Character and Growth of a New Art*. This book, which incorporates segments of the earlier two works, introduced Balázs to the English-speaking world. Like other classical film theorists, Balázs took it upon himself to promote the art of film and direct it in ways he thought properly cinematic. The prescriptive elements of Balázs' more moderate theory, however, seem temperate when compared with those of Kracauer and Bazin, in part because Balázs had both formalist and realist tendencies.

Since it developed in an industrial, mechanical age, the first impulse of the art of film, Balázs writes, will be to provide "photographic theater"; film must resist such tendencies and develop its own language, "a totally different film language" (p. 31), rooted in cinematography (variations in scale, distance, angle, perspective, and focus) and montage, including the representation of scenes as constructed from discrete shots. Balázs embraced an expression theory of film (similar to the later auteur theory), by which a film is seen as the expression of the intentions and/or personality of the filmmaker. Cinematography and montage are the cinematic tools of the filmmaker, and her or his chief means of expression. Much of *Theory of Film* is devoted to a description of the uses of various filmic techniques for such expression.

Balázs also thought that the art of film would allow for a new human sensibility, new perceptive and cognitive skills, and changes in visual culture. This occurs mainly because film encourages a unique form of "identification." Balázs promotes what might be called the "Invisible Observer Hypothesis," which holds that the film transports the spectator into "the film picture itself." In part this melds the spectator's eye and consciousness "with the characters in the film," and the spectator's "eyes are in the camera and become identical with the gaze of the characters." In this, Balázs writes, "the film manifests its absolute artistic novelty" (p. 48). Today some would argue that such views of identification are inaccurate and lead to an underestimation of the independent agency of the spectator. Nonetheless, Balázs' description of identification anticipates that of Christian Metz (on primary and secondary identification) and other apparatus theorists.

Although Balázs is regarded as a formalist for his theory of filmic expression, he also strongly believed in the power of the cinema to reveal reality, thereby altering human perception. Like the later media theorists Marshall McLuhan and Harold Adams Innis, Balázs argued that changes in communications media would lead to altered human consciousness. Balázs held that film, as the dominant popular medium of the century, would have an effect as great as that of the printing press centuries earlier. He championed the close-up as generating "a tender human attitude in the contemplation of hidden things, a delicate solicitude, a gentle bending over the intimacies of life-in-the-miniature, a warm sensibility" (p. 56). In a passage taken from his earlier *Der sichtbare Mensch*, Balázs writes that due to its ability to reveal microphysiognomy (faces and gestures in minute detail), film can communicate emotion more incisively than any other medium. This language of gestures and faces, which he calls "the aboriginal mother-tongue of the human race" (p. 42), not only projects but also creates emotion in the spectator (p. 44).

Balázs' discussion of the nonfiction film shows the problems of categorization so common to treatments of the topic. He discusses the nonfiction film in relation to an odd lot of subcategories: the travel film, the instructional film "with a hero," "epics of labor," "news films," nature films, and so on. All are species of "films of reality," and so can be treated as various kinds of documentary. Balázs' expressionism extends to the documentary in his contention that every film, even one that depicts reality, has an intention, and is consciously or unconsciously an expression of the filmmaker. Thus, Balázs rejects from the outset the idea that the documentary is or can be a mere imitation or recording of visible reality, or a wholly objective account of factual reality. Whether a documentary should be seen as expressing a filmmaker's intention is no doubt a contentious claim; in any case, Balázs clearly sees that the documentary is a rhetorical construct. His observation that the travel film is "a curious transitional art form . . . which lies between a mere recording of reality and the interpreting intentions of a film director" (p. 162) could be applied to many types of documentary film.

For Balázs, the art of the travel film lies not in "invention" but in "discovery" (p. 160). Out of "the immense jungle of experienced reality the artist must find what is most characteristic, most interesting, most plastic and expressive and brings out most vividly" her or his "ideological intention," whether that intention be conscious or unconscious. A travel film never functions as a mere objective record of a journey. Whoever undertakes a journey with the idea of writing or making a film about it must "already have a preconception of his experiences" (p. 162). But a key point for Balázs is the contention that the absence of objectivity does not compromise the ethical requirement that the truth be told (or shown). Indeed, for Balázs, interpretation of reality and the revelation of the truth are not mutually exclusive but dependent. He writes, "Out of the empirical fog of reality the truth—that is, the law and meaning of reality—may emerge through the interpretation of a seeing and experiencing maker" who uses "every means of expression available to the art of the film" (p. 162). Thus, the documentary is a created, rhetorical construct by which the filmmaker interprets the world, and ideally reveals something true about it and in the process about himself or herself.

Balázs' suspicion of objectivity in nonfiction films is most visible in his treatment of the "news film," or newsreel. Newsreels, he writes, seem to be "an innocent form of pictorial reporting," but are in fact "the most dangerous instruments of propaganda," designed to further the interests of the "power groups who pay for them" (p. 165). Their rhetoric implies that they are "objective and authentic photographic records," when in fact they "lie" (p. 165). Newsreels would be instructive and interesting only if we were to view two such films in succession, made by mutually hostile interests. We would then see "no similarity at all, although they purport to show the same things" (p. 165). For Balázs, the individual shot is "mere reality," and it is only montage that gives film propositional value, and the possibility of making true and false claims. Those who make the newsreels have an "immense responsibility," for the convincing power of film lies in the fact that the spectator accepts the moving photograph "as fact, a presentation of conclusive proof," and by implication tends to underestimate the power of shot choice and montage in making meaning (p. 166). Here, Balázs presages many current discussions of documentary, in their concern with the rhetoric of authenticity and objectivity, together with the seductive power of the photographic image, the evidential status of which many spectators are prone to overestimate. This also seemingly contradicts, however, his earlier discussions of the means by which individual shots, due to framing, angle, and so on, are expressive of ideas and attitudes and are not mere recordings or "mere reality."

Balázs is enthusiastic about the work of Dziga Vertov, in part because the films of the *Ciné-Eye*, as Balázs describes them, do not pretend to objectivity. In these films the filmmaker uses the close-up to "peep with his camera at the little events of our workaday lives" (p. 164). These shots are entirely subjective, and the films have no "hero," except the unifying personality of the filmmaker, whose "subjective feeling" determines the choice of material, and becomes the "constructive principle on which the film is built" (p. 165). Such films "will form the most significant, the richest, the most filmic art form of that lyrical film-poetry which is yet to be born" (p. 165).

The relationship of the documentary to reality gives the documentary its peculiar character. In reference to the war film, Balázs writes that representing reality through film is unique in that during the film's production, the events being filmed are still in the making. The filmmaker "does not dip into his memory and recall what has happened—he is present at the happening itself and participates in it" (pp. 170–171). It is this "tangible being-present," Balázs writes, "that gives the documentary the peculiar tension no other art can produce" (p. 171), a tension that is perhaps maximized in representations of extreme events such as war or natural disaster.

Theory of Film was published in 1950, so it is not surprising that this relationship to reality of which

Balázs speaks does not preclude the legitimacy of staging. The staging of events for the camera, common to the films of Flaherty, Humphrey Jennings, the Grierson school, and many others, apparently did not seem to be inherently deceptive or manipulative for either audiences or critics until the rise of cinéma verité some years later. Of Merian Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack's *Chang* (1927), for example, Balázs writes that the film contains not a single "invented" scene, but that "every scene is directed" (p. 163). Balázs recognizes that the film makes heavy use of staged scenes and acting on the part of its participants, but he does not find this to compromise its documentary authenticity, arguing that "reality is shown more convincingly by such acting" (p. 163).

Balázs' anthropocentrism surfaces when he clearly favors documentary films "with a hero," by which he means a central human figure around whom the drama or information coheres. The example he gives is Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), in which Nanook is often the locus of action. It is this central figure, he writes, "who gives meaning and functional life to that reality" depicted in the film, making the representation more vivid, more interesting, and "often more true" (p. 163). The realities of nature, he writes, "are given their deepest meaning for man if presented as a social experience" (p. 163). Even the experience of solitude, he says, fundamentally depends on one's experience of its opposite.

In his writing about problems of objectivity, the microphysiognomy of the close-up, the subjectivity of documentary filmmaking, and the relationship of the documentary to reality and the resulting influence on the spectator, Balázs prefigured many of the debates about the documentary that continue to this day. His theory deserves more attention than it has so far received.

CARL R. PLANTINGA

Biography

Born Szeged, Hungary, August 4, 1884, as Herbert Bauer. Composed the libretti for two works by Bartók, 1911 and 1914 to 1916. Forced into exile in 1919 for communist activity. Worked as scenarist and director in Austria and Germany, from 1919 to 1932. Wrote the scenario for Pabst's *Dreigroschenoper* (*Threepenny Opera,* 1931) among other films, and co-directed (with Leni Riefenstahl) *Das blaue Licht* (*The Blue Light,* 1932). After Hilter's rise to power, he left for Russia, where he lived from 1933 to 1945, teaching at the State Film Institute in Moscow. Returned to Hungary in 1945. Taught film art in various Eastern European countries. Died in Prague, Czechoslovakia, May 17, 1949.

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BALCON, MICHAEL

Michael Balcon was an eminent British film producer from the 1920s through the 1960s. He made a significant contribution to a viable national film industry and, especially at Ealing Studios, oversaw a body of films that projected an influential image of national character and identity.

After World War I, Balcon entered film distribution with his boyhood friend Victor Saville, but he quickly moved on to production in the industrial film sector, completing two titles in 1921 for the Anglo-American Oil Company: *Liquid Sunshine* and *The Story of Oil*. At a decidedly unpropitious time for British film production, Balcon and Saville, in partnership with director Graham Cutts, entered into commercial feature production, making a success of the risky *Woman to Woman* (1923), featuring the American star Betty Compson. Within a short time Balcon had formed the production company Gainsborough Pictures and was producing at Islington Studios.

Balcon established himself as a leading producer relatively quickly, working successfully with star Ivor Novello, and raising the young Alfred Hitchcock to director, most notably on the critical hit *The Lodger* (1926). Balcon contributed greatly to the revival of the British film industry as studio head at Gaumont-British (G-B), which he joined in 1931, and commenced with a commercial program of comedies, thrillers, and historical romances. Balcon's support of Robert Flaherty's romantic documentary *Man of Aran* (1934) was quite out of character and, though referred to at the time as "Balcon's Folly," the film was a modest commercial success. In contrast to his G-B years, he experienced a far more frustrating period as head of production of MGM British, where he served from 1936 to 1938 and completed only a single film, *A Yank at Oxford* (1937). Balcon's most celebrated period began in 1938 when he was appointed head of production at the small Ealing Studios. For two decades he oversaw a modest program of commercial features that made a distinguished contribution to the national wartime cinema and further served Balcon's declared postwar aim of national projection through film. This was achieved in heroic reconstructions such as *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948), literary adaptations such as *Nicholas Nickleby* (1947), and more subtly in the acclaimed Ealing comedies. Production ceased at the company in 1958 and Balcon assumed the role of Elder Statesman to the British cinema industry, serving in a variety of advisory and producer roles to the film and television sectors.

Factual cinema was of minor interest to Michael Balcon, but his conception of a distinctive and viable national cinema was tied to an aesthetic of realism where documentary style informed dramatic fiction. For him, native simplicity and sincerity were the hallmarks of an authentic British cinema, and while only fleetingly in evidence in the Gainsborough and Gaumont periods, as in the candid treatment of workers' leisure in *Hindle Wakes* (1931), they become the ethos of production at Ealing. Here, filmmaking was documentary in approach, and often tied to narratives that did not shy from social issues, tentatively emerging in the boxing drama *There Ain't No Justice* (1939) and the depression tale *The Proud Valley* (1940).

The studio's recruitment of Alberto Cavalcanti and Harry Watt from the documentary movement intensified the trend toward realism and veracity. Actual events underpinned *The Foreman Went to France* (1942) and *San Demetrio London* (1943), while Watt's lean and sparse *Nine Men* (1943), characteristically using some nonprofessional actors among its carefully articulated regional types, was a sober alternative to wartime flag-waving propaganda. Location shooting became a common approach at Ealing and contributed greatly to the films' respectable surface. The POW drama *The Captive Heart* (1946) was partly shot in a recently liberated camp in Germany; London streets and landmarks were an integral element to the thrillers *The Blue Lamp* (1950) and *Pool of London* (1951) as well as to the melodrama *It Always Rains on Sunday* (1947); and the cycle of Empire films, notably Watt's *The Overlanders* (1946) and *Where No Vultures Fly* (1951), provided some authentic locales. Even the celebrated comedies were construed to play within actual settings: *Hue and Cry* (1947) and *Passport to Pimlico* (1949) made effective use of London's postwar landscape, while Alexander Mackendrick took the crew on demanding location jaunts for his Celtic tales *Whiskey Galore!* (1949) and *The Maggie* (1954). The penultimate Ealing film, Seth Holt's *Nowhere to Go* (1958), maintained the tradition of superficial realism and was one of the first features to be influenced by the Free Cinema documentary movement.

After Ealing, Balcon's creative influence was limited, but as chairman of both Bryanston and the British Film Institute Experimental Film Fund, he was involved with the new generation of Free Cinema filmmakers, kitchen-sink realists, and such maverick talents as Ken Russell, Peter Watkins, and Kevin Brownlow, who forged very individual paths in documentary.

ALAN BURTON

See also **Cavalcanti, Alberto; Flaherty, Robert; *Man of Aran*; Watt, Harry**

Biography

Born in Birmingham in 1896. Educated at George Dixon's Grammar School, worked briefly in the jewelry trade and completed his war work at the Dunlop Rubber Company. Entered the field of film sales after the war, but quickly transferred to film production, forming the Gainsborough Company with Victor Saville in 1924. Later head of production at Gaumont-British from 1931 to 1936; MGM (British) from 1936 to 1938; and Ealing Studios from 1938 to 1958. Knighted in 1948. Founding member of Bryanston Films, Chairman of British Lion from 1964 to 1968 and the British Film Institute's Experimental Film Fund from 1951 to 1972, and a director of Border Television. He retired in 1972 and died at Hartfield, Sussex, on October 16, 1977.

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BALDI GIAN VITTORIO

See ***Adolescents, The***

BANG CARLSEN, JON

Best known for his radical approach to the staging of documentaries, Jon Bang Carlsen has played a prominent role on the Danish film scene since about 1980, and remains one of Denmark's most innovative documentarists, with a number of feature films behind him as well.

Bang Carlsen's documentaries often focus on the daily lives and rituals of people whom viewers would consider either ordinary or marginal. Often living outside his native Denmark, Carlsen is drawn to other cultures and landscapes, and a number of his documentaries were shot in other countries—in the United States (*Hotel of the Stars* [1981] and *Phoenix Bird* [1986]), Germany (*Ich bin auch ein Berliner* [1990]*)*, Ireland (*It's Now or Never* [1996], *My Irish Diary* [1996], and *How to Invent Reality* [1997]), and South Africa (*Addicted to Solitude* [1999], *My African Diary* [2000], and *Portrait of God* [2001]). Each of his films forcefully evokes a sense of place as an integral part of its storytelling, and Carlsen often uses long takes, dwelling on faces and settings as part of a highly controlled visual style.

Carlsen's unconventional views on the staging of documentaries date from the very start of his career and were given their fullest expression in his film-essay *How to Invent Reality* in which he outlines his method and explains its underlying logic. Casting as his actors people who essentially play themselves on screen, but speak the lines he has written for them to say, Carlsen deliberately blurs the boundaries between documentary and fiction, uninhibitedly transforming the data other documentarists might prefer to record unchanged. He argues: "I don't want to be a hostage to life's coincidences in my work. I allow myself to rearrange reality in order to express the inner life of my characters" (*How to Invent Reality*, 1997). But these transformations are not gratuitous: The lines of dialogue he writes are tailor-made to suit the people speaking them, so that their words come across as natural and unrehearsed expressions of their own experience. And at the same time, this staging of reality is an act whereby the filmmaker becomes a part of—and illuminates—what he films. As Carlsen puts it, "My films are not the truth. They are how I sense the world. Nothing more" (*How to Invent Reality*, 1997).

In some cases, the viewer is entirely unaware of the degree to which the action has been staged and the dialogue written by the director. This is true, for example, of *Before the Guests Arrive* (1986), in which a woman who runs a small seaside hotel and her one employee are shown preparing the place for the approaching season. The viewer has every reason to believe that the two women are spontaneously expressing their own thoughts during their dialogue. On the other hand, with *It's Now or Never,* about an aging Irish bachelor who is searching for a bride, the observant viewer will notice the rapidly changing

camera positions and realize that the action must have been carefully orchestrated as a series of shots, just as if the film were a work of pure fiction.

In Jon Bang Carlsen's own words:

> Whether you work with fiction or documentaries, you're telling stories because that is the only way we can approach the world: to fantasize about this mutual stage of ours as it reinvents itself in the sphere between the actual physical world and the way your soul reflects it back onto the world. For me documentaries are no more real than fiction films and fiction films no more invented than documentaries.
>
> (*p.o.v.* article, 2003)

His most recent works depart somewhat from the staged documentaries in that his interviewees do in fact tell their own stories—for example, inmates in a South African prison describe how they imagine God in *Portrait of God* (2001). But the director is just as present here as in his earlier works, in that he tells of his own life in a voice-over, speaking in the first person:

> When I was a boy I often lay for hours staring up into the summer sky for a hole into heaven or a lazy angel daydreaming on a cloud who'd forgotten old God's strict orders never to be seen by us people from down on this earth.
>
> In middle age my search for God had taken me all the way to southern Africa, but his trail was as fleeting as the banks of mist that rolled in from the Atlantic to mist up my windowpane as I tried to create a portrait of a person, who might only be a rumour.

In one way or another in all of Jon Bang Carlsen's work, the subjective experience of the filmmaker is deliberately made a central part of the film, and the director's own doubts and ongoing, tentative explorations are as much the subject of the documentary as are the people whose stories unfold before the camera.

RICHARD RASKIN

Biography

Born September 28, 1950, in Vedbæk, Denmark. Worked in theater, then entered the National Film School of Denmark, from which he graduated in 1976. Published books of essays and poetry and has lectured extensively at film schools and universities throughout Europe. Won numerous national and international awards for his films. Lives in both Denmark and Ireland with his wife and four children.

Selected Films

1979 *A Rich Man*
1981 *Hotel of the Stars*
1984 *The Phoenix Bird*
1986 *Before the Guests Arrive*
1990 Ich bin auch ein Berliner
1996 *It's Now or Never*
1997 *How to Invent Reality*
1999 *Addicted to Solitude*
2001 *Portrait of God*
2002 *Zuma the Puma*
2004 *Confessions of an Old Teddy*
forthcoming *Landscapes and Remembrances*

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BARCLAY, BARRY

Barry Barclay established his unique place in the history of New Zealand culture during 1973 to 1974, when a six-part documentary series called *Tangata Whenua* aired on New Zealand television. Since then he has enhanced his significance with completion of the first feature film directed by a Maori male (*Ngati*, 1987), a book on issues associated with indigenous representation (*Our Own Image*, 1990), social activism (resulting in increased New Zealand on-air funding for Maori-produced

and targeted film material for local broadcast television), and *The Feathers of Peace* (2000), a mixture of documentary and drama that carries local history studies into controversial terrain.

What unites Barclay's filmmaking, writing, and activism is his respect for community and his advocacy for the integrity of indigenous communities. Early in his career he began working for John O'Shea's Pacific Films, a breeding ground for filmmakers inclined toward an independent point of view. Along with the trade films and television commercials that were Pacific Films' primary source of income, Barclay made documentaries and feature films with O'Shea's backing from the 1970s until *Te Rua* (1991), when the director and the producer had a falling out. With the appearance of *The Feathers of Peace*, Barclay's public profile has again increased; out of the limelight, he has also been involved in further efforts supporting Maori training and filmmaking.

Despite funding and policy obstacles, Barclay has creatively developed filming strategies designed to accommodate cultural sensitivities. Chief among these has been a set of practices designed to make documentary subjects feel comfortable throughout the filming process, from the extensive use of lenses to keep cameras as far as possible away from subjects while they are speaking, to the synching of sound and image via the clapperboard at the end, rather than the beginning, of takes. He also argues that the Western medium can accommodate indigenous narrative strategies. Taking *Ngati* as an example, he speaks of its emphasis on the community rather than the individual, with a narrative structure that avoids single heroic figures in favor of group interaction. From *Te Rua*, he cites moments involving Maori oral practice and traditions that would be clear to an audience familiar with them, but which could not be read in the same way by most non-Maori audiences. In the docudrama *The Feathers of Peace*, using text from legal testimony of the day as well as other historical documents, he gives nineteenth-century characters the opportunity to speak, following the example of marae practice.

For Barclay, the heart of a movie is its metaphor; until he has his metaphor, he says, the film cannot be made. Simultaneous with making the *Tangata Whenua* series, Barclay was a member of Nga Tamatoa, a group of young Maori organized around undermining social institutions that prevented *Tino Rangatiratanga* (self-determination) at every level. Although Barclay is modest about the extent of his involvement in a left-wing group that critiqued the television establishment that allowed Barclay to make his films, Barclay agreed with Nga Tamatoa's ideological premises. He was among the earliest members of Te Manu Aute, a group that, like Nga Tamatoa, focused on media control.

Our Own Image, the most important published statement of his philosophy so far, is in part a gift to Native Americans and First Peoples, made after Barclay attended a film festival of indigenous people's work. Among Barclay's most interesting points in this short book is the distinction between "talking in" and "talking out." The latter could refer to an indigenous group trying to speak to a dominant culture, but "talking in" refers to the opportunity for a group within the nondominant culture to speak in its own terms rather than in those of the dominant culture, without regard for whether the dominant culture understands (*Our Own Image,* Barclay, 1991, p. 75).

