



Fat Daddy Crowns Corman King-Cinema

by Michael Hirsh

Roger Corman, the Euripides of modern drama, makes Antonioni look like Donald Duck, in his film "The Trip" now playing at the Towne Cinema. Corman has always been a dynamic filmmaker, but The Trip certainly qualifies him as the best living director. Until this year, he made countless grade B movies such as The Raven and The Fall of the House of Usher. In Hollywood, his reputation has rested on his ability as a producer to make any film in half the time, for half the cost anyone else could. While working on The Masque of the Red Death with Vincent Price he finished nine days ahead of schedule and so went ahead and shot The Haunted Palace in the remaining time with the same cast and set. Both were highly successful at the box office, but The Haunted Palace netted twice as much money. This year Corman made his step away from the grade B feature. Besides The Trip, he has made The Wild Angels and The St. Valentine Day Massacre. His pet project, a biography of Robert E. Lee has already been scripted by Hollywood's foremost living original screenplay writer, Leon Katz, and will star Henry Fonda in the title role.

The weaknesses of The Trip stem from certain inadequacies of the script written by Jack Nicholson. Nicholson's story presents us with a realistic portrayal of Paul Robe's psychedelic experience. Most aspects of that experience such as paranoia, schizophrenia, and a distortion of judgment and perception are really well done. But Nicholson's failure to interpret these experiences instead of merely duplicating them results in a weakened artistic experience. It is precisely this realistic style which leads to embarrassment on the part of the audience. Corman is sometimes able to transform that embarrassment into empathy through his organization of the film.

"The Trip" is visually constructed as a gestalt which is perceived as a labyrinth whose matrix forms a confusing set of events where any distinction between appearance and reality is blurred. The key to the labyrinth is slowly developed into an overwhelmingly sexual experience, with a unique rhythm created through a use of all of cinema's visual strategy. A constant changing focus is a pattern which plays counterpoint to other patterns of superimposition, flicker and editing. The whole is a complex and enveloping rhythm which sucks the viewer into the vortex of an unnamable labyrinth.

entertainment

Bergman's Persona Is So Mysterious...

by Jane Rosenberg

Bergman's knowledge of, and ability to deal with the film medium is clearly revealed in his latest film Persona.

The viewer is made aware of his genius through his capacity to seemingly present three dimensional images on the screen. In the opening scene especially, he seems to be experimenting with both old and new techniques of the film. His use of black and white is extremely powerful as it enables him to give the illusion of shadows both within and without his characters. This primitive technique also enables Bergman to impress his idea on the audience that what they are actually seeing is a film and not life.

The boy begins to run his hand along the appearing face of a woman. The illusion of reality in this scene is so forceful that one is tempted to believe that the images seen in front of us are real.

Bergman does not want the distinction between art and reality to be forgotten, and so he includes a shot of a cameraman in the middle of a scene to further remind us that what we are seeing is a film. It is interesting to note that only one allusion to his preoccupation with religion is included. Again I feel that the shot of the nail being driven into the palm of a hand with its resultant reactions is an extension of his experimentation with the medium.

It seems to me that the main reason for Bergman's choices of technique is to further emphasize the alienation of the people within the framework of the film. A relationship between two people who are thrown together is established--one is an actress who has chosen to remain silent so that she does not have to lie to herself or the world by speaking untruthfully; the other is a nurse who had never spoken more than superficially with anyone. The situation under examination carries with it an inherent attitude towards alienation, and its effects on people which is the idea that the movie develops. The

predominance of dark shadows forces a sense of tension, and even gloom on the audience. The nurse feels she has actually become the actress, shown filmatically by the implanting of one half of the actress' face on the nurse's. That half of her face is never again fully seen. This internal change could not have been shown as profound if black and white had not been used.

Image after powerful image never cease to appear on the screen. The unbelievable illusion of the frightening reality of the work is never allowed to be lifted.

This is one of the most powerful films I have ever seen. The acting is honest, and Bergman brilliantly catches every gesture, every expression and even the very rhythms of walking and running without allowing any superficial aspects to interfere with the true naturalness of the situations. To go to it, to be able to sit and allow all the images to be absorbed into your subconscious is an experience you will never be able to forget, especially if you walk out and realize there is a great deal you did not understand intellectually, but that you felt emotionally.

It takes two to figure it out

by Douglas Wilton

A bell rings. A sleeping boy stirs, rises to his elbows. Dainty creases in linen sheet. Delicate body. Dark, pouting lips. Sexually ambiguous. He puts on circular glasses, reads. He looks up at the camera, extends his hand, touches a blank screen: an enormous face, out of focus. His mother? The pattern of features changes. His mother?

PERSONA
The boy's face.
A FILM BY INGMAR BERGMAN
A woman's face.
L. BI ANDERSSON
Another woman.
LIV ULLMANN
An open vulva. Montage of images intercut with film credits.
DIR. PHOTOGRAPHY - NYKVIST
Luminous, metallic lighting; spare, severe compositions. Reminiscent of Dali, Wyeth, etc. The content of film is older media.

Elizabeth, an actress, rejects the phoniness, the ultimate obscenity of modern life by retreating into silence. The doctor prescribes a holiday by the sea in the company of a young nurse, named Alma. What follows is a sort of dance of mirror images. Alma accepts the roles that others impose on here, accepts

incomplete being. Elizabeth rejects the demands of others and struggles for complete being, for integrity. Her silence forces Alma to be honest for a change and so serves as a mirror in which she, Elizabeth, sees what she might become. An inner conflict is set up - between the habit of accepting Alma and the fearful honesty of becoming like Elizabeth.

Alma's conflict serves Elizabeth as a mirror in which she can examine the epistemology of her silence. In the end they become perfect mirror images. Elizabeth's resolve is strengthened but Alma moves steadily toward full identification with her. Within Alma a dark Elizabeth emerges, proud in her freedom, contemptuous of the blind