Not a speaker of Maori himself, Barclay has said that he thinks "a Maori filmmaker is someone Maori who identifies as Maori and is proud to use the camera as a Maori for Maori purposes, at least some of the time," adding that "it's good fun to do other things as well" (Read, 2000–2001, p. 3). To be Maori is to have a strong awareness of the spiritual; to be a filmmaker is to be aware of film's "access to . . . visceral communal icons" (Read, 2000–2001, p. 4).

As Barclay moved away from television toward feature filmmaking, he also turned away from lobbying for political change. In the late 1990s, however, Barclay returned to political activism in a spectacular way. He picketed one of Aotearoa, New Zealand's funding bodies, camping out on the median in the boulevard in front of their office building. His private campaign gained widespread public attention. Barclay himself benefited through funding for *The Feathers of Peace*. At least one Maori filmmaker acknowledges Barclay as a force behind funding and other policy changes that have increased opportunities for Maori filmmaking, along with exhibition possibilities encompassing mainstream audiences.

Throughout his career, Barclay has mentored other filmmakers, particularly young Maori who have trained with him. Along with Merata Mita, he has called for and tutored in workshops to train Maori as well as internships and apprenticeships. Like Mita, he and his work have been well received in Hawaii, and he has used his speaking opportunities there to discuss indigenous filmmaking as he conceives of it. For example, in 2001, he gave a keynote address in which he developed his concept of "indigenous cinema," or "fourth cinema." Unlike "Hollywood, arthouse, and Third World

cinema'' (Read, 2000–2001, p. 1), fourth cinema should be committed to using its viscerally persuasive powers to raise consciousness of ethical issues, particularly through giving indigenous peoples their own voice (Turner, 2002, p. 11).

Barclay has developed and articulated his philosophy regarding the representation of indigenous groups through his own films, in interviews and talks, and in his own published work. He has influenced archival protocol, government funding, and public opinion through his work and action. Barclay's oeuvre is at least as well appreciated overseas as it is in his home country, where he has often raised issues others wish to forget.

HARRIET MARGOLIS

See also **Activist Filmmaking; Aesthetics and Documentary Film: Rhetoric and Documentary; Anthropology and Ethnography: Critical Overview on, and Documentary; Documentary Drama: Australasia/New Zealand; Documentary Film: New Zealand/Oceania; Documentary Film and Globalization; Human Rights and Documentary Film; Interviews; Media Theory and Documentary: Social Responsibility; Race: Critical Overview of, and Documentary; Reconstruction; Sound; Spoken Commentary (Voice of God)**

Biography

Born (1944) in the Wairarapa, an agrarian area near Wellington, New Zealand, of Ngati Apa, Scottish, and French descent. Trained in Australia to be a Roman Catholic priest (1960–1967). After making the *Tangata Whenua* series lived and worked in Sri Lanka, England, France, and the Netherlands, before returning to Aotearoa, New Zealand, and making *Ngati*. Media Peace Award, 2000. ''First Legacy Appreciation Award,'' Hawaii Film Festival, 2001.

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BARNOUW, ERIK

Erik Barnouw was a Netherlands-born, American-raised media scholar and historian. He was also a creator of media, working in many capacities and over a long period of time in the production of both commercial and educational material. With his broad and varied background, Barnouw was able to consistently combine and reconcile the needs and tendencies of production and research, activity and reflection, private and public. As a member of the faculty of Columbia University, Barnouw was instrumental in establishing media studies as an academic discipline. He was also central in disseminating the insights of the academy beyond its boundaries, both through his own extensive, accessible publications, as well as by establishing and serving as the first head of the U.S. Library of Congress's media division.

Barnouw's life and work address documentary film at a number of important and instructive points. His most obvious contribution is the book

Documentary (1974, revised 1983 and 1993), a seminal history of the form, which continues to serve as its ideal introduction. The book was undertaken in part as a response to two prevailing perspectives—essential to a proper rendering of the documentary landscape, but tending to obscure the full view because of their very predominance. These were Western bias (as in Rotha), and an anecdotal or editorial approach to both events and their implication (Jacobs, 1971; Rosenthal, 1971). In preparing his work, Barnouw's approach was to situate the subjective—the practitioners' accounts and the perspectives of power—within a broader context, applying historical methodology and theoretical awareness to the telling of the tale.

Documentary remains exemplary for its combination of clarity and complexity, and for the accessible way it sets forth the multifarious and often contradictory events and issues relating to the nonfiction film. It also manages a more difficult and more affecting reconciliation, which is that it balances scholarly rigor with real generosity. For Barnouw, the documentary, at a basic conceptual and historical level, seeks not only social justice but also, to use the term in a particular sense, charity. With this conviction, Barnouw tempered clear and vigorous criticism with a sympathy that takes into account both inadequacy and accomplishment, good desires along with disappointments.

Barnouw's sympathetic attitude is partly rooted in his experience as a practitioner, and the fact that his production activities (advertising, radio scripts, instructional and educational material, government propaganda, documentary films) far predated his work as a media scholar and historian. A career broadcaster responsible for the definitive history of American broadcasting, and the first president of the International Film (Flaherty) Seminars who became the champion of his documentary associates, Barnouw demonstrated how direct connection with, and descent from the subjects of, study need not compromise that study.

That Barnouw could meld intimacy with effective scholarship had much to do with his disposition, and also with the circumstances in which it operated. Many of film history's most notable artist/scholars (Eisenstein, Vertov/Delluc, Dulac/Grierson) worked in revolutionary or critically unstable contexts, where the avant garde had (at least briefly) official approval, or where experimentation could be fostered. This ground was conducive to the cultivation of firebrands, of temporarily autonomous auteurs with ideas that they wished to emphasize over other alternatives, and the means to carry out those ideas. Here was the kind of partisanship—occasionally even the self-absorption and distortion—that historians are supposed to temper or even counter.

Although Barnouw's most celebrated and significant documentary production is the magisterial *Hiroshima-Nagasaki 1945* (1970), made in collaboration with Akira Iwasaki, the majority of his production work, at least in the first decades of his career, did not reach or even attempt such heights. At first, and for a long time, Barnouw worked as a foot soldier in hierarchical, infrastructural, and/or entrepreneurial settings that did not value or even allow revolutionary innovation. In these settings, Barnouw developed the historian's virtues of patience and perspective. Knowing what it was not only to act, but also to be acted upon, Barnouw managed something that has proved to be very difficult for artists/scholars. He observed and participated in history, developing from the experience an insider's authority while still maintaining the long-range view. Barnouw avoided the temptations of theoretical advocacy. Instead, he pursued a course both more objective and more kindly, laying out theoretical alternatives, and the historical factors that gave rise to, that limited, and that justified them.

Erik Barnouw's critical openness leads to a final point, which is that he made a great contribution to documentary culture by exceeding—or more accurately by extending—the boundaries often imposed upon it. As a survey of the publications reveals, his historical and critical work ranged very widely. He spoke authoritatively about social activity and a number of the arts, as well as of the various media through which their effects were disseminated. In this he accomplished a kind of scholarly horizontal integration, to which he added an unusual, essential, vertical element.

Barnouw was interested in and illuminated the ancestry of current forms and conditions. With his interdisciplinary and chronological range, and his synchronic and diachronic reach, he could expose and clarify connections between diverse times and places. Some of this must be ascribed to the beneficent influence of Barnouw's father, Adriaan, a distinguished linguist, translator, anthologist, scholar, and teacher whose work concentrated primarily on his native Netherlands. Through Adriaan, Erik early understood, among other things, how the documentary idea could be manifest in the didacticism of a medieval morality play, in Dutch and Flemish genre painting, or in the development of vernacular poetry. The result was real, unstrained coherence, notwithstanding

apparent great gulfs in time and discipline and geography.

As a communications scholar, Erik Barnouw labored extensively in a public and popular field, and in its diversity he consistently came back to consider the nonfiction film and the documentary idea. He believed in documentary's leavening powers, and he showed that documentary research and production cannot be separated from educational impulse, nor from citizenly activity and activism. For Barnouw, the documentary was not simply an object of study or an abstraction. Rather, it was a call to citizenship, encouraging and enabling journalists, filmmakers, broadcasters, academics, teachers, and students to extend personal lines into public discourse, and private interest into positive public action.

DEAN DUNCAN

See also **Grierson, John; Rotha, Paul; Vertov, Dziga**

Biography

Born in the Netherlands in 1908. Over the course of his life, worked in advertising, television, and journalism. Also a songwriter, a filmmaker, and a film preservationist. Served on the boards of many media organizations. Joined the faculty of Columbia University in 1946. Organized the Film Division in the School of the Arts. Served as department chair until 1968. Won a Peabody Award for the documentary radio series entitled "Words At War," 1944. Named chairman of the Writers' Guild of America, 1957. Retired in 1973; named professor emeritus of dramatic arts. Died in Vermont, July 19, 2001.

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BASIC TRAINING

(US, Wiseman, 1971)

The first of three films about the United States Armed Forces made by American documentary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman, *Basic Training* documents the standard eight-week training for new army inductees and enlistees at Fort Polk, Kentucky, before being shipped out to Vietnam. The processes of institutional indoctrination and maintenance of power, primary aspects of institutional functioning explored in Wiseman's other films, are emphasized in the film's vision of the military machine. As commanding officer Lt. Hoffman puts it bluntly in his welcoming speech to the men early in the film, "The best way to go through basic training is to do what you're told, as you're told, and there'll be no problems."

In the brief montage sequence that opens the film, the new inductees are immediately stripped of their individuality. The opening shot is of the

men arriving on a bus, from which they walk unhurriedly to the barracks, dressed in a variety of civilian clothes. In the second shot, they are assigned bunks by number; in the third shot, they are measured for uniforms, the tailor calling out measurements. Next come three shots of men having their hair cut short, all the same, a recurrent Wiseman image signifying loss of individuality and absorption into an institutional system. Then there is one quick shot each of fingerprinting, ID photos being taken, and one man, in answer to an interview question, giving his social security number, his identity now only a statistic. At the end of this opening sequence, the men are in uniform, a striking contrast to their varied appearance just a few moments before.

The music in the film further emphasizes the loss of individuality within the larger group. The function of music is established early on in *Basic Training*, when the commanding officer and his entourage smartly march into a room to welcome the trainees accompanied by the musical fanfare of "The Caissons Go Rolling Along." The entire film is punctuated with shots of the men drilling, keeping time to marching tunes. In these shots the camera frequently tilts down to isolate in close-up the legs and feet of the men, showing that no one is allowed to march to the beat of a different drum.

When Lieutenant Hoffman tells a black private that "the Army's not just one man, it's millions of people," and that he must work with the group, he echoes the social message of virtually every classic Hollywood war movie, but with a crucial difference, for while the classic war films depict the compromise of individualism as a noble sacrifice necessary for the war effort, Wiseman views the military as unacceptably dehumanizing. In one particularly striking shot in *Basic Training*, the soldiers march in the foreground as if "beneath" a large American flag waving in the background. Here, Wiseman finds a visual expression of the extent to which the individual is subject to the state—a point ominously reiterated in the image of the soldiers entering a transport plane shot from a position within or under it, the dark, jagged edges of the plane's bay doors suggesting a giant maw about to consume the men.

Basic Training, 1971.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

Basic Training also offers a disturbing view of masculinity in its suggestion that violence is innate in men and easily nurtured by the process of basic military training. The men readily cheer each other on ("Get him from behind," "Hit him in the head") as they fight in pairs. Even after the whistle blows, signaling that the combatants should stop, we see one pair continue on, their potential for violence now fully aroused. In the tooth-brushing scene, several of the men are shown, in effect, foaming at the mouth, and in the scenes of bayonet practice, the men seem reduced to animals, "grunts" abandoning language for screams of violence. Several scenes make the connection between firearms and the phallus. On the firing range, a demonstrator fires his weapon from his crotch, accompanied by a crude joke from the instructing sergeant; and one trainee is visited by his family, who concentrates their attention and conversation on his rifle, "fetishizing" it and investing it with unmistakable phallic implications.

Much screen time is devoted to the hapless Private Hickman, a trainee who has trouble with everything from executing the to-the-rear-march to making his bed. Attempting to learn something as simple as reversing his direction while marching, behind him we see the other men drilling with increasing uniformity and competence. Just as they tend to march in the opposite direction from Hickman within the frame, so the lack of ability by this one individual in the foreground sets him up as a foil to the many in the background, all of whom are quickly becoming professional soldiers. (Their growing proficiency also provides Wiseman with a visual way of "marking time" in the film.)

For Wiseman, Hickman is emblematic of the misfit literally out of step with society, scorned by his comrades as a result. The weakest link, he is threatened with a "blanket party," a military hazing ritual in which a blanket is thrown over the victim before he is beaten, thus rendering him unable to name his attackers. Hickman's response, we discover, is to attempt to overdose on drugs. Finally, Hickman evolves from a comic figure to a tragic one, for he represents that spark of human imperfection that is all but ruthlessly eliminated as the men become trained soldiers.

BARRY KEITH GRANT

See also **Wiseman, Frederick**

Basic Training (USA, 1971, 89 mins.). Distributed by Zipporah Films. Produced, edited, and directed by Frederick Wiseman. Cinematography by William Brayne. Sound recorded by Frederick Wiseman.

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BASSE, WILFRIED

Wilfried Basse's oeuvre bridged the gap between German avant-garde filmmaking of the Weimar Republic and the conventional educational filmmaking propagated during the Nazi period. When he started out in 1929, he counted prominent avant-garde artists such as Kurt Schwitters and other members of the Kestner-Society as his friends. He dissociated himself from the Bauhaus aesthetic.

Basse's main filmic interest was people in their everyday surroundings, whom he observed from a short distance. His first film, *Baumelutenzeit in Werder* (1929), about a crude spring fair near Berlin, was noted for the satirical tone it employed with regard to human foibles and inadequacies. The film garnered comparisons to George Grosz and Heinrich Zille for Basse.

Basse used a small handheld camera that allowed for great immediacy and intimacy in shooting. This was illustrated by *Market in Berlin* (1929), which depicts the hustle and bustle of a Berlin peasants' market. The film's style was praised by many reviewers; others, Siegfried Kracauer among them, criticized it for its lack of an overt political message. The same could not be said of *Das Rote Sprachrohr* (1931), a portrait of a communist agitprop company. Inspired by Russian formalism, this film was Basse's experiment with a specified screenplay and indoor shooting with studio lighting.

Basse's primary work was *Deutschland—zwischen gestern und heute* (1932–1934), which demonstrated how historical developments determine the present. While Basse was editing the film, the Nazis came into power. Reviewers criticized the lack of Nazi ideology in the film, while audiences seemed to avoid the film exactly because they expected Nazi propaganda. Nevertheless, it was awarded a gold medal at the Venice Film Festival in 1935.

Suspected of communist sympathies, Basse and his production company faced numerous obstacles. For the rest of his career, he worked with the Reichsanstalt für den Unterrichtsfilm (RfdU, Reich Institute for Educational Films), for which he shot nearly forty films. Since these films were not publicly shown, they were not censored. In fact, the RdfU worked independently, free of Nazi control. During this time, Basse's films focused on topics relating to handicrafts and sports. In 1940, he was commissioned to make a film about genetic diseases—*Erbkrank—Erbgesund*—Basse's only overt concession to the Nazi regime.

ULI JUNG

Biography

Born on August 17, 1899, the son of a banker. After several failed attempts at various professions, turned to filmmaking, due to the influence of the films of Hans Cürlis. Formed his own production company in 1929. The Nazis' takeover brought about political difficulties, which led him to the Reichsanstalt für den Unterrichtsfilm, for which he was one of the most prolific contributors. Assigned to oversee the slow-motion photography for Leni Riefenstahl's film, *Olympia,* 1936. Died June 6, 1946.

Films

1929 *Baumblütenzeit in Werder*
1929 *Market in Berlin*

1929 *Wochenmarkt auf dem Wittenbergplatz*
1930 *Der wirtschaftliche Baubetrieb*
1931 *Mit Optik 1,4 – Kamerastudien von Wilfried Basse*
1931 *Das Rote Sprachrohr*
1930–1932 *Abbruch und Aufbau (1930–32)*
1932–1934 *Deutschland—zwischen gestern und heute*
1934–1934 *Glückliche Heimat*
1934–1935 *Bunter Alltag*
1935 *Der Böttcher baut einen Zober*
1935 *Der Kohlenmeiler*
1936 *Roggenernte*
1936 *Hausbau*
1936 *Dachschiefer*
1936 *Der Schuhmacher / Wie ein Schuh entsteht*
1936 *Tabakbau in der Uckermark*
1936 *Handweberei*
1936 *Wie ein Ziegelstein entsteht*
1936 *Wie ein Pflasterstein entsteht*
1936 *Ein Brief wird befördert*
1936 *Braunkohle-Tagebau*
1936 *Ein Kohlenschleppzug auf dem Mittelrhein*
1936–1940 *Erbkrank–Erbgesund*
1937 *Kugelstoßen*
1937 *Schwälmer Bäuerin am Spinnrad*
1937 *Perspektivisches Sehen*
1937 *Städtische Feuerwehr*
1937 *Dämmen einer Schornsteingruppe*
1937 *Kurzstreckenlauf*
1937 *Weitsprung*
1937 *Schwimmen*
1937–1940 *Vom Korn zum Brot*
1938 *Junge Löwen im Zoologischen Garten*
1938 *Junge Paviane im Zoologischen Garten*
1938 *Junge Bären im Zoologischen Garten*
1938 *Das Anlernen junger Pferde zum Zuge*
1938 *Schwäbische Kunde*
1939 *Ein Tag auf einer fränkischen Dorfstraße*
1939 *Deutschland–gastliches Land*
1939 *D-Zug fertig zur Fahrt*
1939–1940 *Der Jockey*

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BATAILLE DU RAIL, LA

(France, Clément, 1946)

La Bataille du Rail (*The Battle of the Rails)* began as *Résistance Fer*, a short film relating the contribution of the *cheminots*, the French railway workers, to the struggle against German occupation. This documentary, among a series of projects commissioned in 1945 to celebrate the *Résistance* by the *Comité de Libération du Cinéma Français*, made such a strong impression on the producers that they asked the director, René Clément, to turn it into a feature-length film. Professional and amateur actors were hired, stories of resistance in the railways were collated by the writer, Colette Audry, and German prisoners of war were brought in. *La Bataille du Rail* was released in 1946 and gained instant acclaim as the most moving account of the *Résistance*.

La Bataille du Rail is a rather disjointed film, half-documentary and half-fiction, where its transformation from a *court-métrage* to a ninety-minute full-length feature is quite apparent. It is rather chaotic in its loose structure and confusing in its script. The odd juxtaposition of a fiction to a documentary is nevertheless what makes *La Bataille du Rail* so special. As a docudrama, it acquires unique qualities of being a detailed and dramatic account of the plight of railway men trying desperately to put all sorts of obstacles to prevent the movement of trains through sabotage, diversion, and cooperation with the *Maquis*, the armed resistance to German occupation.

The film spans over the four years of the war, and can be divided into two sections. The first part

La Bataille du Rail, 1946.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

is a documentary using actors; it explains the resistance to German occupation in the railways during these years, in particular its effect on the movement of trains between the occupied zone in the north and the "free zone" in the south of France. The considerable risks taken by the workers of the SNCF, the nationalized French railways, are described in detail, almost in a didactic manner: the sabotage of the rolling stock, the meticulous deception of the German army officers, and the ensuing reprisals narrated with an acute sense of patriotic duty and drama.

The second part of the film is set in the aftermath of D-Day and describes the attempts by the *cheminots,* allied with the *Maquis,* to stop a heavily armored train taking German reinforcements to the front line, ending with its dramatic derailment. The film becomes much closer to a work of fiction than a documentary. It finishes with scenes of triumph, greeting the arrival of the first train in a liberated France, ultimate symbol of a nation freed by the sacrifice of its railway workers.

La Bataille du Rail received the award for best film at the 1946 Cannes festival, and René Clément received the award for best director. It is still considered the first film that managed to capture the spirit of the *Résistance*, the heroism of a nation, and the dangers involved in resisting German occupation. Undoubtedly, the circumstances of its release explain its success, among a public desperately looking for the film that would capture the emotional intensity of such acts of bravery. It is also a fine and rare example of French neorealism, not unlike the Italian postwar films, in its unique blend of reality and fiction and in its attempts to reach humanity in the most inhumane circumstances of war against an occupying army.

René Clément envisages acts of resistance in the SNCF as a patriotic epic and relies quite heavily on the "feel good" factor that prevailed after the war, hence its considerable success. The film does not, however, demonize German occupation—there is even some sympathy for the German soldiers relaxing on the side of the tracks where their military convoy is stranded, a sharp contrast with the violence unleashed in the attack that follows.

La Bataille du Rail portrays a collective struggle, where there is no hero, where the fight for survival from both sides is described with a sense of the unavoidable. It ignores the real divisions that existed during these years among the French population. There is also little reference to the involvement of allied troops or of the Gaullist *resistance.* Patriotism is mixed with socialist undertones: These acts of bravery are those of the *cheminots,* who symbolize the working class as the driving force in resisting German occupation.

The style of Clément is a cold assessment as well as a tense account of resistance by railway workers: There is some of Eisenstein's sense of drama in the languishing whistling of a steam engine during the summary execution of *cheminots* suspected of sabotage, and in the accordion rolling down the side of the track after the spectacular derailment of the German convoy. The photography of Henri Alekan contributes greatly to the dramatic effect of the film, and *La Bataille du Rail* will establish him as one of the greatest photographers in black and white for the cinema. He had already collaborated to the *Beauty of the Beast* of Jean Cocteau and worked with Wim Wenders in 1983 on *The State of Things* and on *Wings of Desire* in 1987.

La Bataille du Rail transformed the career of René Clément from that of a minor documentary filmmaker to one of the prominent directors of his generation. Born in 1913, he made short documentary films during the 1930s and 1940s, in particular *Ceux du Rail* in 1942, which gave him an insight into the railway industry that would be useful when filming *La Bataille du Rail.* Until the late 1950s, Clément confirmed his stature as a world-class director, receiving an Oscar for *Au-delà des Grilles* in 1948 and *Jeux Interdits* in 1952.

Clément belongs to the generation of directors left behind by the desire for change demanded by *La Nouvelle Vague,* who criticized his filming technique for its lack of subjectivity and its detachment from reality. His last noticeable success, *Plein Soleil*, released in 1960, inaugurated a slow decline in a career that had been prolific and successful, until his last film, *Jeune fille libre le soir*, which came out in 1975, the year before his death. *La Bataille du Rail* remains the film for which he is best known.

YVAN TARDY

La Bataille du Rail (*The Battle of the Rails*) (85 min.). Distributed by L.C.J. Editions et Productions, 2002. Produced by La Coopérative générale du cinéma Français, 1946. Directed by René Clément. Script by René Clément. Photography by Henri Alekan. Music by Yves Baudrier. Dialogues by Colette Audry. Filmed in black and white. Played by Jean Clarieux (Lampin), Jean Daurand (*Cheminot*), Jacques Desagneaux (Athos), François Joux (*Cheminot*), Latour (*Cheminot*), Tony Laurent (Camargue), and French railway workers.

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BATTLE FOR OUR SOVIET UKRAINE, THE

(USSR, Dovzhenko, 1942–1943)

The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine (Bitva za nashu Sovetskuiu Ukrainu) is an account of the German Army Group South's invasion of the Ukraine and its repulsion in the Great Patriotic War. Produced for the Central and Ukrainian Newsreel Studios, the film was begun in early May 1943, completed on October 6, and released on October 25, 1943. Often attributed to Alexander Dovzhenko, the nominal directors were his wife, Julia Solntseva, and Jacob Ovdeyenko. However, although credited only as "supervisor," bucolic sections link to Dovzhenko's earlier feature films, particularly *Earth*. The contrast between these lyrical scenes showing, in an idealized manner, what life was like before the invasion, and the starkness of the war footage, gives the images of destruction much of their impact.

Dovzhenko, with a number of other documentarists, remained in Moscow when the bulk of film production, along with much of industry that stood in the path of the invading forces, was evacuated to the east. He also spent time in liberated areas of the Ukraine, so he saw firsthand more of the effects of war than many of his colleagues. The authenticity that Dovzhenko's team managed to convey is remarkable. The film is put together with a freedom from the bureaucratic interference that filmmakers working on fiction production experienced, allowing Dovzhenko greater latitude than if he had gone to Alma Ata with the others.

Dovzhenko's feelings about the invasion are summed up in a letter to his wife dated June 4, 1942 (Marshall, 1983, p. 152), in which he wrote that although Hitler would be defeated, the Ukraine had been ruined. Despite this pessimism, he and his team made another documentary, *Victory in Right-Bank Ukraine and the Expulsion of the German Aggressors from the Boundaries of the Ukrainian Soviet Earth* (released in May 1945), which contained material on reconstruction. Of the two films, *Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine* is more harrowing, with many shots of dead bodies, including children, and the devastation in the reconquered areas is brought vividly home.

This graphic depiction of despoliation and despair runs contrary to Graham Roberts's (1999,

p. 136) characterization of wartime Soviet documentary as "a mirror image of reality," projecting confidence in a time of tragedy. Dovzhenko's diary indicates that before its release he was skeptical about the film's likely official reception, as it ran counter to the positive portrayals depicted in the bulk of Soviet films. He feared that it might be banned altogether, or marred "by cutting the difficult and unheroic scenes." His more subtle conception of the complexity of war—"the grandiose woe of retreat and the incomplete joy of advance" (Dovzhenko, 1973, p. 91)—was at odds with the simplistic official ideology.

The original title was *Ukraine in Battle*, but the addition of the word *Soviet* served to lessen the nationalistic interpretation by stressing the common struggle of all the Soviet peoples. The political message was that the Ukraine was still part of the Soviet Union. The sensitivity of the nationalism issue can be gauged by the fact that, while working on *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine*, Dovzhenko also wrote the script for *Ukraine in Flames* (not to be confused with *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine*'s U.S. release title). It had a similar theme to *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine*, but its perceived nationalism blocked its realization and blighted Dovzhenko's career.

Many contemporary reviewers claimed that there were twenty-four camera operators, although in fact twenty-nine are credited on *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine* and twenty-five on *Victory in Right-Bank Ukraine*. Both films feature footage taken by German forces (that was later captured), providing a more rounded depiction of the conflict. There was enough material to allow adherence to the 180-degree rule, with Germans usually attacking from left to right and the Soviet forces from right to left. Interspersed are speeches from party and army leaders, including Nikita Kruschev, head of the Ukrainian Communist Party, and direct-to-camera witness accounts from ordinary people with harrowing stories to tell. Considering the disparate origins of its elements, *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine* displays a remarkable coherence. Jay Leyda (1983, p. 377) proclaimed it "an inspiration to every artist who works in the documentary film."

Dovzhenko was dismayed by the indifferent reception the film received in the United States when it was released there in the spring of 1944. He noted in his diary entry for April 8, 1944: "She [the United States] didn't even want to look at the blood she is buying with her canned bacon" (1973, p. 105). This was a sentiment that echoed his government's demand for the opening of a second front, and the feeling that the Soviet Union was being asked to make enormous sacrifices while its allies stood by.

Critical opinion in the United States was indeed lukewarm. While acknowledging the unvarnished presentation and the effectiveness of the battle sequences, many of the reviews were carping, with negative comments on the clarity of the photography, the quality of the translated commentary, and the tendency of the pictures of devastation to have a certain sameness. These blasé assessments of the film's lack of technical polish ignored the far from ideal circumstances of production.

The British *Kinematograph Weekly*, by contrast, while noting the "family resemblance" of films depicting the effects of occupation, could still concede that *The Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine* was "a vivid indictment of German brutality," and highlight its depiction of suffering and the realism of the battle sequences. Similarly, *Monthly Film Bulletin* considered that, of the many documentaries originating from the Soviet front, few had "been so vivid or poignant as this." The difference in tone perhaps reflected the relative complacency of a country that had not experienced invasion, compared to one whose civilian population had itself suffered from direct attacks, and thus could therefore empathize with the misery of those subjected directly to the German war machine.

TOM RUFFLES

See also **Documentary Film: Russia/Soviet Union**

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BATTLE OF ALGIERS, THE

See **Near/ Middle East**

BATTLE OF CHILE, THE

(Cuba, Guzman, 1975–1977)

Patricio Guzman's *The Battle of Chile* marks the end of a brief but intense period of revolutionary filmmaking in his native country. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Chilean feature and documentary filmmakers joined together in support of Popular Unity, a coalition of left-wing parties, producing work that protested the endemic poverty in their country. Guzman's film covers the political upheaval of 1973 from the election of Salvador Allende in February to the coup in September that overthrew the political changes effected by the Popular Unity and forced Guzman and his colleagues to work in exile.

The Battle of Chile is composed of three parts, "The Bourgeois Insurrection" (1975), "The Coup d'état" (1977), and "Popular Power" (1979). Part One covers the election of Allende and the ensuing middle-class revolt. Part Two covers popular demonstrations in support and opposition to Allende. It also treats strategic debates within the left. Part Three focuses on later mass organization efforts. The film opens with some of the last footage shot by Guzman and his crew: Allende is killed in the bombing of the La Moneda Palace and the Popular Unity party is effectively overthrown by the military coup supported by the middle class. With the denouement established at the outset, *The Battle of Chile* is set up to be studied more than experienced as a surprising narrative. Guzman intended the film, while polemical, to be more analytic than propagandistic: "From the very beginning, our idea was to make an analytical film, not an agitational one" (Burton, 1986, p. 51). After this opening shot, the film moves back to February, when the crew began filming, shortly before the narrow election of Allende.

Led by cinematographer Jorge Müller Silva, *The Battle of Chile* was shot with a team of handheld cameras by Guzmán and his team of collaborators, called El Equipo Tercer Año (The Third Year Group). The group participated in extended technical and theoretical discussions before filming began, defining five "fronts of struggle" to focus the project. (See *Cine-tracts,* No. 9 (Vol. 3, No. 1), 1980, pp. 46–49.) This allowed the cameramen to focus on capturing certain events effectively rather than worry over which events to record or neglect. By Guzmán's account, the more polished shots of the film were the result of his collaboration with

The Battle of Chile, 1975–1977.
[*Still courtesy of the British Institute*]

Müller, where he would survey ongoing events while relaying specific filming strategies to Müller: "Since I tried to anticipate for him what was about to happen, I could tell him to pan, to lower the camera, to raise it, instructing him to make certain movements that are much more readily identified with fictional than with documentary filmmaking" (Burton, 1986, p. 57).

Even with this preplanning and improvised direction, the nature of the subject meant that the group had a limited amount of control over what they were able to film or, in some cases, found themselves filming. The filmmakers often capture planned events, such as governmental meetings, protests, and funerals, but as frequently tape unexpected developments.

Distinct scenes are often bridged by voice-over commentary, but the majority of analysis is provided by interviewed subjects. This one camera, one soundman style of filmmaking is most commonly known as direct or observational cinema. Here, the cameramen aim more to record as much of what unfolds before them than to produce polished shots. The editors of *The Battle of Chile* seem to have selected which scenes to include based on their impact or historical significance much more than their technical perfection. Shots with a shaky axis or blurring pans are often left in the film. In one scene, amidst unrest in the streets, the camera sweeps past the marquee of a movie theater. It announces that *Violent City*, starring Charles Bronson, is showing in Metrocolor. This brief reference to mainstream feature filmmaking reminds the spectator of the rhetorical, stylistic, and substantive differences between the type of cinema exemplified by *The Battle of Chile* versus this American feature. Moving past the marquee, the camera reveals an urban landscape lit with fire, running crowds, and the sounds of an ambulance. The fact that *Violent City* is showing in a truly riven, violent city jolts the spectator into recognition that, though certainly not shot in 35mm or Metrocolor, *The Battle of Chile* is a real document not to be conflated with Hollywood filmmaking. A more insistent reminder of this comes later.

In the most famous scene of the film, which closes Part One and opens Part Two, Argentine cameraman Leonardo Henricksen is shot and killed by a Chilean Army officer during the aborted coup in June. Here, the camera focuses on an officer who looks directly at the camera and fires; the image loses its balance and turns black.

Although the observational method of filmmaking employed in *The Battle of Chile* frequently produces objective shots that don't explicity support nor oppose Allende, the left-wing political interest that was the impetus behind the project is more forcefully present in certain scenes, sometimes even in the shooting style. While the filmmakers begin by covering both sides of the electorate prior to Allende's election, often interviewing families at home in addition to mass demonstrations, afterwards the filmmakers appear more frequently and more intimately with Allende's sympathizers. Guzman and his colleagues frequently film amidst leftist demonstrations, interviewing participants in the middle of crowds. They also travel with and interview workers on truck beds en route to union meetings. The right wing is shown in more formal settings or, if on the streets, from a greater distance. At a meeting of the American Institute for Free Trade Unionism (a group funded indirectly by the CIA that encourages managers in the transportation sector to oppose Allende's policies), an unidentified speaker is shot in a low-angle close-up. His face monstrously fills the screen, with deep black nostrils flaring and a gaping mouth. Words that may already displease the viewer are colored even more insidiously by this stylistic choice.

In an interview, Guzman states that the film was made to support Popular Unity, but none of its constitutive parties, mostly notably the Communists and Socialists, in particular. This was typical of Chilean documentary in this period, which was galvanized by a manifesto by Miguel Littín, another filmmaker and head of Chile Films, the national film production company. Littín called for the development of a leftist cinema that would valorize the workers and labor leaders who fought for Allende's reforms. Although Guzman follows the principles that Littín outlines, *The Battle of Chile* was made without the help of Chile Films, which was too unstable to support the project.

The Battle of Chile, while shot by Chileans, received a great deal of international support in terms of production. French documentary filmmaker Chris Marker provided the film stock with which the picture was shot. After shooting was complete, fearing the destruction of his footage, Guzman smuggled his film to Cuba following Allende's assassination. *The Battle of Chile* was edited in Cuba at the Cuban Institute of Film Art and Industry (ICAIC). With the help of solidarity campaigns, the film was distributed around the world and became the most prominent testament of the coup. Guzman and other Chilean filmmakers went on to produce a startling amount of work in exile (176 films, 56 of which were features between 1973 and 1983), becoming the most successful Latin American "cinema of exile" in this period.

JESSE SCHLOTTERBECK

See also **Guzman, Patricio**

The Battle of Chile / La Batalla de Chile (Chile, El Equipo Tercer Año / ICAIC, 1975–1979, 315 min.). Directed by Patricio Guzman. Produced by Chris Marker. Cinematography by Jorge Müller Silva. Film editing by Pedro Chaskel.

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BATTLE OF CHINA, THE

(US, Capra, 1944)

Sixth in the "Why We Fight" series produced by the U.S. Army during World War II, *The Battle of China* builds on *The Nazis Strike* (1943), *Divide and Conquer* (1943), and *The Battle of Russia* (1944) through collaboration among Hollywood's top hands. Frank Capra, one of America's premier theatrical filmmakers, directed the film, stamping it with his recognizable personal style. Anatole Litvak, another influential Hollywood figure co-directed and oversaw production, without credit in both cases. Julius Epstein handled writing, William Hornbeck edited, Dimitri Tiomkin composed original music, and Anthony Veiller narrated. All worked together on the earlier documentaries.

Lacking Germany's propaganda machinery, Japan offered meager film footage for Capra to exploit for propaganda purposes. While some scenes in *The Battle of China* originated in Japan, Capra turned to stock Hollywood theatrical footage to help offset the deficit. The film states, "Certain non-combat stock scenes were used from historical pictures," but never identifies theatrical footage. Where documentary film ends and Hollywood stock begins is deliberately indistinct.

The Battle of China appropriates and makes use of several stock patriotic symbols and images. Visual and auditory cues, such as the "V for Victory" symbol superimposed on a ringing Liberty Bell, solicit predictable audience response. A rousing bugle call summons the troops, over an image of a road sign pointing to Tokyo. Thematic elements emphasize similarities, real and imaginary, between China and the United States. Confucius represents the Golden Rule and Sun Yat Sen becomes China's George Washington. While General Chiang Kai-Shek marches, Patton-like, across the screen, Madame Chiang addresses Congress. "China's war is our war" is the resounding theme.

The Battle of China permits neither balance nor misinterpretation. The Chinese, with "indestructible spirit," proceed on their "Homeric journey to freedom," while their "courage never faltered." Through simplistic graphics, Chinese military disasters become "trading space for time," while "feverish," or "blood-crazed" Japanese soldiers "outdid themselves in barbarism," perpetrating a "nightmare of cruelty." The "oldest and youngest of the world's great nations," filmgoers are assured, fight "side-by-side," "civilization against

barbarism," "good against evil." In the process, this film demonstrates effective propaganda. In 2000, *The Battle of China* won the National Film Registry award of the National Film Preservation Board.

MICHAEL S. CASEY

See also ***Battle of Russia*****; Capra, Frank; Litvak, Anatole; War: WWII**

The Battle of China (USA, Army Signal Corps, 1944, 65 min., black and white). Produced by War Department. Directed by Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak (un-credited). Music composed by Dimitri Tiomkin (un-credited), performed by Army Air Force Orchestra. Editing by William W. Hornbeck (un-credited). Narration by Anthony Veiller.

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BATTLE OF MIDWAY, THE

(US, Ford, 1942)

The first U.S. combat documentary to receive wide commercial distribution during World War II, *The Battle of Midway,* was a project largely without precedent. As might be expected of a work sanctioned by the U.S. Navy and President Franklin Roosevelt, the film commemorates the heroism of American forces in battle and illustrates the vital link between home front and war front at an early stage of U.S. involvement in the war. But director John Ford, who was on leave from Hollywood as head of the Field Photographic branch of the Office of the Coordinator of Information (later the OSS), also experiments with formal elements and incorporates themes of importance to his work as a fiction filmmaker. In this regard, *The Battle of Midway* seems no less deeply personal a work for the political calculations that shaped its making.

Ford had previously supervised the production of training films for new recruits and reconnaissance films for the high command. But the three-day battle at the Pacific Ocean atoll of Midway, 1,100 miles northwest of Pearl Harbor, in early June 1942 provided Ford with an opportunity to extend his wartime work in a new direction. Accepting an assignment to photograph the defense of the U.S. Naval Air Station at Midway, Ford navigated the shoals of military, governmental, and studio bureaucracies to retain control over the footage, shifting postproduction from Washington to Los Angeles on the Twentieth Century Fox lot. Speculations about the distribution of Ford's new documentary was a topic of much comment in the Hollywood trade press in late summer, leading up to the release of *The Battle of Midway* by the War Activities Committee and Fox in September. Seven first-run houses in New York ran the film, as did six in Los Angeles; eventually 500 prints were circulated nationwide. The following March, *The Battle of Midway* was among four films named Best Documentary by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Remarkably, *The Battle of Midway* devotes little of its eighteen minutes to explaining the wider causes and significance of the battle, a turning point in the Pacific campaign. We learn nothing about the arrangement of naval and air forces on the eve of battle or the tactical maneuvering on either side, including the crucial decoding of cables that alerted U.S. officials to a feint of Japanese forces toward the Aleutians and the pending Midway air attack. Instead, the film offers a series of impressions of the Midway outpost and its occupants before, during, and after the battle, emphasizing the natural beauty and serenity of the islands and surrounding waters, the ominous stillness of an evening watch as silhouetted soldiers stand guard before a setting sun, the perceptual disorientation and confusion produced by the bombing and strafing of the islands, and the

Battle of Midway, 1942.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

resilience and determination of the American marines tested by the attack.

Ford's account of the battle, moreover, does not shy away from images of destruction—billowing black smoke against a cobalt sky; gutted buildings; twisted metal, wreckage, and rubble; the injured and the dead—and a concluding account of burial-at-sea functions as elegiac counterpoint to a more aggressively martial coda in which victory is asserted and the costs to the enemy enumerated. Alfred Newman's musical score, incorporating familiar military and national anthems and hymns, is crucial to the overall rhythmic effects. In this regard, *The Battle of Midway* seems less journalistic than musical in design, indebted, as Tag Gallagher has suggested, to nineteenth-century battle compositions, with different musical markers signaling striking shifts in tone.

Contemporaneous reviewers found *The Battle of Midway*'s combat footage—shot in 16mm Technicolor by Ford and Jack MacKenzie, his 20-year-old first mate, from their post on Midway's Eastern Island—particularly compelling. (Additional air and sea photography was provided by Kenneth M. Pier, who accompanied pilots off the *U.S.S. Hornet*, and brief footage of an "Ohio family" at home was supplied by cinematographer Gregg Toland.) The footage was assembled by editor Robert Parrish in two extended battle passages marked by free-hand camerawork and expressively disjointed cutting, with the descent of planes and multiple explosions interspersed with the reactions of marines returning anti-aircraft fire. At times, the image track seems to slip its sprockets, as a visible frame line optically registers the force of the concussion, and a sense of geography is lost amid the smoke and floating debris. Early in the assault, Ford was knocked unconscious by one such explosion and received a flesh wound, for which he was awarded the Purple Heart. Reports of this, circulated by the press, only served to enhance the perceived authenticity of the film as photographic document.

Ford's experiments with vocal commentary proved of greater controversy. Soliciting scripts from screenwriter Dudley Nichols and MGM executive James Kevin McGuinness, based on personal

notes, Ford supervised the reading of the commentary by four actors—Donald Crisp, Irving Pichel, Henry Fonda, and James Darwell—the last two of whom were currently at work on *The Ox Bow Incident* on the Fox lot. Above and beyond conventional scene-setting, the commentary dramatizes, and works to bridge, the gap between depicted events and their presentation to the viewer, a function most conspicuously evident when Darwell, speaking as if an American mother watching the Midway footage, expresses urgent concern for the well-being of the young pilots far from home.

Some critics at the time found the commentary overly intrusive or sentimental; Darwell's dialogue, in particular, was thought an unwarranted Hollywood touch. Ford, however, who claimed to have wanted to make the film for "the mothers of America," never expressed regret about these choices, and Parrish recalls that audiences at Radio City Music Hall were audibly moved by it. Certainly the selection of this particular quartet of voices was not gratuitous; Fonda and Darwell evoke the poignant leave-taking scene from Ford's film version of *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940); Crisp and Pichel likewise use Ford's adaptation of *How Green Was My Valley* (1941), with its wistful memorial view of a Welsh mining family. Strands of "Red River Valley," lifted from the sound track to *The Grapes of Wrath* for the evening watch in *The Battle of Midway*, reinforce these associations. Trading in heightened emotion, certain moments on the sound track thus demonstrate possible points of intersection between combat narratives and domestic melodrama, genres then sharing the screen of movie houses. They also serve a wider project of reimagining community ties between home front and battle front under the pressure of a global war.

CHARLES WOLFE

Battle of Midway, The (US, United States Navy, 1942, 18 mins.). Distributed by Reel Media International, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., and the War Activities Committee. Directed by John Ford. Written by John Ford Dudley Nichols and James Kevin McGuiness (as James K. McGuiness). Produced by John Ford. Original music by Alfred Newman. Cinematography by John Ford, Jack MacKenzie, and Kenneth M. Pier. Edited by John Ford and Robert Parrish.

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BATTLE OF RUSSIA, THE

(US, Litvak, 1944)

The Battle of Russia was the fifth installment in the group of American World War II propaganda films known as the *Why We Fight* series. The films in the series, a total of seven, fall into two major groups: those that provided historical background for the events in Europe and Asia (*Prelude to War* [1943], *The Nazis Strike* [1943], *Divide and Conquer* [1943], and *War Comes to America* [1945]), and those that detailed specific campaigns of the war and the respective allies involved in those campaigns. *The Battle of Russia*, along with *The Battle of Britain* (1943) and *The Battle of China* (1944), form the latter group. *The Battle of Russia*, like the other films in this subgroup, was intended to educate the

audience about a nation and ally to which most Americans were traditionally adverse. The resulting film is one of the only pro-Soviet films ever produced by the U.S. government.

Although most of the credit for the *Why We Fight* series has traditionally, and justifiably, been given to Frank Capra, these films were collaborative projects, and thus it is important to recognize all of those involved in the production of *The Battle of Russia*. Capra received producer credit for the film, and by all accounts worked closely and intensively with director Anatole Litvak to give the film its shape and orientation. Eric Knight, who headed a team of seven screenwriters, is largely responsible for the film's verbose scripted narration, which was spoken by Walter Huston. The score for the film was done by Hollywood veteran Dmitri Tomkin and drew heavily on Tchaikovsky as well as traditional Russian folk songs and ballads. Although collaboration was obviously important to the genesis of *The Battle of Russia*, it is important to reiterate the important role that Litvak and Capra played in combining the elements of the film into a cohesive whole. As a compilation film, *The Battle of Russia*'s footage is derived from various sources, including newsreels, amateur filming, and fiction films. From these disparate sources Litvak and Capra, along with veteran editor Walter Hornbeck, created a cogent report on the Russian people and their battle against Hitler's army.

The film itself consists of two parts, the first dealing with a history of the Russian people up to and including the peak of the Nazi invasions of Russia (December 1941). The second part of the film begins with winter falling on the Nazi invaders and goes on to detail the heroic Russian counterattack launched during that winter, which not only

Why We Fight 5 (Battle of Russia), documentary by Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak, 1943.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

Why We Fight 5 (Battle of Russia), documentary by Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak, 1943.
[*Courtesy of the Everett Collection*]

drove the Germans back, but also, as the film's narrator pointedly reminds us, "shattered the myth of Nazi invincibility," and thus boosted the Allied hopes for an eventual defeat of Hitler and his forces. To illustrate all of this, the second part focuses especially on two decisive battles, those at Leningrad and those at Stalingrad.

Formally, *The Battle of Russia* is the epitome of the compilation film. Shots and sounds are recontextualized in such a way as to present the images as supportive of the film's argument, without a questioning of the image itself; thus, viewers take footage from *Alexander Nevsky* (Eisenstein, 1938) as representation of historical fact. This phenomenon is achieved in *The Battle of Russia* not only through skillful montage but also through the employment of a unifying voice-over that dominates the film's soundtrack. Thomas Bohn points out that voice-over narration is present in 75 percent of the film, well above contemporary theoretical protocol, which called for no more than two-thirds of the visual track to be accompanied by narration. Nonetheless, the narration in *The Battle of Russia* is not excessive. The material presented was both complex and obscure to the film's audience, and at no point does the film's propagandistic tone break down into obvious repetition. Besides the prominent narration, the film's informative mode demanded an abundance of animated effects to illustrate tactical concepts such as "wedge and trap" and "defense in depth," as well as troop movements and other military maneuvers.

Thematically, the film falls in line with the messages presented throughout the *Why We Fight* series: Germany's invasion of Russia represents an encroachment of the "slave world" into the "free world" of Russia, with a fascist army threatening a

peace-loving, pious, and proud people. The depravity of the Germans is reiterated throughout the film with constant reminders that German soldiers were literally raping and pillaging their way through the Russian countryside. But, as the film's most famous line, "Generals may win campaigns, but people win wars," indicates, the film is concerned with showing how the spirit of a people can defeat even the mightiest army. The film's concluding shots, showing the Russian army along with the armies of all of the Allies marching off to presumable victory, underscore the idea that the United States and Russia are "in this together," and thus point to the film's true goal, that of propagandizing unity with the heretofore (and afterwards as well) adversarial Russians.

The success of the film in achieving this goal is illustrated by the film's popularity, which extended beyond the military audience for which it was initially intended. *The Battle of Russia* was the second of the *Why We Fight* films to receive an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary feature. The film was also popular abroad, with Stalin ordering hundreds of prints to be shown in Russian theaters. But like all propaganda films, *The Battle of Russia* served its historical purpose and was quickly dated as an artifact of government policy. The necessary propagandistic elisions that the film presents (not mentioning the word *communist* once, the avoidance of any mention of the Stalin-Hitler nonaggression pact, and the praise for the piety of an officially atheist state), made the film unsuitable for post-war policies. The film was too good at sympathetically portraying Stalin and Russia, and was withdrawn from circulation during the Cold War, making it one of the most ironically effective propaganda pieces in documentary history.

CHRISTOPHER MEIR

See also ***The Battle of China*; Capra, Frank; Litvak, Anatole**

The Battle of Russia (US, 1944, 80 min.). Distributed by Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, Questar Pictures, and the War Activities Committee of the Motion Pictures Industry. Produced by Frank Capra. Directed by Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak. Written by Julius J. Epstein, Philip G. Epstein, Rober Heller, Anatole Litvak, and Anthony Veiller. Film editing by William Hornbeck. Original music by Dimitri Tiomkin. Non-original music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Commentary by Walter Huston.

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BATTLE OF SAN PIETRO, THE

(US, Huston, 1945)

The Battle of San Pietro, a documentary about one battle in Italy in the Allied campaign in World War II, is the most critically acclaimed wartime documentary ever produced under the auspices of the U.S. War Department. The film makes use of maps, charts, and voice-over narration to provide an account of this battle. The more lasting contribution of *The Battle of San Pietro*, however, emerges from its meditation on the experience of the infantryman, and its larger insights into the destructiveness of war and the resilience of the human spirit.

The Battle of San Pietro bears the unmistakable stamp of its director, writer, and voice-over narrator, the Hollywood filmmaker John Huston. Before the war, Huston had been primarily known as a screenwriter, but his talents as a director were proven after the release of *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). Along with Frank Capra, William Wyler, John

Ford, and others, Huston was one of several prominent filmmakers enlisted in the American war effort. Huston made three war documentaries for the U.S. Army Pictorial Service: *Report from the Aleutians* (1943), *The Battle of San Pietro*, and *Let There Be Light* (1945). The latter film, about veterans under treatment for various mental problems resulting from combat, was suppressed by the War Department until 1980 (Simmon, 2000, p. 58).

Huston was sent to Italy in 1943 to document the triumphant entry of American forces into Rome, but the ground offensive met stiff resistance from the Germans and slowed to a halt north of Naples. Huston was reassigned to make a film "that would explain to American audiences why U.S. forces in Italy were no longer advancing" (Huston, 1980, p. 109). American forces had moved into position at the foot of the Liri Valley, through which meandered the main road to Rome. The German defenses had taken position in and around the little village of San Pietro, and were about to offer some deadly resistance to Allied advances.

The film begins with a two-minute introduction by General Mark Clark, who led the U.S. Fifth Army into the Liri Valley, explaining that San Pietro was key to the region and that in light of the importance of the objective, casualties were "not excessive." It is widely assumed that Clark's introductory words were designed and tacked on by the War Department to counter the film's implication that casualties *were* excessive. According to William Nolan, however, Huston wrote the opening narration for Clark, thinking that Clark would have it reworked for his own purposes. Huston was surprised when Clark used the speech unaltered: "Now, there was this four-star general repeating, word for word, the strategy of the campaign as I saw it . . . and me just a dogface in it! I guess he didn't know any more about what was going on than I did" (Nolan, 1965, p. 51).

In part the film chronicles the progress of, and military strategy employed in, Allied attempts to take San Pietro and the surrounding hills. The film's finest points are to be found elsewhere, however. Huston's film unit, with its 35mm handheld Eyemo newsreel cameras (Haskew, 2000, p. 82), was attached to the 143rd Infantry Regiment of the 36th Texas Infantry Division. *The Battle of San Pietro* manages to convey the men's experience through footage that captures the violence of battle, including numerous close-ups of men's faces, shots of the many casualties as they lie on the battlefield or are wrapped in shrouds, and narrated accounts of the extreme danger of the infantry attacks. The 143rd Regiment alone required 1,100 replacements after the Battle of San Pietro (Huston, 1985, p. 115). Huston has said that he made the film to express admiration for the courage and fortitude of the common foot soldier.

Where Frank Capra's wartime documentaries are highly propagandistic, Huston was unable or unwilling to hide his strong misgivings about the war. *The Battle of San Pietro* archly and subtly demonstrates the war's effect on the townspeople, on the town, on San Pietro's artistic and cultural treasures, and on nature itself. It does so in part through what has been called "one of the most memorable voice-over narrations in film—both in script and delivery" (Simmon, 2000, p. 59). After shots of the broken town of San Pietro, we see a pock-marked statue of St. Peter as well as the ruined church of St. Peter's, its dome missing to reveal the sky above. In voice-over, Huston intones something apparently taken from a tourist guidebook: "Patron Saint, Peter, point of interest, St. Peter's, 1438, note interesting treatment of chancel." Toward the film's end, Huston sums up with shots of men digging graves and slow pans across the faces of the survivors:

> The lives lost were precious lives—to their country, to their loved ones, and to the men themselves . . . many among these you see alive here have since joined the ranks of their brothers at arms, who fell at San Pietro. For ahead lay San Battore, and the Rapido River, and Cassino, and beyond Cassino more rivers, and more mountains, and more towns, more San Pietros, greater or lesser, a thousand more.

Toward the film's end, we see a montage of images of children emerging from the rubble, some smiling, some obviously frightened but too curious to remain in hiding. James Agee objected to the "emotional sales pressure" of the music of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir here. Nonetheless, he called the scene "radiant with illimitable suggestions of meaning and mystery" and "the first great passage of war poetry that has got on the screen" (Agee, 1945). We see shots of the people of the village returning to their daily routines, carrying water, plowing, and sowing seeds. Huston's narration tells us that although the prime military aim had been to defeat the enemy, the people looked upon the Americans as their deliverers. We see a religious procession, and the voice-over narration ends the film: "And the people pray to their patron saint to intercede with God on behalf of those who came to deliver them . . . and passed on to the North with the passing battle."

Upon finishing the film, Huston showed it to a group of officers, who pronounced the film "anti-war" and decided to withhold distribution. Huston

told the officers that if he ever made a picture that *was* pro-war, he "hoped someone would take me out and shoot me" (Huston, 1980, p. 120). *The Battle of San Pietro* presented the battle not as a strategic victory, but as a small battle in a costly and continuing campaign. General George C. Marshall later asked to see the film, and later pronounced that all army trainees should see it to become better prepared for the shock of battle. Huston was promoted to major. *The Battle of San Pietro* was released in 1945, however, after the Allied victory, and having been cut from five to three reels. Although it did not fulfill its original military objective, it remains one of the most humane and artful war documentaries ever made. As James Agee wrote in 1945, "it is in every way as good a war film as I have seen; in some ways it is the best."

CARL R. PLANTINGA

See also **Huston, John**

The Battle of San Pietro (US, John Huston, 1945, 33 min.). Produced by the U.S. Army Pictorial Service. Directed, written, and narrated by John Huston. Cinematography by Jules Buck, John Huston, and other Signal Corps cameramen. Music by Dmitri Tiomkin, performed by the Army Air Force Orchestra, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and St. Brendan's Boys Choir.

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BATTLE OF THE SOMME

(UK, Urban, 1916)

Of the various documentaries made under official auspices during WWI, *The Battle of the Somme* has rightly assumed a key place. It broke all box office records, as thousands were turned away in the first week despite its having opened simultaneously at over thirty London cinemas. More than one theatre was exhibiting it to 10,000 people a day, and the Finsbury Park Cinema attracted over 50,000 people in that first week. Thereafter, 100 prints were distributed around the provinces, and within two months hiring fees had been scaled down from £40 a week to £8 for three nights, bringing it within reach of the smallest cinemas. *Bioscope* complained of unfair competition when music halls hired it instead of limiting themselves to shorts. But it drew many into the cinema for the first time. Still more important, it provided a huge stimulus for the idea of a British film archive. Langford Reed noted that in 1913 both Copenhagen's Royal Library and the Louvre had established film sections, similar archives existing in the Vatican, Madrid, and New York. Meanwhile, the British Museum resisted because film was combustible and impermanent. But the press considered it unthinkable that *Somme* prints should not be preserved for posterity.

The film covers the first phase of the Somme offensive, which was to last about four months, with an advance of some thousand yards at the expense of more than half a million British casualties. This opening phase, and the huge preparations that had been necessary, generated footage enough for a feature-length propaganda film, although disjointedness betrays its opportunist origins. Both the Germans and French produced their own Somme films, the former, claimed by *The Times* to be technically superb. It focused on the devastation wrought on French towns by Allied guns, and

German care for enemy wounded. The two German attacks were obvious fakes. The film allegedly "followed the British model as closely as possible," and certainly the French version did so. This began with preparations: "long files of marching soldiers and vast stores of ammunition," then trenches "full of soldiers ready to leap out," the attack, and numerous Germans surrendering.

French troops, who had bled too freely at Verdun to be able to make their expected contribution on the Somme, have little place in the British film. But there is an image of enduring French peasant women, toiling within view of a military camp that proclaims the ever-present hazards of war. The film is especially distinguished by the amount of attention given to casualties. Topicals, no longer free from censorship, were shorn of "realistic horrors of war" by either civil censor or service departments, leaving *Cinema*'s reviewer unprepared for the Somme film's images of "war, rich with death." These same images continue to shape people's understanding of the war, because the "over the top" sequence has been used repeatedly as television producers' shorthand. Indeed, it was passed off, in the official compilation *America Goes Over* (1927), as U.S. Signal Corps filming of the Doughboys' "Jump-off" at St Mihiel in September 1918. A contemporary letter to the *Nation* quoted the *Manchester Guardian*: "Two years ago the public exhibition of horrors like this would have been condemned as an indecency." Its writer, wondering what could have happened in the course of those two years, resented the soldiers' sufferings being turned into an entertainment. Others, notably the Dean of Durham in a letter to *The Times*, protested "against an entertainment which wounds the heart and violates the very sanctities of bereavement." But the *Daily News* gloated that the provinces were devouring it "with an eagerness which must be not a little disturbing to the Dean of Durham"; and bereaved *Times* readers found his objections "squeamish and sentimental."

John Raphael, *Era*'s Paris correspondent, focuses on those "over the top" scenes, the core of the film since without them people would have been unconvinced by the remainder. Apparently an officer friend gave him an eyewitness account of their filming, when the cameraman "was actually crouching in that foremost trench, protected by nothing but a few sandbags, and operating through a hole." These scenes were almost certainly staged, though his remarks may result from confusion rather than a desire to tell a good story or offset rumors of faking. Faked or not, they worked powerfully on many people. "My God, they're dead," cried one woman; at another cinema "two men fainted, but not a single woman." Elsewhere "a woman felt faint, but after a sip of water outside insisted on returning to the theatre and seeing the film through." On the whole, audiences seem to have been awe-stricken at feeling themselves witness to youthful vitality extinguished by unseen forces; but one evening-gowned flapper complained: "It is rather too sad. They ought to cut out the gruesome bits."

That "gruesome bits" were included at all was doubtless due to the need to make some acknowledgment of the appalling casualty lists, and of public resentment that official films had revealed so little. Thus, this film purports to let people in on war's grim secrets while still keeping them from the truth. Malins knew how mild it was. Even so, he had feared "that some of the dead scenes" might offend. Graves's "certain cure for lust of blood" had to be avoided if the film was not to provoke demand for an end to the carnage. At the same time thrills were needed to draw the public; the trick was to offer glimpses of war's grimness before sending them home, cheered with the prospect of victory. Malins discovered that editing involved "discretion, diplomacy and tact" with so many interests to be served and "so much ... at stake." The central ploy was to translate death to willing and glorious sacrifice. This was the rhetoric used in Lloyd George's statement that accompanied the film, canny enough to infect responses from some of the bereaved: "I never understood their sacrifice until I had seen this film." It was blazoned on countless happily smiling faces of men marching up the line, earnest in their belief in what they were doing. The authorities, far more skilled in mass psychology than in handling world affairs, understood that people *wanted* to be persuaded: It was so much easier to cope with loss if the bereaved could believe in the cause and its leaders. But the justness of a cause is not sufficient to maintain people's commitment to it; they must believe that it will prevail. Raphael was one among many who found the film worked wonderfully in this respect. Although he had never doubted final victory, the film made him feel safer and more confident than ever: "Look at the German prisoners as they pass on the film and you can see that Germany knows that she is fighting a losing fight." To his selective eye, personal shabbiness proclaims their loss of morale, whereas there is not "a dirty or unshaven man" among the British (the German film showed Germans brushing their uniforms). British citizens smile while Germans cringe, and the "poor fellow whose own leg is badly smashed, giving up the corner he has found to rest it in to a fainting German prisoner," typifies the chivalry of troops assured of their own superiority.

Another resource for victory on display was British hardware—guns of many calibers being shown in action. Here is the neat evasion used in TV coverage of the Gulf War. Audiences marvel at the technology, losing sight of end results: people blown to pieces or shredded by shrapnel. But there was also targeting of the many munition workers seeking relief in the cinema. Pre-battle sequences include great stacks of shells that not only acknowledge the logistics of conflict but also the hard work being done at home to sustain the army in the field. This is both a pat on the back and an exhortation to continued effort. The aim is to balance humanity with technology. As "Blanche" says in the *Bystander*, the horror of modern war is that people become cogs in a destructive machine. Naturally, it is the Hun who has robbed war of its romance, and a main objective of the struggle is to reeducate him. This shows on screen when "a German prisoner, sitting dazed among his enemies, is offered a cigarette by a British soldier. In a moment, as someone put it, 'his face is beautifully lit—lit with the sudden glory of the truth that men are men, and in their humanity triumphant over any process that would make them less than men.'"

There were complaints that the film was sometimes screened in incongruous company, even farce; but it was often slotted at short notice into existing programs. Whatever the circumstances, it is clear that the film was never viewed passively, although there is evidence that audiences had generally lost their old demonstrativeness. People shouted excitedly when they recognized someone on screen. At the Maida Vale Palace one interruption came from "a wounded Gordon [who] saw himself being medically attended at Minden Post." There were also more formal commentaries: Lieutenant F. R. Holmes, later to accompany one of the cinemotors touring the country, lectured at the Scala in "a breezy, pleasant, chatty manner." At Norwich and elsewhere parties of wounded were taken to see the film, and many of them would have had no trouble in filling out the gaps left by editorial reticence. One wounded soldier in a Shaftesbury Avenue cinema broke down when he saw the "the dead Devons lying on the battlefield, with the battery of artillery moving forward. He sobbed like a child and a nurse led him out of the theatre." *Cinema*'s reviewer noted how dozens of wheels passed the bodies without any desecrating them. But perhaps the wounded soldier was an artilleryman, who knew that gun teams could hardly avoid sprawled bodies as they careered along corduroy tracks. Besides, the fastidiousness of men and horses (who prefer not to trample on bloodied corpses) succumbs to the terrors of shellfire.

There are various other moments when front-line experience would have taken viewers behind the film's glib narrative. Even scenes of soldiers' ablutions, reassuring to mothers with soldier-sons still young enough to forget to wash behind their ears, would remind the trench soldier of the scarcity of clean water up the line. And if he had been in any large attack, he would probably imagine General de Lisle's pep talk on the eve of battle not in the clichéd terms recorded by Malins, but more like Brigadier-General Tuxford's distortions about German war on the wounded, which had fighting mad troops screaming "Remember the *Llandovery Castle*!"

Some deconstruction of the film's narrative has been undertaken by Smithers, who points to a dozen questionable episodes. Most striking is the July 1 mine explosion at Hawthorn Redoubt, which is followed by a shot of what purports to be the resulting crater. It probably represents the aftermath of a July 5 explosion, and its later repetition smacks of editorial carelessness. What was probably editorial calculation was the inclusion of that moment of irritation as "one of the English 'Tommies' gives a German prisoner a dig in the ribs." The American trade paper *Variety*, seeing the film as a potential "gold mine," proposed the omission of this moment of "actual feeling" and some rearrangement. American audiences demanded a stronger narrative, and Charles Urban, handling British official documentaries in America, achieved this by splicing in sections of *Britain Prepared* and shots of an American Field Ambulance (interest was apt to lapse without an American presence). Titles were rewritten, "eliminating what we should call British patriotism," and the resultant seven-episode serial proved highly successful with American audiences. It was shown in 16,000 theatres in 12,000 towns from coast to coast, and by the end of 1917 some 65,000,000 people had paid to see it.

GORDON WILLIAMS

See also **War: WWI**

The Battle of the Somme (UK, British Topical Committee for War Films sponsored by War Office, 1916, 79 min.). Produced by William Jury. Cinematography by J. B. McDowell and Geoffrey Malins. Edited by Charles Urban and Geoffrey Malins. Filmed in France.

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BAZIN, ANDRÉ

André Bazin, the influential post-World War II French film critic, played a pivotal role in the development of French film culture in the 1950s and 1960s. He is also considered (along with Sergei Eisenstein) to be one of the two most important classical film theorists, and an insightful and poetic champion of realism in film. As co-founder and editor of *Cahiers du Cinéma*, for years Europe's most influential film journal, as spiritual leader of the French *Nouvelle Vague* (New Wave), and in his theoretical writings and support of the *politique des auteurs*, Bazin had a marked impact on filmmaking in France and elsewhere. Through his writing he also promoted various film movements, in particular Italian neorealism, and did much to elevate the critical reputations of directors such as Jean Renoir, Orson Welles, Robert Flaherty, and Charlie Chaplin.

Bazin was an insightful realist film theorist. Although his theory of realism is problematic in some regards, it built the foundation for debates that continue to this day. His strengths lay in his criticism more than in his systematic thought. He tended to make theoretical points in the context of writing on specific filmmakers, films, or genres; and, as his chief English-language biographer points out, summarizing Bazin's thought is "extremely difficult" (Andrew, 1976, 136). Bazin is a writer of grace and beauty, however, and an expert with the insightful turn of phrase and the suggestive metaphor. Not least among his qualities was an ability to transmit his enthusiasm for film to his associates and his readers. As Jean Renoir writes, "it is for his influence on his contemporaries that I hold him so deep in my affections. He made us feel that our trade was a noble one much in the same way that the saints of old persuaded the slave of the value of his humanity" (Bazin, 1967, vi).

Bazin did not explicate a theory of documentary, but he valued documentaries and wrote about them often. He accepted the documentary film as an artistic equal to fiction film and, in his criticism, did not draw a sharp distinction between fiction and nonfiction. Yet Bazin's theory of cinema has special import for the documentary, because he argued that film has a unique and powerful capacity to "reproduce" the phenomenal world with an authenticity and psychological power hitherto unseen. For that reason, it is useful to concentrate here on the notion of realism as Bazin developed it.

Like the other classical theorists, Bazin approached the cinema from the perspective of medium specificity theory, introduced by Gotthold Lessing in his *Laocoön* in the eighteenth century, and upheld by various critics and theorists since then. The theory holds that each art form has its own special subject matter and/or unique function that it performs especially well, and that for a work of a particular art form to reach its potential, it needed to exploit that subject matter or perform that function.

The formalist classical theorists assumed that like all art, film needed to be expressive. Formalists saw the dependency on motion photography in

film to be a liability. Hence, they favored various formative techniques as a means to make the cinema *art*, more than the mere recording of visible reality. Conversely, the realist theorists—among whom Bazin and Siegfried Kracauer were the leading figures—claimed that the uniqueness of film stems from its roots in photography and the concomitant realism that it brings. For a film to reach its potential, filmmakers need to respect the realist nature of the medium. Kracauer did not favor any particular technique over another in achieving realism, but Bazin is famous for promoting the use of long take and deep focus as properly cinematic uses of the medium. For Bazin, the essence of the cinema could be found in its most important function, to "reproduce" phenomenal reality. As J. Dudley Andrew writes, Bazin saw the cinema as "a 'sesame' to universes unknown; cinema as a new sense, reliable like our natural sense, giving us knowledge of empirical reality otherwise unavailable" (Andrew, 1976, 145). Grounded on this conception of the essential function of the cinema, Bazin made judgments about the aesthetic success and failure of particular films, and about cinematic and uncinematic uses of the medium.

This kind of medium specificity theory has come under attack for its overly prescriptive tendency, and for focusing on the supposed *nature* of the medium at the expense of *uses* of the medium (Carroll, 1988, 258–263). Even if one rejects the claim that realist uses of the medium are especially cinematic, however, few would deny that the nature of cinematic realism is a central issue of film theory, and that Bazin's thoughts on the matter have been more influential than those of any other theorist. Bazin's contention that film is essentially a realist medium, and that its inception and development stemmed from the human need to record and preserve the world around us, accounts for a central difference between Bazin and the formalist theorists, namely, that Bazin welcomed sound and the sound film. Sound brings the film representation closer to phenomenal reality, and its coming alarmed the formalists and heartened the realists. For Bazin, sound brings film one step closer to "total cinema," the complete reproduction of the world. As Bazin writes in "The Myth of Total Cinema," the purpose that motivated the inventors of film was "a recreation of the world in its own image, an image unburdened by the freedom of interpretation of the artist or the irreversibility of time"(Bazin, 1967, 21). Like the "asymptote," the cinema will always reach out to, but never achieve, ultimate realism.

Bazin's theory of realism had both physical/temporal and psychological components. That is, Bazin thought that the film could reproduce or imitate some of the spatial and temporal characteristics of the phenomenal world and could also provide for the spectator a *sense* of authenticity and realism. For Bazin, the two are inseparable. Spatial realism is essential, a realism "without which moving pictures do not constitute cinema" (Bazin, 1967, p. 212). Cinematic representation ought to give the spectator a sense of the location of objects and the spatial layout of a scene. Bazin also favored temporal realism, an attempt to preserve a sense of the temporal experience of lived reality. He gives the example of Robert Flaherty showing Nanook hunting a seal in *Nanook of the North* (1922). Bazin lauds the director for preserving the actual length of the waiting period as Nanook hunts; "the length of the hunt is the very substance of the image, its true object . . ."(Bazin, 1967, p. 27). Bazin writes that the motion picture "embalms time," but this is not embalming an instant, like an insect preserved in amber. Instead, duration is taken into account, and change itself is "mummified."

Bazin thought that filmic representations could and should resemble phenomenal reality both spatially and temporally. Yet the most interesting elements of his realism went beyond this claim. For Bazin, what makes the moving photograph powerful and expressive extend beyond resemblance to its roots in "mechanical reproduction" (Bazin, 1967, p. 12), in the fact that to a degree the production of the photograph escapes the subjectivity of the filmmaker. This provides the photograph with a special relationship to the scene before the camera and a special power to affect the spectator. Photography carries with it a credibility because it transfers something of reality "from the thing to its reproduction" (Bazin, 1967, p. 14). In this way the moving photography affects us almost like a phenomenon of nature, like a "flower" or a "snowflake." Bazin also writes of the photograph as a decal, a fingerprint, or like the ruins of an ancient building. In each case, the photographic sign bears a special relationship to its referent that lends it not only credibility but expressive power.

Although Bazin did not use these terms, one way to get at the relationship between the moving image and the real is to use philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce's trichotomy, by which he categorized signs according to the way they relate to their referents: icon, index, and symbol. Where the icon *resembles* its referent, and the symbol

relates to its referent solely by *convention*, the index is connected with its referent by *causality* or *proximity* (like a fingerprint), typically bearing a strong physical connection with that to which it refers. In these terms, then, the film scene is both an icon and an index, as it (under specifiable conditions) can resemble its referent spatially and temporally, and has an indexical bond with it by virtue of the mechanical reproduction that created the photograph.

That Bazin had reverence for that indexical relationship between image and reality can be scene in his discussion of the Thor Hyerdahl documentary, *Kon Tiki* (1950). The film was made when Hyerdahl and his associates attempted to prove that the Polynesian Islands might have been populated by sea migrations from Peru. The voyage of the Kon Tiki proved that a primitive boat could make the voyage. The footage of the journey was obviously made by amateurs and is imperfect in many ways. For Bazin, however, this serves to minimize artifice and to strengthen the indexical bond. He writes that the film is imperfect, but marvelous, because "the making of it is so totally identified with the action it so imperfectly unfolds; because it itself is an aspect of the adventure"(Bazin, 1967: 161). At one point, a whale appears and threatens the boat, but the cinematographer fails to capture the whale for the most part. Nonetheless, Bazin writes, the footage is powerful because it captures the sense of danger. It conveys that danger in large part is due to the indexical bond between the moving photograph and scene before the camera. Bazin refers to this indexicality when he compares *Kon Tiki* to "those moss-covered stones that, surviving, allow us to reconstruct buildings and statues that no longer exist." It is the cinematic image, the "objective image," that gives memory "its eternal substance" (Bazin, 1967: 160, 163).

Bazin thinks that the roots of the moving image in mechanical reproduction give the moving image its psychological force. This consists in part of the sense of credibility and authenticity it imparts to the spectator, but also in the sense that reality itself is literally re-presented. (Bazin's ideas here prefigure those of philosophers Kendall Walton and Stanley Cavell, both of whom discuss viewing photographs as a kind of seeing.) Bazin sometimes writes, however, as though the realism he promotes is more a psychological attitude than a relationship between film and reality, seemingly cashing in his ontology for a subjective psychology. He writes, for example, "If the film is to fulfill itself aesthetically we need to believe in the reality of what is happening while knowing it to be tricked" (Bazin, 1967: 48). Elsewhere he remarks that "realism in art can only be achieved in artifice," and that the necessity of making artistic choices necessarily entails a choice "between one kind of reality and another"(Bazin, 1971: 26, 29). One should take these remarks as evidence that Bazin understood that audiences were not naïve in granting authenticity to a filmic image, and that realism in film is always a matter of degree and not an absolute. And although it would be unfair to deny the problematic nature of Bazin's theory, it does seem most accurate to insist that Bazin's realism is both psychological *and* ontological.

Bazin is famous for his promotion of the long take and deep focus at the expense of montage. Bazin tended to favor any technique that would preserve for the spectator a sense of the unity and ambiguity of reality. He championed Italian neorealism for "never making reality the servant of some *a priori* point of view" (Bazin, 1971: 64), claiming that the films of neorealism have "an exceptionally documentary quality" and that even when they represent fictional events, the films "are first and foremost reconstituted reportage" (Bazin, 1971: 20). Bazin favored the use of gaps and ellipses in narrative for the mental activity they demand of the spectator. Of the films of Rossellini, Bazin writes that the "mind has to leap from one event to the other as one leaps from stone to stone in crossing a river. It may happen that one's foot hesitates between two rocks, or that one misses one's footing and slips. The mind does likewise" (Bazin, 1971: 35).

Montage works against realism, Bazin argued, because it creates "a sense or meaning not proper to the images themselves but derived exclusively from their juxtaposition" (Bazin, 1967: 25), and in so doing carves up prereflective reality according to the purposes of the filmmaker. Thus Bazin favored directors like Renoir or Flaherty, who put their faith in reality rather than in the plastics of film technique. Bazin often singled out director Robert Flaherty for praise, and Flaherty's refusal to use montage at certain key points also generates approval. The film shows Nanook struggling with a seal. Bazin writes, "it is inconceivable that the famous seal hunt scene in *Nanook* should not show us hunter, hole, and seal all in the same shot. It is simply a question of respect for the spatial unity of an event at the moment when to split it up would change it from something real into something imaginary" (Bazin, 1967: 50).

Just as Bazin argued against montage, he promoted the long take and deep focus. He took great care in describing the use of deep focus in the Italian neorealist films, or the use of long takes and camera movement in the films of Jean Renoir, for example.

Bazin's biographer, Dudley Andrew, suggests several motivations and influences for Bazin. Andrew foregrounds the importance of philosopher Henri Bergson in Bazin's intellectual development. Bergson wrote about modes of apprehending the world, distrusting the powers of analysis, and emphasizing the importance of reflection, including suprarational modes such as art, faith, and sexuality. Bergson's heritage can easily be seen in later French phenomenology, and as Andrew writes, "Bergson gave Bazin a deep feeling for the integral unity of a universe in flux" (Andrew, 1978: 21). Bazin also had a deep reverence for, and interest in, nature and kept assorted animals around his home throughout his life. Other influences include the journal *Esprit* and the Christian activism of the *Esprit* study group, and also Malraux, Sartre, and the existentialist ethos of France at the time.

Taken to an extreme, Bazin's theory would seem to champion films that merely record, visually and aurally, phenomenal reality, while respecting the temporal unity of such reality. Perhaps a slow and continuous 360-degree pan for the length of the film would be the best way not to add anything to prereflective reality, allowing the spectator freedom to interpret the ambiguous world free of the subjectivity of the filmmaker. Such a film, however, would be unacceptably dull for must of us. The interpretive and creative work of the filmmaker(s) is what is missing from such a film; yet this is precisely the element that Bazin seems to want to preclude. Bazin certainly understands that all films require such creative input, but his theory demands that subjectivity be put at the service of objective reality without sufficiently describing how this might be accomplished. Perhaps it is an impossible demand.

Reality is obviously complex, with many levels. We can believe, as Bazin argues, that film can "reproduce" or represent phenomenal reality, that is, the world as it is seen, heard, and experienced temporally. But certainly there is a deeper sense in which a realistic film would provide explanations for phenomena, would insightfully draw out relationships, implications, psychologies, ideas, and other nonphenomenal elements of reality. Two things need to be said here. First, film images that provide a veridical record of phenomenal reality do not necessarily get at reality in this deeper sense, as the case of the 360-degree pan illustrates. Second, films that "respect" phenomenal reality through the use of deep focus or long takes may nonetheless mislead us about reality in that deeper sense.

The "rhetoric of authenticity" in a documentary, derived in part from that indexical bond between image and scene that Bazin celebrated, can often be misleading. Reality does not speak for itself, and no film technique or set of techniques that merely "reproduces" reality guarantees truth or accuracy. Although filmic images and sounds may sometimes provide evidence for a perspective or a claim, and may give us a richness of information unavailable in other media, it is ultimately the creative work of the filmmaker that enables a documentary to become informative, compelling, and illuminating.

André Bazin introduced these problems with an eloquence that has ensured his work a central place in the history of film theory.

CARL R. PLANTINGA

Biography

Born April 18, 1918 in Angers, France. Studied to become a teacher at La Rochelle, Versailles, and finally, the École Normale Supérieure in St. Cloud, where he passed his exams in 1938. Called into the army in 1939. Quit the teaching profession in 1942. In 1944, began to establish ciné-clubs throughout France and Europe and to write extensively on film for various newspapers, magazines, and journals. Revived *La Revue du Cinéma* in 1947. Became Francois Truffaut's foster father in 1949. With Jacque Doniol-Valcroze, founded *Cahiers du Cinéma* in 1951. Died November 11, 1958 in Paris.

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BBC: THE VOICE OF BRITAIN

(UK, Legg, 1934–1935)

BBC: The Voice of Britain was the first General Post Office Film Unit film to use synchronized sound. It featured appearances by H. G. Wells, J.B. Priestley, G. K. Chesterton, George Bernard Shaw, and even a brief showing by the young filmmaker Humphrey Jennings (as a witch in Macbeth).

As early as 1932, the Empire Marketing Board was approached by the BBC to produce a film advertising and celebrating the new national broadcaster. ''They informed the EMB that, after an examination of the field, they were satisfied that Mr Grierson and his EMB Film Unit were best qualified to make the particular type of film they desired'' (Post Office memorandum to the Select Committee, undated 1932, in Rotha, 1973; p. 128).

In many ways *BBC: The Voice of Britain* was the first film internationally to make clear the power of any major broadcasting institution, as well as spelling out the reithian ideals that informed her public face. The irony of yet another government body making such a project is invisible in the film itself. Nevertheless, the film gives some clues as to why Legg, in his subsequent career, was to be so favoured by large institutional backers including, after the war, that ultimate global player, the United Nations. Grierson biographer, Forsyth Hardy, commented: ''The GPO film is admittedly diverse, but not only is there a plan behind the diversity but an individual approach is established and maintained. The film dramatises its material but humanises it as well'' (Hardy in *Cinema Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1935).

The plan of the film is a straightforward, now classic, one for the ''behind the scenes'' film ever since: the film diary of a day's broadcasting activity at the British Broadcasting Corporation, itself less than ten years old at the time of the shoot.

The set-up of the film is equally normative. The popular cinematic trope of the sleeping (British) countryside is used to convey a land whose natural voice the BBC had, in the mind of the literary and intellectual world, rapidly become. An early morning service conducted by the Reverend Dick Sheppard is the first of the BBC programmes (that day) to ''gently wake the land.'' This lyrical and elegiac mode, later often referred to as the ''ecclesiastical,'' using musical and poetic thematics and images quite unselfconsciously, was to be more fully worked out in later films such as *Coal Face* (1935) and *Night Mail* (1936). In these films the word of poet W. H. Auden and the music of Benjamin Britten were woven into the visual montage in what has become the paradigm of early British public documentary (the GPO and the Crown Film Unit) style and the bedrock of the BBC's own characteristic (and schooled) Documentary House Style for the next fifty or more years.

Paul Rotha saw no particular signs of personal style in the film, however. Writing of a group of films made in the mid-1930s he wrote: ''None of them had any individual characteristics of direction. Any of these three directors (Evelyn Spice, Stuart Legg, and Edgar Anstey) could have made any of the three films'' (Of *BBC: Voice of Britain*).

Apparently there were many periods of funding crisis in the making of the film. This might have been expected in Elton's first (public) filmmaking intersection with the perpetually beleaguered world

BBC: The Voice of Britain, 1934–35.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

BBC: The Voice of Britain, 1934–1935.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

of public broadcasting. Elizabeth Sussex reported that according to World Film News, in May 1936, the actual cost of the shoot through to the final release print was between £7,000 and £8,000.

JONATHAN DAWSON

See also **General Post Office Film Unit; Legg, Stuart**

BBC: The Voice of Britain (UK, GPO Film Unit, Legg, 1934–1935) 56 min, black and white. Directed, scripted, and edited by Stuart Legg.

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BEDDINGTON, JACK

Jack Beddington was a corporate professional specialising in publicity and public relations. In this role in the 1930s, he bestowed patronage to young artists in the fields of painting and cinema and raised the standard and taste in publicity films. In particular, he supported the talents emerging at the documentary film movement, dispensing commissions to filmmakers and providing employment at the Shell film unit. In 1940, he was appointed to head the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, where he improved the effectiveness of film propaganda and greatly raised the profile of documentary in wartime cinema.

As head of publicity at Shell, Beddington became interested in modern forms of public relations. As a cultured man, he aimed to pursue this work with taste and dignity. He therefore commissioned many promising young artists, such as Graham Sutherland and McKnight Kauffer, to work on promotions and advertising. In 1933, Imperial Airways hired Paul Rotha, on Beddington's recommendation, for the documentary film *Contact*. Such commissions helped develop an independent sector for documentary in Britain, alongside the "official" units at the Empire Marketing Board and subsequently the General Post Office. Again, Beddington was instrumental in this when he commissioned John Grierson to write a report on film publicity and from this sprang the Shell film unit in 1934, headed initially, on Grierson's recommendation, by Edgar Anstey. After some "teething" troubles, the Shell unit settled into a close relationship with the documentary film movement, which was reflected in its celebrated detached approach to public relations rather than a narrow corporate publicity, made a significant contribution to wartime propaganda, and continued with popular, acclaimed technical films for many years.

The Films Division of the Ministry of Information made an inauspicious start to the war. Its first head, Sir Joseph Ball, was a tactless appointment, as he was closely associated with the Conservative Party and its political film machinery. Furthermore, he cultivated the populism of the commercial cinema and the newsreels, and he offended the progressive educated classes through the rejection of the leftist documentary movement in the scheme for cinema propaganda. His abrupt replacement by Kenneth Clark, in December 1939, was an improvement, as the new

incumbent was artistically and intellectually acceptable to the critics, and he fostered a new spirit of openness; but he was largely ignorant of film propaganda and lasted only three months. Finally, a successful appointment was made with Jack Beddington, who held the post until the Ministry was wound up in 1946. Beddington benefited from some administrative and policy improvements put in place by the new Minister, John Reith, who developed a clearer direction for film propaganda and found a significant place for the documentary filmmakers in the new scheme. Eventually, Beddington won the confidence of the cinema trade and the Films Division earned an enviable reputation for wartime propaganda.

Beddington was instrumental in arranging, with the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, the screening of "official" five-minute films in each programme, an important early victory in his relations with the trade. In the long term, his achievement was to bring the documentarists into wartime film propaganda while at the same time maintaining effective links with the commercial producers and newsreels. This balancing act could be precarious, and the documentarists were as quick to make criticism as the commercial interests of Wardour Street. He was greatly helped in this task of reconciliation by Sidney Bernstein, both a cinema entrepreneur *and* a friend of minority film culture, who acted as honorary advisor to the Films Division.

The Films Division managed varied responsibilities ranging across news film, guidance of commercial filmmakers in terms of war-related themes, liaison with the official film units attached to the services, and stewardship of the MOI's Crown Film Unit. It is now widely recognised that Britain's wartime achievements with film propaganda was exceptional. Much of the important work derived from Beddington's tenure at the Films Division: effective programmes of theatrical and nontheatrical distribution of propaganda films, adroit handling of Treasury officials seeking restraints on the filmmakers, and the smooth cross-fertilisation of policy and practice through the Ideas Committee, an informal gathering of Ministry officials and filmmakers that promoted awareness on both sides. Such methods ensured "precisely the line that the Ministry wished it to follow in mobilising support for the war effort and in constructing the essential wartime ideology of popular national unity" (Aldgate and Richards, 1986: 10). After the war, Beddington returned quietly to business and seemingly had little direct contact with film.

ALAN BURTON

See also **Crown Film Unit; Ministry of Information; Shell**

Biography

Born John Louis Beddington January 30, 1893. Educated at Wellington College and Balliol College, Oxford. 1914–1919, served with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. 1919–1927, employed in China by the Shell Petroleum Co. Invalided home in 1928, he was appointed publicity manager, then assistant general manager at the London office of Shell-Mex and B.P. Ltd. 1940–1946, served as Director of Films Division, MOI. Awarded the CBE in 1943. After the war, he joined the board of Colman, Prentis and Varley as Deputy Chairman. Honorary Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and the Royal College of Arts. Died April 13, 1959.

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BENELUX

See **Newsreel Series: Benelux**

BENOIT-LÉVY, JEAN

Jean Benoit-Lévy was a filmmaker, screenwriter, and one of the most important producers of French educational and scientific films before World War II. Deprived of his professional position by the anti-Jewish statutes promulgated by the Vichy government in 1940, he sought refuge in the United States in 1941. There, by refocusing and redefining his contribution to educational films, he became a teacher, an author, and an executive officer for the United Nations. He continued his dedication to the importance of film in mass education.

His vision of film is based on his strong family values and the late nineteenth-century's scientific outlook, imbued with positivism. He began his career as assistant filmmaker just before World War I, a time when Europeans were adjusting to the political, social, and educational challenges of mass society. Benoit-Lévy was introduced to the promising new technology by his uncle, Edmond Benoit-Lévy, a lawyer and pioneer of French cinema. The family shared a commitment to the republican ideals of equality, rationality, modern teaching, social reform, and progress.

Benoit-Lévy perceived film as both an art and formidable educational tool. His films testify to his preoccupation with applied scientific knowledge—particularly in medicine, hygiene, and engineering—to improve the living conditions of ordinary people, especially children. He believed that everyone had the right to live a healthy and rewarding life. His films on professional training and craftsmanship are tributes to technical skills and beauty.

He was well acquainted with the small group of talented avant-garde filmmakers of the late 1920s who connected formal research and social documentary. In 1945–1946, Jean Benoit-Lévy would consult this group, which included John Grierson, Alberto Cavalcanti, Paul Rotha, and others, when he reflected on the role and the orientation of future film production for the United Nations Film Board.

In his work during the 1920s and 1930s, Benoit-Lévy's position was reformist, opposed to the revolutionary and authoritarian solutions that flourished during his lifetime. He was attached to traditional values, a strong work ethic, and individual freedom. Nevertheless, he believed that state intervention was necessary to ensure adequate ongoing funding for educational film production, as well as to create a centralized institution dedicated to documentary film exchanges. Furthermore, he was convinced that France had an international cultural influence in this field that should be maintained and strengthened. He was well known in France, a person of stature among the cultural elite of the interwar period, and well acquainted with government officials. The war completely disrupted his personal and professional life. The deprivation he suffered and his exile contributed to his being almost forgotten.

Benoit-Lévy made more than 300 films, many commissioned by institutions and ministries. As an educational film expert, he wrote articles and reports. His proposal to further the use of film in the school system was ambitious: the development of a new pedagogy (*pédagogie cinégraphique*) that would involve a connection between filmmaker, teacher, and student. Moreover, different kinds of educational and social films were required, because learning was not restricted to the classroom. In accord with several documentary filmmakers of his time, Benoit-Lévy believed film audiences should be educated to appreciate different genres. His friend, Germaine Dulac, called this *éducation cinégraphique*. His films were shown in both nontheatrical and theatrical networks. For the latter, he used the category "films *éducatifs spectaculaires*" that included such films as *Pasteur* (1922).

He referred to *films de vie* (films of life) to describe more precisely what documentary films should be. Films of life were "documents of life"; they not only express human activities but "transfer life itself to the screen." They had a profound social function. During the interwar period, he focused on educational and scientific films but also made eleven feature films. For many of those, he worked with Marie Epstein as a writer-director team. The most well known, *La Maternelle* (1933) and *La Mort du Cygne* (*Ballerina*, 1937), follow his film of life (documentary) approach. The truth and reality of social issues could be addressed through a free creative process.

In 1941, Benoit-Lévy and his family came to New York with the help of the Rockefeller Foundation. Unwilling to compromise his vision of film to participate in the American commercial film industry, he taught film studies at the New School for Social Research alongside many refugee scholars. It was

during his teaching tenure that he wrote *Les Grandes Missions du Cinéma*, published in 1945. Film was an autonomous art with its own laws, technique, and means of expression. He believed that logic and visual and intellectual clarity were indispensable to filmmaking. The aesthetics and the editing—beauty and drama—contributed to the *idée-force*, the main idea, that must always be immediately accessible.

He was also convinced that cinema had a social and civic mission. This idea was not new, but it was forcefully repeated as the war was ending and social concern predominated. Then Benoit-Lévy insisted on freedom more than in his prewar writings. Film was a most powerful medium for the diffusion of human thought. After World War II, the discourse was about film bringing people closer together to learn, to discover, and to understand the world.

SUZANNE LANGLOIS

Biography

Born in Paris in 1888, to a middle-class family originally from Alsace. Trained at the Laboratoires Pathé and Gaumont, then began his career as an assistant in 1910. In 1922, founded his company, the *Édition française cinématographique*, dedicated to producing educational films. In 1945, named Director of the Film and Visual Information Division of the United Nations Department of Public Information. Appointed director of the United Nations Film Board in January 1947. Left the U.N. in 1949 but maintained a lifetime commitment to the ideals of international cooperation and mass education. In 1958, the International Council for Film and Television (ICFT) was founded under the patronage of UNESCO, and he was elected its first delegate general. Died in Paris in 1959.

Selected Films

1915 *Les Vainqueurs de la Marne*: director
1920 *Le travail du potier*: director
1922 *Pasteur*: producer (Jean Epstein, director)
1925–1930 *L'École départementale primaire et professionnelle de Vitry-sur-Seine*: director, producer
1933 *La Maternelle*: co-director, co-writer, producer
1935 *La haute fréquence médicale*: director, writer, producer
1935 *Le Maroc terre de contrastes*: director, producer
1937 *La Mort du cygne/Ballerina*: co-director, co-writer
1948 *La Charte des peuples/The People's Charter*: director
1955 *Ballets de France*: director

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BERLIN: THE SYMPHONY OF A GREAT CITY

(Germany, Ruttmann, 1927)

One of the internationally best known and most influential German documentaries of the 1920s was Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Grosstadt* (1927, *Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City*). With Alberto Cavalcantis famous *Rien que les heures* (1926) on Paris, the film started the tradition of the city-films of that period. Walter Ruttmann and his two co-authors, Karl Freund and Carl Meyer, planned to show Berlin in a course of one day from sunrise to around midnight. The last two

wanted to report simply on the daily life in the metropole, but Ruttmann prefered to create a visual symphony with his material. His tool was the montage of formal symbols and abstract structure, which was obviously influenced by his abstract animation films before. The form and movement became more important than the content. ''During editing it became clear, how difficult it was to visualize the symphonic curve, I had before my eyes. Many of the most beautifull shots couldn't be used, because not a nice picture-book should be created, but something like a construction of a complex machine, which only can run, when even the smallest parts fit into each other with exact precision'' as Ruttmann stated in an article shortly after the premiere on September 23, 1927.

Ruttmann suceeded, as the first images demonstrate, when waves of water change into graphic structures. These abstract images then dissolve to a train crossing; a fast-moving train comes, which is heading in the direction of Berlin. The landscape is rushing in front of the window. The rhythmic montage with details again builds up a close intensity. So the spectator already reaches Berlin with high expectations. What will happen next? After this hectic start, a calm moment follows. At five o'clock in the morning, life on the streets wakes slowly. The last night revellers go home exhausted, and the first workers start to rush to the factories. Now the streets and subway fill up. The machines start to run. The montage develops a growing speed, and Ruttmann sometimes experiments with ironic comparisons, for example, when a close-up of the walking feet of the laborers is followed by the feet of cows on their way to the slaughterhouse, which is then followed by marching soldiers. The second act shows pupils on the way to the school; the employees go to the offices; a group is riding in the park. The shops are opening, city life is awakening. An important element of the film is the traffic of cars, railways, trams, subway, and even airplanes, which symbolizes the rhythm of the modern metropole. The lunch break at noon follows the different classes with their specific meals and behavior. Even the animals in the zoo get something to chew. After a short nap, life goes on. A suicide of a woman attracts sightseers. When work is over, leisure time with different kinds of sports begins. The last part shows nightlife of the roaring twenties with theater, cabaret, varieté, dance, and drinking. Berlin is illuminated by neon light. The traffic is still running heavily. The film ends with fireworks. The next day is waiting.

In *Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Grosstadt* the metropole is the main actor. The people often appear in a group, or they are anonymous elements and only part of a mass. There are no individuals to identify with, and Ruttmann shows different classes without preference. He often contrasts the rich and the poor, but he also shows the wealthy middle class or the simple workers. The film was therefore criticized by many, from Siegfried Kracauser to Jerzy Toeplitz to Klaus Wildenhahn. They claimed that the film showed only the surface and that Ruttmann did not analyze the society deeply enough. They also claimed that he did not take a political position. These criticisms miss the point. Ruttmann was interested mostly not in a sociological study, but in creating a special symphony of Berlin. ''The strict rhythmic style of editing indicates that Berlin doesn't wait or pause for anything, and that the rythm of the city, of which the activities of the masses function as a part, is the very essence of the city itself'' (Chapman, 1979: 39). Ruttmann aimed to show this as well as the modernity of Berlin. The broad range of impressions and images in their formalistic structure of editing become a dynamic flow and spectators were attracted by that rhythm, which shows typical life without any heroes. The Hungarian film theorist, Béla Balázs, experienced *Berlin* as ''optical music.'' It was also

Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City, 1927.
[*Still courtesy of the British Film Institute*]

discussed as an example of an "absolute film," where the structure and visual impression is more important than the story. The avant-garde worked on this new form of abstract film, and Ruttmann had been one of the leading persons of that group since 1922. The concept of new realism was best represented in this film, which became the model for many documentaries. Sequences of his Berlin film are still used in historical television programs to symbolize city life in the Weimar Republic. Ruttmann's symphony shows the city in a new way and was one of the first documentaries in the 1920s in Germany that attained the status of a classic.

The film was often adapted afterwards and quoted in many other films. Between 1936 and 1943, Leo de Laforgue shot another Berlin film. The theatrical release was in 1950 under the title *Symphonie einer Weltstadt (Berlin wie es war)* (1950, Symphony of the Metropole [Berlin as it was]), and it showed Berlin before the destruction resulting from World War II and tried to imitate Ruttmann, but he was not successful. The most recent adaption was Thomas Schadt's *Berlin: Sinfonie einer Grosstadt* (2002, Berlin: Symphony of a City). He was inspired by Ruttmann's classic film. The 2002 film is shot in black and white and follows a day in modern Berlin. But the new film also reflects the history of the metropole in the last century and thus develops its own quality. The film is accompanied by modern, abstract music, which gives the film a rhythm of its own. That proved the actuality, which Ruttmann's *Berlin* film still has.

KAY HOFFMANN

Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Grosstadt (*Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City*) (Germany, Deutsche Vereins-Film, 1927, 65 min). Directed by Walter Ruttmann. Writen by Karl Freund, Carl Mayer, and Walter Ruttmann. Original music by Timothy Brock and Edmund Meisel. Cinematography by Robert Baberske, Karl Freund, Reimar Kuntze, and László Schäffer. Edited by Walter Ruttmann. Art direction by Erich Kettelhut.

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BERLINER, ALAN

Alan Berliner has been delving into the intricacies of family life in his documentary film work for many years. His style is at once one of meticulous research and down-to-earth story-swapping as he skillfully blends the personal and the universal. While Berliner's early work was essentially avant-garde or experimental in form and content, he gravitated toward documentary filmmaking largely out of a love for genealogy, family collections of home movies, and an interest in discovering his place in the world through an investigation of his own heritage. This is reflected in the various subjects he has taken for his work, both in form and content.

Berliner's early work explored notions of the avant-garde as well as documentary. Short films made between 1975–1985 are compiled from found footage and use scraps to create new narrative tales. His move into the style of his later, better known work came in 1987 with *Family Album*. Again, this

film used found footage, but the 'bricolage' here (as Berliner calls it) was culled from estate sales. This led to a film reminiscent of Edward Steichen's *Family of Man* photographic project of the 1950s. Berliner constructed this experimental work from personal home movies from the 1920s through the 1950s, moving from birth to death in its progression. Footage celebrating new babies, graduations, birthdays and weddings are juxtaposed with images of life's more sorrowful passages. The film was screened at over twenty major festivals, including the 33rd Robert Flaherty Film Seminar (1987), the Sundance Film Festival (1988), and the Munich International Film Festival (1987). The work was featured in the 1987 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial Exhibition.

Berliner's next work was *Intimate Stranger*. The 1991 film takes as its subject Berliner's maternal grandfather, Joseph Cassuto, a Palestinian Jew who worked as a merchant for the Japanese in the cotton industry in Egypt in the years prior to World War II. His break from his family during the war and the reunion in New York following it give a context for this study of a man admired in his professional life yet unpopular in his own family. Cassuto was unhappy in the United States and ultimately left his wife and children for most of the year to live in his beloved Japan to pursue business interests. Berliner finds means of constructing an elaborate portrait of his grandfather in a way that gives credence to the man's two distinct lives. The multifaceted approach to the discovery of this man's humanity brings dynamism to this complex investigation. This film was accepted into nearly forty international festivals upon its release, including the Margaret Mead Film Festival, Sundance, and Cinéma du Réel in Paris (where it garnered a Special Jury Award in 1992). Berliner was honored with the Distinguished Achievement Award from the International Documentary Association in 1993.

Following a pattern of increasingly personal approaches to his particular style of exploring family and history, Berliner revealed *Nobody's Business* in 1996. This film investigates his father, Oscar Berliner, a self-professed "ordinary guy." Berliner's reclusive father is initially in no way interested in being a willing participant in his son's investigation. The film is delightful in its depiction of the conflict between the two men, one endeavoring to learn more about his father's life, the other deeply concerned with his own privacy and seclusion. *Nobody's Business* takes its title from Oscar's relentless insistence that no one needs to know anything about him. It is not their business, it is not interesting, and he is not interested in making these things known to anyone. Slowly, though, the events of his life are discovered, as Berliner presses his father for clues and explanations. He shows his father old photographs and asks personal questions about their contexts. Stock footage is also employed, most notably the repetition of an image of boxers sparring, seen whenever the discussion between father and son becomes heated. Berliner's research took him to the massive archive run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Salt Lake City, and he shows the magnitude of this genealogical project alongside the microcosm of records relating to his father. This work was an enormous success in its ability to unite the personal tale of one man with the universal story of all of mankind.

The film was shown as the first installment in the tenth season of PBS' *POV* series, where it created a massive level of viewer response. This prompted the combined efforts of several agencies, including the National Archives, to encourage people to explore their own genealogies. The film was screened in over fifty festivals, including a place in the "Frames of Reference" show at the Guggenheim Museum. It won an Emmy in 1998 from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and received major awards from several international festivals.

The 2001 release of *The Sweetest Sound*, Berliner's film exploring the meaning of our names, takes him to Holocaust Memorials, the Vietnam Wall, the NAMES project, AIDS quilt, and other great repositories of memory. He finds that he shares a name with many other Alan Berliners in the world, including another filmmaker, Belgian Alain Berliner. He deals with the concept of "Same Name Syndrome," visiting the Jim Smith Society and the National Linda Convention, before finally deciding to invite the Alan Berliners of the world over to his house for dinner. The study again shows the exquisite communion shared by all humans, even in the face of so much difference. Again a large success, this film was screened by over fifty festivals throughout the world and in such venues as the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC. Berliner won the Storyteller Award at the Taos Talking Picture Film Festival in 2001, and has had retrospectives of his work at the Museum of Modern Art as well as the International Center for Photography in New York City. He continues to explore documentary forms, and is also very active as an installation artist working with found sound and audio environments.

TAMMY A. KINSEY

Biography

Born New York, NY, 1963. Attended SUNY—Binghamton and the University of Oklahoma. Early film work explored notions of the avant-garde and documentary. Film *Family Album* featured in 1987 Whitney Museum of American Art Bienniel. Recipient of grants from National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship. Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. Distinguished Achievement Award from the International Documentary Association, 1993, for *Intimate Stranger*. Berlin International Film Festival, Caligari Film Award, 1997. Nyon Visions du Réel, Switzerland, Grand Prix Award, 1997. Retrospective show at the International Center for Photography, New York. Storyteller Award, Taos Talking Picture Film Festival, 2001. *Family Album*, *Intimate Stranger*, and *Nobody's Business* all screened on PBS series *POV*. Artist-in-residence at Walker Center for Art, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Selected Films

1986 *Family Album*
1991 *Intimate Stranger*
1996 *Nobody's Business*
2001 *The Sweetest Sound*

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BERUF: NEONAZI

(Germany, Bonengel, 1993)

Beruf: Neonazi (*Profession: Neo-nazi*) sparked a controversy at its release in June 1993 leading to its temporary ban in several regions of Germany. Later it served as evidence in the trial of the main protagonist, who was convicted on grounds of comments he made in the documentary, pre-eminently those in which he denied that the Holocaust took place. In Germany, the "Auschwitz-lie" is a crime that has been punishable in law since 1985 and 1994 (Long, 2002). The intense reaction to the film also has to be seen against the backdrop of growing right-wing violence in Germany during the early 1990s.

The post-verité documentary was criticized for its sympathetic treatment of the hero, Ewald Althans, whose neo-nazi views, it was argued, the film presented without taking a stance against them. Althans was not merely a private person, a social actor, observed by the documentary, but an experienced agitator. *Beruf: Neonazi* made the limitations of observational documentary apparent and raised questions as to whether observation is an appropriate method to "expose" a political performer, or whether it merely provides a neo-nazi demagogue with a platform. The director, Winfried Bonengel, argued that only observation could penetrate the slick veneer of Althans, who would unmask himself involuntarily in moments in which his expressions manifested his doubts. Challenging Althans verbally would not lead anywhere, because he was such a rhetorically articulate operator who would dismiss any opposition as merely defensive. Instead of countering his views in a direct verbal debate, the film, Bonengel claimed, visually parodied the convictions of its protagonist through low camera angles that depicted his poses as pompous, like an exaggeration of the elevated angles in Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935). The director and the cameraman saw Althans as "a robot with a tiny little ball for a head" (Niroumand, *Die Tageszeitung*, 18.11.1993). The film's critics, on the other hand, contested the claim that the images provided a parody or critique and found that the camera's positioning merely depicts Althans as superior and enhances his appeal. The cameraman had no choice other than to make images from a

low angle, it was suggested, because he was short and his subject was tall (Donner, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1993).

In the documentary's most controversial scene—the one which ultimately led to Althans' conviction—he talks a visibly shocked young American into the ground with his rhetoric that no one could have been gassed in Auschwitz. Instead, Althans manages to label him as rude and leaves the debate as a victor. Whether the close-up of his face when he is not speaking arrests it in a telescopic prison, as the cameraman Johann Feindt argued (Niroumand, *Die Tageszeitung,* 18.11.1993) and reveals a "rare loss of composure" (Bathrick, 1996—or not, is down to interpretation. In fact, that none of the other Auschwitz visitors objects strongly to Althans' provocations might also be due to the fact that they were intimidated because he was accompanied by a film team rather than by his rhetorical skills. After this scene, the camera, arguably, takes Althans' side when it shows him walking away, and not the young tourist, whose political views the filmmaker and most of the film's audience share: Bonengel "shows Althans from behind as with upright stride he moves away from the camera toward the exit. Like a cowboy who has just brushed off the dust from his pants or like a gladiator leaving the arena" (*Frankfurter Rundschau* 19.11.1995).

The director's argument against using direct verbal challenge does not preclude an expository commentary. Bonengel rejected authoritative voice-over, because it would be patronising and block an allegedly less educated audience from judging for themselves. The dangers of the attraction of fascism needed be experienced in order to be properly rejected, and not be contained by a pedagogic narration, one newspaper agreed (Niroumand, *Die Tageszeitung*, 18.11.1993). Similarly, the German Studies scholar David Bathrick finds that the reception in Germany expressed "an immense fear of any visual ambiguity" rooted in a "legitimating notion of antifascism, that comes to function so successfully in the service of *Bilderverbot* (censoring of images)" (Bathrick, 1996).

Beruf: Neonazi was also criticized for showing a right-wing extremist who was attractive, eloquent, and young (born 1966) rather than repellent, repetitive, and old as were the usual exponents of National Socialism in Germany at the time. These were much easier to dismiss. The "Nazi-Yuppie" constituted an unwelcome reminder that beauty does not preclude fascism and earned the documentary the reproach of glamorizing fascism. Althans himself proclaimed elsewhere: "I am a National Socialist and I am socially acceptable. And National Socialism is then only dangerous, when it becomes socially acceptable" (from Eckerle, Hohmann, "Sein Kampf, mein Sieg" in *Münchner*, 1992, cited in Long, 2002: 4). However, in another of the paradoxes that make out *Beruf: Neonazi*'s history of reception, Althans was regarded as dangerous only by the media and the courts, which in turn boosted his visibility. This was in contrast to his much lower standing in the Holocaust-denial movement itself, especially after he was outed as gay. The 'revisionist international' did not want another closeted gay leader after the neo-nazi Michael Kühnen had died of AIDS in prison (Long, 2002: 76).

At the end of November 1993, the Hessian state parliament banned *Beruf: Neonazi* and confiscated copies because the film did not counter the neo-nazist statements with its own commentary, and it rather seduced young viewers to Althans' positions. The Frankfurt court ruled that the documentary "circulated national socialist propaganda without providing commentary, incited the masses, insulted and disparaged the memory of the dead, and maintained that Auschwitz was a lie." ("Die Deutschen sind noch nicht reif dafür" in *Berliner Zeitung* 11.12.1993, cited in Bathrick, 1996). Rallies were held against screenings of the film, it was demanded that the director pay back the film's grant money, and the distributors withdrew. At the end of December 1993, by contrast, the public prosecutor's office in Berlin pronounced that *Beruf: Neonazi* could be screened in that region, since it was a "critical and realistic representation of actual neo-nazi activities" and "maintains distance to its protagonist . . . through artistic means, through the presentation of counter-positions and externally through the choice of its title." (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 24.12.93).

In a typical succession of contradictory moves for the sake of generating publicity, the German magazine *Der Spiegel* initially attacked the film as neo-nazi propaganda paid for by tax money in November 1993 (*Der Spiegel*, 15.11.1993). Three months later, however, *Spiegel-TV* wanted to broadcast the whole film, but was forced to drop this on account of the strong protest of prominent German public figures (*Frankfurter Rundschau,* 18.2.1994.) Instead, it screened a discursive programme with the title "Show It, Don't Censor It" about the film including interviews with the director and the protagonist, and a 30-minute excerpt of the 83-minute film (Bathrick, 1996). Bonengel objected to a broadcasting of his film. While he defended a screening in the cinemas, arguing that the public space of the movie theatre would foster a

debate among an audience, a broadcast to individuals at home would diminish their ability to be critically distanced and make the solitary viewer more susceptible to Althans' views. Had the film not originated in Germany—or had it indeed had been neo-nazi propaganda rather than a production by a serious filmmaker—it would probably not have evoked such a heated debate.

In September 1994, the same State Court of Berlin that previously had allowed the screening of *Beruf: Neonazi* arraigned Althans on grounds of his utterances in the film, which again effected a temporary ban of the documentary. Ironically, the screening of the film resulted in a court case against its main protagonist, which eventually resulted in his conviction after he previously had been acquitted due to lack of evidence for his right-wing activism. The former documentary subject represented himself in the trial, claiming that he had merely re-enacted his previous neo-nazi persona for the documentary. He further maintained that with his statement in the documentary "What is going on here is a massive hoax," he meant the film itself and not the gas chambers of Auschwitz, in which he stood at the time. In a sense, Althans claimed to have taken the same position toward his own comments as the filmmaker did: he "only wanted to make a neutral statement, as to what an orthodox neo-nazi would be." (*Associated Press*, 13.6.1995). He furthermore argued that he played up to the image of a neo-nazi, because he did not want to alienate anyone. While conducting his own defense, Althans was sometimes moved to tears by his own depictions of his life, bearing witness to the director's suggestion that his subject became the victim of his own narcissism. The film team was enlisted in court as witnesses that their subject was authentic in the documentary. The cameraman testified that Althans' behavior in the documentary was genuine; that is, he was not acting when making his right-wing comments (*Associated Press*, 13.6.1995). The courts accepted his utterances as evidence, and in 1994 and 1995 Althans was sentenced to three and one-half years altogether, six months longer than asked for by the prosecution, for denial of the Holocaust, glorification of Nazism, defaming the memory of the dead, and incitement to hatred.

SILKE PANSE

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BEVERIDGE, JAMES

For five decades, James Beveridge was known widely in the documentary community as a producer, director, presenter, administrator, and educator. His career was strongly influenced by his mentor, John Grierson, with whom he maintained a close friendship. In 1939, Beveridge was the first Canadian to be hired by Grierson at the nascent National Film Board. He was trained on the job at the wartime Board, serving as Executive Producer for a number of production units as well as working on many films as writer, director, producer, editor, host, and narrator. After Grierson's departure from the NFB in 1945, Beveridge became the Secretary of Production. Beveridge began a long association with India in the early 1950s, helping to shape the postwar Indian documentary

through his work as Head of Production of the Burmah Shell Film Unit and his co-founding of the Pune Film and Television Institute (India) and Jamia Millia Islamia Institute Mass Communications Research Centre. Beveridge was also founding Director of the North Carolina State Film Board. Like Grierson, Beveridge was a television presenter of documentary films, hosting the series *Let's Face It* on CBC television, co-hosting *Four Religions with Arnold Toynbee & James Beveridge,* and later serving as the daily critic on Canada's private network, CTV. His work as an educator included a visiting professorship at New York University and the founding of Canada's largest university-based film program at York University in Toronto.

The more than 150 films Beveridge produced and directed can be divided into two categories. Most are shot in the voice-over style of the classic Griersonian documentary and focused on the specific social issues that concerned the agencies with which he worked. Beveridge attacked these projects with a high degree of social commitment. *Inside Fighting Russia* challenged the limits of the official commitment to Canada's wartime ally. Beveridge's series, *Minority Report,* produced at the North Carolina State Film Board, was a rare (perhaps only) example of a southern U.S. state examining its own racial policy at the height of the civil rights movement. But Beveridge also had a passion for exploring the work of musicians and other artists. He was a regular contributor to the PBS *Creative Persons* series. *Glenn Gould—Off the Record*, the film he edited at the NFB in 1959, was among the first attempts to use the new *cinema verité* style to document an artist at work. That same style shaped the films he produced and directed on Indian artists: *Satyajit Ray* and *Bismillah Khan*, a series, *Musicians of North India* and *A Himalayan Tapestry* (for which he won the President of India's Gold Medal Award for best documentary). It is also apparent in his documentary *Hands*, about the national living treasures of Japan. His wrap-around multi-screen film for EXPO '67's *Man In Control* theme pavilion tested his lifelong versatility and creativity with a third approach to documentary.

SETH FELDMAN

See also **National Film Board of Canada**

Biography

Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1917. Graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1938 and began work at the nascent National Film Board the following year. Met John Grierson in England in 1939. Served as the NFB's Production Secretary (head of production) from 1945 to 1951 when he was transferred to the NFB's London distribution office. In 1954, moved to Bombay to become the Head of Production for the newly formed Burmah Shell Film Unit. With the closing of that unit in 1959, returned to the NFB. From 1959 to 1960 he was moderator on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation programme "*Let's Face It.*" Seconded by the NFB to establish the North Carolina State Film Board where he produced fifteen films between 1962 and 1964. Returned to India in 1967 as consultant/Chief Officer of the Indian Films Division in Bombay and as adviser on the establishment of the Television Production Wing for the Pune Film and Television Institute. Served as a consultant for the Canadian International Development Agency and UNESCO, on the development of rural television programming strategies. Returning to Canada in 1970, became the founding chair of the Department of Film and Video at York University in Toronto. In India again from 1982 to 1987, founded and directed the Jamia Millia Islamia Insititute Mass Communications Research Centre in Delhi. Received the Academy of Canadian Film and Television's Lifetime Achievement Award in April. 1991. Died the following year in Toronto.

Selected Films

1941 *Peace River*: producer, director
1942 *Inside Fighting Russia*: producer, director
1957 *A Himalayan Tapestry*: producer, director (President of India's Gold Medal Award for best documentary).
1959 *Glenn Gould—Off the Record*: editor
1961 *Four Religions with Arnold Toynbee & James Beveridge*: producer, moderator
1964 *The Minority Report* series: *Vote and the Choice is Yours, A Knocking at the Gate, Goodbye to Carolina*: Executive Producer
1967 *The Creative Person* series *(PBS)—Wealthy Fisher, Satyajit Ray, Bismillah Khan*: producer, director
1970 *Music of North India* series—*Amjad Ali Khan, Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jasraj, Vijay Raghav Rao*: producer, director
1974 *The Dalai Lama*: producer, director
1975 *Hands*: producer (Winner, Grand Prize, International Craft Festival, NYC)

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BIRRI, FERNANDO

Fernando Birri has been dubbed the "godfather," "father," and "pope" of the pan-continental film movement known as the New Latin American Cinema. Birri was one of the first filmmakers to document underdevelopment, poverty, and other social problems in what Michael Chanan calls a critical realist style. In his 1962 manifesto entitled "For a Nationalist, Realist, Critical and Popular Cinema" Birri explains:

> [It [New Latin American Cinema] was born because . . . a generation of filmmakers was growing up who wanted to provide a reply to some of the problems of the moment. . . . They were questions that came from an historical necessity, a necessity in the history of our peoples . . . a place denied us for so many years, a place which . . . as the title of the beautiful Nicaraguan film has it, is a place of bread and dignity. These ideas, I believe, explain something of the tension out of which the New Latin American Cinema was created and motivated.]
>
> (Birri, in Barnard, 79)

Birri was formally trained at the Centro Sperimentale in Rome during the 1950s by some of the great masters of Italian neorealist cinema. It was there that Birri learned to film ordinary people living their everyday lives, and to valorize a "culture of the people," or popular culture. His aim was to create a popular cinema that elevated the folkloric elements in Argentine popular culture and to initiate a cinema that would raise peoples' consciousness about the disparities of wealth and degrees of human suffering in Argentina as well as Latin America as a whole. As John King observed, Birri made the attempt to adopt and transform neorealism in the context of Latin America, to break with the distribution and exhibition circuits of commercial cinema, and incorporate new working class and peasant audiences into more democratic cultural practices (King 85).

Birri's philosophy initially stemmed from the tenets of liberation theology, a movement that gained prominence in Latin America in the 1960s, as well as from Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, in his work on "the pedagogy of the oppressed." More specifically, Birri drew from Freire's idea of *concientización* (conscientization) and a philosophy of praxis (Chanan, 38). From these ideas Birri made films such as *Tire dié* (1958, Toss Me a Dime) and *Los inundados* (1961, Flooded Out). The latter film features a family from Santa Fe whose home is destroyed every time the flood season hits the region. Despite the dramatic content, the film is a picaresque comedy, using actors from the popular theatre, and non-actors. The sound track is by folk singers from the provinces as well as by famous *payadores* (gaucho troubadours). Without losing the human side of the characters, the film avoids converting the family and others into stereotypes of victims, but at the same time, the film's storyline is replete with satirical jabs at political figures, the government, bureaucracy, and even poor people in the area (Ruffinelli,1).

Birri called his films and others comprising the New Latin American Cinema "a poetics of the transformation of reality." He goes on to explain that "it generates a creative energy which throughout cinema aspires to modify the reality upon which it is projected." The ultimate objective for Birri was "to have no abyss between life and the screen." (Birri, in Barnard, 81).

Birri's documentaries from the late 1950s and early 1960s were considered revolutionary in their time because they varied so drastically from the mainstream films produced within the prevailing studio system based in Buenos Aries. Birri was reacting to what he deemed "an accomplice cinema" in veiling the brutal social realities affecting the majority of people in Argentina.

He worked in the province of Santa Fe in the hopes of democratizing film production to areas often considered the "periphery" of the nation. However, after his films were completed, he faced problems with official censors because the films did not present "a pretty picture" of social conditions in Argentina. In 1962, when *Los inundados* played in film festivals, the censors under the centrist Frondizi government responded by attempting to seize all copies in circulation. When it won prizes at the Venice film festival and Karlovy Vary (Czech Republic) that year, the official censor and other critics were offended and accused Birri of poor technical ability and low production values. Birri, in defending the film, said the technical imperfections were the result of the non-professional means he had been forced to work with, and that he preferred "the contents to the technique, to make sense imperfectly than to have a senseless perfection" (Birri, in Gamucio Dagron, 87).

After the military coup of 1963, Birri left the country definitively and fled to Italy. There he worked on a series of experimental and documentary films under the aegis of the Laboratory of Film Poetics. During this period he filmed political documentaries, such as *Mi hijo el Che* (1985, My Son Che), and a 3-hour experimental film (ORG, 1986) directed under the pseudonym Fermaghorg. His philosophy of life and filmmaking shifted from a less militant, realist outlook to one stressing more eclectic and hedonistic tendencies. In his manifesto poem, "For a Cosmic Cinema, Raving and Lumpen: The First Cosmunist (Cosmic Communist) Manifesto," he expresses the need for a "revolution in language" that included "a montage of attractions," "a sensorial experience," involving what he deems a "sensual hedonistic erotic communism" (Birri in Barnard, 83).

In 1986, he helped found the International School of Film and Television in San Antonio de los Baños in Cuba and worked as its director until 1991. During this period he directed a magical realist film, *Un señor muy viejo con alas enormes* (*The Old Man with Enormous Wings)*, based on a short story written by Colombian novelist Gabriel García Marquez. Birri has continued to make a diverse range of films about Latin American topics, the latest a critically acclaimed film project that is an adaptation of Uruguayan cultural critic Eduardo Galleano's *Century of Wind* (1999), a transcontinental mosaic of Latin American history in the twentieth century.

TAMARA L. FALICOV

See also **Tire dié**

Biography

Born in Santa Fe, Argentina, in 1925. Studied at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia de Roma, 1950–1953. Returned to Argentina and founded the Film Institute of the National University of the Litoral in Santa Fe, 1956. Founded the "Laboratory of Cinema Poetics" in the Film Department at the University of the Andes in Venezuela, 1982. Worked as Director of the School of the Three Worlds, San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba, 1986–1991. Received a lifetime achievement award at the International Documentary Film Festival of Leipzig, 1997. Founded the Birri Foundation, dedicated to funding young artists and fostering media education, 1999.

Selected Films

1958 *Tire dié* (Toss Me a Dime)
1959 *Buenos días, Buenos Aires*
1961 *Los inundados* (Flooded Out)
1963 *Pampa gringa*
1985 *Mi hijo el Che* (My Son Che)
1986 *ORG*
1988 *Un señor muy viejo con alas enormes* (An Old Man with Enormous Wings)
1999 *El siglo del viento* (A Century of Wind)

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BIRTLES, FRANCIS

Adventurer Francis Birtles started his career with a solo cycle ride from Perth to Melbourne in 1905. By the end of his life, he had cycled several times across and around Australia, had been the first person to drive a car from London to Melbourne (1928), had set records for other car journeys across the continent, and had traveled extensively over the routes of early explorers. He always carried a camera, creating illustrations for books and journal articles, including images of life in outback towns or on remote station properties, encounters with native peoples, and confrontations with the natural world (including wild animals, flooded rivers, duststorms, and bushfires).

The Gaumont company was sufficiently impressed to send cameraman Richard Primmer along with Birtles on his 1911 ride from Sydney to Darwin, out of which came the film *Across Australia* (1912). In 1914, Frank Hurley accompanied Birtles on a trip to the Gulf country, commissioned by Australasian Films. Hurley returned to Sydney to join the Shackleton Antarctic expedition, but completed the film *(Into Australia's Unknown,* 1915). After that, Birtles did his own cinematography, producing *Across Australia on the Track of Burke and Wills* (1915), *Through Australian Wilds*: *Across the Track of Ross Smith* (1919), and *Australia's Lonely Lands* (1924). For him the film was always a by-product of the adventure, and he seemed unaware that he had pioneered a new genre—the expeditionary film (or outback adventure film). Other examples of the genre included Hurley's *Pearls and Savages* (1921), and William Jackson's *In New Guinea Wilds* (1920). A new flowering occurred in the 1960s, and included Keith Adam's *Northern Safari* (1966), Malcolm Douglas's *Across the Top* (1969), and numerous films by the Leyland brothers (starting with *Wheels Across the Wilderness* (1969). Currently, the genre lives on in television series such as *Outback Adventures with Troy Dann* and *Bush Tucker Man*.

By the late 1920s, documentary films were not quite so lucrative, and— following the example of Frank Hurley and J. E. Ward (*Australia's Own* 1919)—Birtles turned briefly to narrative fiction. He still set his films in the outback, but now weaved a story around the familiar images of indigenous life and the natural world. *Coorab in the Island of Ghosts* (1929, directed by Francis Birtles and Torrance McLaren) was ahead of its time in employing no white cast at all, but by current standards is uncomfortably paternalistic. It is the only one of Birtles' films to survive, and is held in ScreenSound Australia (the National Collection of Film and Sound).

INA BERTRAND

See also **Documentary Film: Australia; Hurley, Frank**

Biography

Born Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia, November 7, 1881. Served in the merchant navy from age 15, then in South African army and police from 1899. Returned to Australia 1905, began a career of outback traveling, taking still photographs and cinematograph films. Joined the board of Austral Photoplays Ltd, surveyed the overland telegraph route from Adelaide to Darwin (1920–1921), and discovered a payable gold mine (1934). Died July 1, 1941 in Sydney.

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BITOMSKY, HARMUT

In his essay, ''The Documentary World,'' the German documentary filmmaker, Hartmut Bitomsky, advanced the idea of the documentary film image as ready-made. Like the artist, the filmmaker takes an object out of its original environment into a new context (Bitomsky, 2003: 206). Taking this idea further, it is not only that he treats images as objects but that his images are also of objects: the Autobahn, the beetle, the B-52 bomber. Arguing against the current focus in documentary film on the depiction of lives as individual or bizarre cases, Bitomsky is interested in the socioeconomic and planned effects of these functional objects of transport and war (Bitomsky, 2003: p. 275). Tellingly Bitomsky did the voice-over narration on the experimental documentary *Four Corners* (1997) by James Benning, another filmmaker who prefers the filming of streets, machinery, and landscape to that of individuals. (Benning also did the sound on *B-52*.)

The ''object'' of Bitomsky's films, however, is not a closed entity. For Bitomsky, the dialogue with the images is imperative. The images are not merely ''objective'' material untouched by the viewing process. *Playback* (1995), for example, follows the articulated thoughts of workshop participants at the Amsterdam Film museum, as they closely analyze early silent film footage. In *Playback* the filmmaker narrates: ''There are not new films and old films, there are only films one has seen and films one has not seen.'' It is the relation between both the visible, on the one hand, and the imagination of the filmmaker and the viewer, on the other, that produces a new entity. His documentaries do not merely depict an empirical, visible surface, but they *make* it visible (Bitomsky, 1972). Bitomsky is interested in not only creating original images but in producing new images through the viewer's interaction with existing ones. His films examine the processes of production and trace the path of its material in the way they are made, as well as in what they depict. *Der VW-Komplex* begins the way *B-52* ends, with the dismantling of its object on a scrapheap. The discarded machinery makes for new images, though. Bitomsky's ''recycling'' of images is economic.

In many of his documentaries, Bitomsky finds ''reality'' in photos and footage stored in archives. In his examination of cinema through the medium's own means, the fragment retains its quality in itself and is not subsumed under a new whole. Bitomsky's ''interest starts after reality and event has already been formed into story''' (Pirschat, 1992: 5). The fragment can be a part of a machine or a section of a moving image. Exposing the found footage as fragments that are not integrated allows the viewer to examine their construction without being drawn in. In Bitomsky's films, the viewer is always made aware of the viewing process. This is achieved by making the image itself into an object by, for example, framing it. Bitomsky follows Levi-Strauss's dictum that to understand images better, one must resist experiencing them, and this is realized by making them smaller (Bitomsky in *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1992). In *Die UFA*, for example, the camera films several monitors at the same time, each showing different footage. Another way Bitomsky distances the viewer is to show photographs instead of moving images with the hand of the filmmaker moving his material and turning the pages of books full of images, rather than having the image fill the whole of the screen. This gives viewers the space to detach themselves from the image, but it also depicts the filmmaker as a manual worker given that the still images are propelled forward by manual labor.

Work has an aesthetics and aesthetics are work. Both impact on one another. At the beginning of *Reichsautobahn* the filmmaker narrates: ''The Autobahn is the biggest German edifice. At its inauguration Hitler said: 'We'll make sure that the work does not become separated from those who built it.''' Bitomsky argues that it was the aestheticisation of the Autobahn—it it was made for sight—which which was a means for work placement, rather than its functionality. His documentaries reflect the reciprocal influencing of ideology, industry,

and images, as well as the interlacing of the civilian and the military and of culture and war (Bitomsky, TAZ 2002). Bitomsky's interest in the functional aspects of the aesthetic is consonant with Brecht, who wrote that "less than ever does a simple reproduction of reality tell us anything about reality. A photograph of Krupps or the AEG yields hardly anything about those industries. True reality has taken refuge in the functional" (Brecht, 1967: 161). The subject matter of his documentaries often is industrial and technological (roads, cars, fighter planes) and, as such, decidedly masculine. The image engineer Bitomsky, however, is interested in the unplanned malfunctions of these grand designs of modern technology: the disintegration of the pompous, totalitarian plans of Hitler's Autobahn in *Reichsautobahn,* or the many accidents in the power weapons of the Cold War in *B-52*. In *Die UFA,* another example, Bitomsky points out that the Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels had to prohibit the anti-communist propaganda films they initially had commissioned. Even though the Nazis used communist footage against the Soviet's original intent, this inspired people to see the original films. This does not happen with Bitomsky's documentaries using found footage, however, as they examine and work through the originals and do not just reject them. In Germany, showing Nazi propaganda footage within a film has to be indexed by commentary, subtitles, or inter-titles. The German film scholar Klaus Kreimeier argued that announcing the Nazi footage as propaganda precludes any experience of the images as anything other than propaganda (Kreimeier, 1992: 16). In contrast to television reports or other German documentary filmmakers such as Erwin Leiser and Joachim C. Fest, who use Nazi footage as evidence, Bitomsky's documentaries do not use the markers of authenticity such as speech in sync-sound technology as proof. Rather, his films show Hitler before he talks and then paraphrase the content. Moreover, unlike for instance Emile De Antonio's narration in his compilation films, Bitomsky's is not merely contrapunctual against the original footage of, for example, Nazi images. Instead, Bitomsky carves out their inherent contradictions. Even though Bitomsky's documentaries address the concrete consequences of an ideology, they are not directly political. His films delineate the conflicts between the concepts of ideology and the causes and effects of industry not only in terms of his subject matter but also with respect to the film industry, which his documentaries are in the least possible way part of.

Since 1974, Bitomsky has published, edited, and contributed to the influential German film journal, *Filmkritik* (1957–1985), amongst others with his friend the documentary filmmaker Harun Farocki. With his fellow Anglo-American and French film semioticians at the time, the documentary filmmaker shared an enthusiasm for American fiction film such as those by Samuel Fuller or John Ford. The latter features *Das Kino von John Ford* (1979) in Bitomsky's portrait. Although his earlier reviews in *Filmkritik* and his book *Die Röte des Rots von Technicolor* (1972) were influenced by semiotics, they are written like an instruction manual. Bitomsky approached semiotics like the Volkswagen in *Der VW-Komplex*. His style of writing is similar to that of his film narrations: profound and—untypical for analytic texts in German—constructed in short sentences. Bitomsky does not only analyze found images in his documentaries, but unusual for a documentary filmmaker, he has published texts about his films. The visual "quoting" of found images in Bitomsky's films can perhaps be seen as a continuation of his frequent citing of texts in his early film reviews. In writing about the reception of his documentaries that already reflect production processes of other objects of modernity, Bitomsky constructs a circular trajectory in which he engages in a similar process with his writing about his films as he does in his filming about found images and objects.

Before Bitomsky left Germany, his documentaries could broadly be divided into two groups: films that reflect on their medium such as the videofilms about the cinema *Das Kino und der Tod* (1988), *Kino Flächen Bunker* (1991), and *Das Kino und der Wind und die Photographie* (1991), and films about images of Germany such as *Deutschlandbilder* (1983), *Reichsautobahn* (1986), and *Der VW-Komplex* (1989) (Pirschat, 1992). *Die UFA* (1993), about the national-socialist image politics with respect to the German cinema studios, combined both. With *B-52* (2001), invented by the Germans in the World War II and further developed by the Americans for the Cold War, the focus has shifted to his chosen home country. Hartmut Bitomsky has produced more than forty documentaries.

SILKE PANSE

Biography

Born in Bremen, Germany, 1942. Read German literary studies, theatre studies, and journalism at the Free University Berlin, 1962–1966. Changed to the then-new German Film and Television Academy Berlin, 1966–1968. Expelled for political activism during the student revolts. Worked for the West German Television (WDR) from 1973. Published, edited, and wrote for the film journal *Filmkritik*, 1974–1985. Visiting Lecturer at the Academy for Film and Television in Munich, the Free University Berlin and the German Film and Television Academy Berlin after 1975. Dean of the School of Film and Video at the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles, 1993–2002. Still teaches there. Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Selected Films

1970 *Die Teilung aller Tage*
1971 *Eine Sache, die sich versteht*
1976 *Humphrey Jennings. Bericht über einen englischen Filmemacher*
1976 *Das Kino von John Ford*
1980–1981 *Highway 40 West – Reise in Amerika*
1983 *Deutschlandbilder* (with Heiner Mühlenbrock)
1985–1986 *Reichsautobahn*
1988 *Das Kino und der Tod*
1988–1989 *Der VW-Komplex*
1991 *Kino Flächen Bunker*
1991 *Das Kino und der Wind und die Photographie*
1993 *Die UFA*
1995 *Playback*
1999–2001 *B-52*

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BLACK AUDIO FILM COLLECTIVE

The Black Audio Film Collective was formed by a group of British filmmakers and audiovisual technicians committed to independent filmmaking. The collective began as an informal grouping in 1982 and was soon established as a cooperative in 1983. It became a franchised workshop in 1986 under the workshop declaration, along with other London-based film and video workshops Sankofa, Ceddo, and Retake Film and Video Collective. Support for an independent filmmaking practice emerged from the election of a Labour administration in 1981 to control the Greater London Council (GLC). The combination of the Thatcher government and inner-city riots gave rise to a politics of difference and identity. The GLC increased funding for the arts and the priority given to representing the ethnic diversity of London. The Black Audio Film Collective emerged out of the context of a changing cultural politics and ailing British film production funded by a combination of The London Borough Grant Scheme, British Film Institute, Channel 4, The London Borough of Hackney, and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. The problem of dependency on grants was not new to marginal filmmaking, but it did enable the collective to innovate and challenge dominant practice.

Black Audio's commitment to experimentalism and audiovisual form incorporated documentary film practice as a means of articulating the diasporic experience of the British nation and empire. The films of the collective interrogate and hybridize the cultural history and language of the documentary form by taking existing dominant cultural signs and radically recontextualizing them. This is demonstrated in the early work of the collective, a tape-slide show called *Expeditions: Signs of Empire and Images of Nationality* (1982).

One of the key reference points for Black Audio was the British documentary and modernist tradition of filmmaking. The production of the award-winning documentary, *Handsworth Songs* (1986), juxtaposed media coverage of the civil disorder in the Handsworth district of Birmingham in 1985 with a reflexive excavation of the documentary and newsreel archive that records the journey, arrival, and settlement of the Afro-Caribbean population into the mother country and the industrialised West Midlands. The contested critical reception of *Handsworth Songs* amongst not only black cultural critics underlined how the collective effectively countered both the expositional documentary realism that represented blacks in Britain and the politics of the monologic black subject.

The growth of the workshop sector in the 1980s was encouraged by the commitment of Channel 4 to British filmmaking and the decision to establish an Independent Film and Video department with Alan Fountain as senior commissioning editor. *The Eleventh Hour* became an "independent" and avant-garde slot where at eleven o'clock on Monday evenings Channel 4 would broadcast workshop productions and documentaries from outside the United Kingdom that resisted the "impartial" conventions of television documentary.

The Workshop Declaration was agreed on in 1982 between Channel 4, the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT), the British Film Institute, the Regional Arts Association, and the Independent Filmmakers Association. The nonprofit-making, and noncommercial workshops were run cooperatively and committed to an integrated and collective practice of production, exhibition, distribution, and development of audiences, research, education, and community work more generally. The Black Audio Film Collective was active outside London; it staged program at independent cinemas and toured the country with its tape-slide program *Expeditions*, gaining insights through discussions with audiences. The distribution of the black workshop sector went beyond regional and metropolitan art house cinemas and into social clubs, community centers, and cultural associations (Pines, 1988). Pressure exerted by the Independent Filmmakers Association led to an independent distribution group, The Other Cinema opening the Metro Cinema in London, where films such as Sankofa's *Passion of Remembrance* (1986) and Black Audio's *Handsworth Songs* gained the first West End runs of workshop films (Williamson, 1993).

After the Broadcasting Act of 1990, Channel 4 was responsible for selling its own advertising and consequently withdrew its backing for the workshops. The prior abolition of the GLC compounded the situation for the workshops. Black Audio Film Collective continued its commitment to an innovative filmmaking practice and secured commissions for the production of documentaries such as *Touch of the Tarbrush* (1991) for the BBC as part of a series about English identity; *Mysteries of July* (1991), a documentary for the Channel 4 series *Critical Eye* concerning deaths in police custody; and *Seven Songs for Malcolm X* (1993) *and The Mothership Connection* (1995), a documentary exploring the connection between pan-African culture and science fiction, with the latter documentaries circulating via the international film festival circuit.

Black Audio Film Collective forms part of the tradition of British Independent filmmaking maintained by similarly organized groups such as the London Film-makers' Co-operative founded in 1966 and the Independent Film-makers' Association formed ten years later. The presence of the Black Audio Film Collective and the workshops meant that a number of experiments took place involving filmmaking practice that questioned the critical agendas of British documentary, British cinema, and black culture and politics and also demonstrated that British documentary filmmaking was not solely confined to television.

IAN GOODE

See also ***Handsworth Songs***

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BLACK BOX BRD

(Germany, Veiel, 2001)

Germany's long and painful struggle to overcome the legacy of the Nazi regime reached a cataclysmic peak during the terrorist siege to which the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF, Red Army Faction) subjected the nation and its government in the late 1960s and 1970s. The terrible violence during the fall of 1977 was portrayed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Volker Schlöndorf, and a team of other directors in their joint film *Deutschland im Herbst* (Germany in Autumn, 1978). The following decades saw a decrease in the number of terrorist assaults, but the attacks on representatives of industry and government continued into the 1990s and ended only when the RAF eventually announced its own dissolution on April 20, 1998.

In his much-acclaimed film, *Black Box BRD*, which won both a German and a European Film Award, Andres Veiel follows the lives of two people directly connected to this conflict, Alfred Herrhausen and Wolfgang Grams. In the film, they represent the two opposing sides, although both died a violent death. Herrhausen was senior manager of Deutsche Bank when he was killed by an RAF bomb on November 30, 1989 while driving to work in his car. Grams, a leader of the third generation of the RAF, had been living underground since 1984. He died on June 27, 1993 during an exchange of fire with police officers attempting to arrest him. Investigations into the exact circumstances of his death have failed to provide conclusive answers.

Veiel approaches his difficult topic in a manner that is personal, yet remains distant from a narrative point of view. At no point in his film does the filmmaker comment directly on the events portrayed. The film ends with a few lines of text that do not attempt to answer the many questions raised by the film, but simply provide specific historical data on Herrhausen's and Grams's deaths. The text states that it is "unclear" whether and to what extent Grams was involved in the attack on Herrhausen, causing hesitation on the part of the viewer who may be attempting to create a direct connection between the two stories.

The personal atmosphere of the film is a result of the many private memories shared by family members, as well as former friends and colleagues of the two main characters. These interviews are the main sources of information from which the film draws. In addition to these interviews, which make up the overwhelming majority of the film's running time, Veiel incorporates archival footage from private home movies that strengthen the personal tone of his biographical film. To provide the audience with some context, *Black Box BRD* also includes scenes from original news programs, thereby providing not only necessary historical information for a contemporary audience, but also a sense of the urgency and drama that surrounded the political conflicts during the decades when Germany was finally taking a closer look at its historical legacy.

It becomes increasingly apparent throughout *Black Box BRD* that the unconstrained idealism with which both segments of society were pursuing their political and societal goals still prevents many people, years and decades later, from analyzing the incidents with any degree of objectivity. The issues that initially stirred the student demonstrations, and then escalated into the RAF's terrorism might have been overcome had those issues been dealt with appropriately during the conflict. One of the great and sad ironies of Herrhausen's murder is that it occurred at a time when he was already starting to steer Deutsche Bank away from the hard-line capitalist ideology of the post-war boom years. After a meeting with Mexico's president, he proposed to the bank's board that they take greater account of the social consequences of their operations. Although his intentions alienated many of his senior colleagues, Herrhausen's plans might have found much support in the public debate about the social role and responsibilities of corporations.

Black Box BRD is aptly named after a technological device, the workings of which most of its users do not comprehend. The film is structured like a mosaic or puzzle and thus also presents itself as a mysterious object. Its manifold pieces, mostly brief segments smoothly cut from longer interviews, resist the temptation of presenting a conclusive or linear narrative. The film moves back and forth between the lives of its two main subjects, following their biographies in more or less chronological order. Beyond the interviews, Veiel filmed very little additional material: staged footage of the fateful auto convoy, neighborhoods, Deutsche Bank, and prison buildings. Veiel clearly refused to follow the current trend of producing a docudrama, in which historical and archival material is edited in a way that it becomes almost indistinguishable from reenacted scenes. The additional (fictitious) footage that Veiel included is helpful, however, as it often provides subtle clues whenever the film's narrative moves from one of its main characters to the other. Because there is no voice-over narrator in *Black Box BRD*, these transitions perform a crucial function. In general, however, the film's almost detached relationship to its topic is noticeable. The camera remains mostly immobile, and sound is natural, with only the theme song occasionally providing some distraction from the tense statements of the people on the screen.

As did his earlier film about German youth in the 1970s, *Die Überlebenden* [The survivors, 1996], Veiel's *Black Box BRD* refuses to judge the two people it portrays so intimately. It presents them as complex individuals who have, on occasion, questioned their own ideologies and principles. As a rule, the interviewees are not questioned while on camera. The film instead presents testimonials, memories, and the lasting pain deriving from the search for answers by the friends and relatives of Herrhausen and Grams, who represent all those who did not survive the dark terrorist phase of Germany's postwar history. *Black Box BRD* is not afraid of silence, as when family members are overcome by emotion and unable to continue. Yet, the film's very existence provides an outspoken and powerful reminder that the absence of clear answers does not have to mean that the past can be forgotten, thereby providing a valuable counterweight to cultural and political amnesia.

GERD BAYER

See also **Veiel, Andres**

Black Box BRD (Germany, 2001, X Verleih/Zero Film, 102 min) Distributed by Warner Home Video. Produced by Thomas Kufus. Directed by Andres Veiel. Shooting script by Andres Veiel. Cinematography by Jörg Jeshel. Assistant direction by Andreas Teuchert. Music by Jan Tilman Schade. Editing by Katja Dringenberg. Sound direction by Paul Oberle.

Selected Films

1991–1992 *Winternachtstraum*: director, writer
1993 *Balagan*: director, writer
1995–1996 *Die Überlebenden*: director, writer
2001 *Black Box BRD*: director, writer
2003 *Die Spielwütigen*: director, writer

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BLANK, LES

An independent documentary filmmaker from the United States, Les Blank is considered a maverick for his lush films on food, regional music styles, and communities on the fringes of mainstream American society. The founder of Flower Films in El Cerrito, California, Blank has directed and/or produced approximately thirty-three documentary films since 1960. In addition, he has served as crew member on approximately seven other films, including additional photography on *Little Dieter*

Needs to Fly (1997, Werner Herzog) and uncredited second camera on *Easy Rider* (1969).

Les Blank studied in the Ph.D. film program at the University of Southern California and worked as a freelance industrial and commercial filmmaker in Los Angeles before directing his own independent documentary films. Blank initially financed these films by continuing to make promotional films for such companies as Holly Farms Poultry, Archway Cookies, and the National Wildlife Federation. His work has since been funded by such entities as the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Film Institute, The National Endowment for the Humanities, The Ford Foundation, The Guggenheim Foundation, PBS, and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Major retrospectives of his work have been mounted worldwide, and feature articles have appeared in such publications as *Film Quarterly, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, Mother Jones, Rolling Stone*, and *The Village Voice*. Blank was awarded the American Film Institute's Maya Deren Award for outstanding lifetime achievement as an independent filmmaker in 1990, and his documentaries have been internationally recognized with awards, including The British Academy Award, the Grand Prize at the Melbourne Film Festival, The Special Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival, the Grand Award at the Houston Film Festival, the Golden Jugo at the Chicago Film Festival, and the Best of Festival Award at the San Francisco Film Festival.

His documentary films are praised for the intimate and privileged glimpses they provide into artistic and culinary subcultures in the United States and are particularly recognized for capturing and visually/aurally preserving aspects of American culture that have now faded or disappeared altogether. He incorporates an organic and sensual shooting style that allows the viewer privileged views of artists, food lovers, and others who are committed to living life to the fullest. Possibly best characterized as artistic visual ethnographies, most of Blank's films invite the viewer to a better appreciation of common folk who have dedicated their lives to community around a common interest. These interests include garlic; late 1960s flower children; Serbian-American, Hawaiian, Afro-Cuban, Louisiana-French and Tejano music; bluegrass fiddling; German filmmaker Werner Herzog; women with gaps between their front teeth; beer; and Cajun and Creole cooking. Music is often an important cinematic element in his films, and close-up shots of steaming pots of sauce, pigs suckling, women dancing, people laughing and enjoying whatever it is that gives them pleasure and their lives meaning, are delicately paced to weave a tapestry of experience for the audience. Often presented as tight vignettes or segments, Blank's films unfold to gradually allow the viewer more information on the subject and people at hand. The subject matter, often quirky and outside of mainstream American experiences, are engaging and gratifying to observe. Blank uses a delicate hand to unfold stories of commitment to craft and community, often intercutting snatches of informal conversations, relaxed interviews, imbedded and privileged observational footage, and occasional hand-lettered explanations and subtitles. As a filmmaker, Les Blank appears to be at ease in every situation he documents and with every person he engages. He allows them to demonstrate and discuss their cultural nuances with dedication and passion, rarely seeming sentimental or patronizing. His shooting and editorial styles are as earthy and dedicated as the subjects he explores, and his films are noted for their devotion to vision and independence.

C. Melinda Levin

See also ***Del Mero Corazón***

Biography

Born November 27, 1935, in Tampa, Florida. Received a B. A. in English literature and an M.F.A. in theatre from Tulane University. Studied in the Ph.D. film program at the University of Southern California. Awarded the American Film Institute's Maya Deren Award for outstanding lifetime achievement as an independent filmmaker in 1990.

Selected Films

Running Around Like a Chicken With Its Head Cut Off (1960)
Dizzie Gillespie (1965)
God Respects Us When We Work, But Loves Us When We Dance (1968)
The Sun's Gonna Shine (1969)
The Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins (1969)
Chicken Real (1970)
A Well Spent Life (1971)
Spend It All (1971)
Dry Wood (1973)
Hot Pepper (1973)
Chulas Fronteras (1976)
Always for Pleasure (1978)
Del mero corazon (1979)
Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe (1980)
Garlic Is As Good As Ten Mothers (1980
Burden of Dreams (1982)
Sprout Wings and Fly (1983)
In Heaven There Is No Beer? (1984)
Cigarette Blues (1985)

Huey Lewis and the News: Be-FORE! (1986)
Ziveli! Medicine for the Heart (1987)
Gap-Toothed Women (1987)
Ry Cooder and the Moula Banda Rhythm Aces: Let's Have a Ball (1988)
J'ai ete au bal (1989)
Yum, Yum, Yum! A Taste of Cajun and Creole Cooking (1990)
Christopher Tree (1991)
Julie: Old Time Tales of the Blue Ridge (1991)
Marc and Ann (1991)
Puamana (1991)
Sworn to the Drum: A Tribute to Francisco Aguabella (1995)
Maestro: King of the Cowboy Artists (1995)
My Old Fiddle: A Visit with Tommy Jarrell in the Blue Ridge (1995)

BLUE EYED

(Germany, Verhaag, 1996)

Blue Eyed was selected as one of the outstanding documentaries of 1996 by the Academy of Motion Pictures. The film is centered on Jane Elliot, who has committed herself to fighting prejudice, ignorance, and racism in society after the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968. Elliot, a former teacher, offers a special training course, in which she divides people on the basis of two arbitrary physical properties: blue or brown eyes. She declares the latter to be better and more intelligent and grants them privileges that she denies to the blue-eyed, who are deemed to be inferior and less intelligent. When she started this workshop in her school, all the members of her family were aggressively attacked by their white fellow citizens and their restaurant had to close.

At the beginning of the experiment, the blue-eyed people are marked with a green collar around their necks. These seventeen candidates are sent to a small, overheated room with only three seats. They have to wait a long time for their appearance in the workshop and do not really know what will happen. The brown-eyed participants are encouraged to consider themselves special, and to treat the blue-eyed contemptuously. For the first time, many white people become acquainted with the feeling of belonging to a condemned group that can never win. They experience the feeling of being discriminated against, in the same way that society today discriminates against women, people of a different color, homosexuals, or the disabled.

The film documents this workshop with three observing cameras. They keep close to the protagonists, creating a sense of discomfort and tension for the viewer. There are only short breaks with typical images from America, beautiful shots that are accompanied by a jazz sound track, giving an impression of the atmosphere of the American middle class. The film was shot with a budget of $200,000, and the crew shot seventy hours of Digi-Beta material. The final film was than transferred to 35mm. The director, Bertram Verhaag, shows how the group dynamics work and why nobody among the blue-eyed can resist the mechanisms of suppression. The film shows the core of racism: power and its use against the weak or disenfranchised.

As film critic Thomas Klingenmaier wrote: "It won't help much to be prepared to face Jane Elliot. This elderly woman will tear down any shield. Even we, the spectators of *Blue Eyed*, can't get rid of this feeling of uneasiness, embarrassment, anxiety and utterly helpless hatred when she starts putting people down, humiliating them, deriding them, incapacitating them. No doubt about this: for three quarters of the time in this documentation Jane Elliot is the meanest, the lowest, the most detestable, the most hypocritical human being hell has ever spit back on earth. But she should be an example for all of us."

KAY HOFFMAN

Blue Eyed (Germany, 1996, 90 min) Directed by Bertram Verhaag, in cooperation with Jane Elliot. Produced by

Denkmalfilm Ltd., in co-production with: WDR, 3SAT, BR. Production Manager: Alon Gilk. Director of Photography: Waldemar Hauschild. Additional cameras: Hans-Albrecht Lusznat and Glenn Eddins. Camera Assistant: Christina Schultz. Editing by Uwe Klimmeck. Music by Wolfgang Neumann. Sound by Zoltan Ravasz, with Bopp King and Joe Thoennes.

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BOND, RALPH

Ralph Bond's talent as a filmmaker was limited, but his political activism and organisational abilities have clearly left a mark on British documentary. Having worked in the insurance business, Bond, a young Communist, started a career in politics in 1927 as the secretary of the National Left Wing Movement. In 1929, the new Communist political line favouring the development of an independent proletarian culture offered Bond the chance of organising the cinema side of it. Following the examples of Germany (Volksfilmverband) and France (Les Amis de Spartacus), he set out to establish a workers' film movement to give working-class audiences access to Soviet and other films of artistic and political merit. Like its "bourgeois" counterpart, the Film Society, and its political rival, the Masses Stage and Film Guild (controlled by the Independent Labour Party), the workers' film movement used the legal and organisational form of the private society to get around censorship measures. The London Workers' Film Society, the flagship of the UK-wide Federation of Workers' Film Societies (FOWFS), was the first to start its activities in November 1929. Writing in periodicals as far apart as the cinephile *Close-Up*, the CP controlled *Daily Worker* and the movement's own *Workers' Cinema*, Bond acted as a tireless propagandist for the cause.

As a manager of the Atlas Film Co. that imported films from Germany and the Soviet Union for FOWFS member-societies, he also embarked on an ambitious production program. With limited means, Atlas produced three issues of the newsreel *Workers' Topical News* (1930–1931), a compilation film *Glimpses of Modern Russia* (1930) and a twenty-minute film to support the Workers Charter Campaign, entitled *1931 The Charter Film*. By the end of that year, however, the supply of new Soviet films dried up as a result of the coming of sound, and Atlas was on the verge of bankruptcy. Bond was happy to accept an invitation by John Grierson, who had occasionally helped out Atlas, to join his Empire Marketing Board (EMB) Film Unit.

Working as production and studio manager at the EMB Film Unit, Bond earned the respect of his colleagues for his knowledge of Marxism, which in the eyes of many in the documentary movement offered the only viable political alternative to the crisis-ridden capitalist system. Bond, on the other hand, completely endorsed the social realism of the documentary movement, "the drama of the doorstep" as he coined it later, and respected Grierson as "a man of extraordinary talent." Bond had the chance to direct a few documentaries at the General Post Office (GPO) Film Unit, successor to the EMB Film Unit, and then moved on to Strand Films. In *Today we Live* (1937) he was able to show his views on the plight of the unemployed. Commissioned by the National Council for Social Service, the film was co-directed by John Grierson's sister, Ruby. Her location was a seemingly picturesque Cotswold village, but Bond chose the bleak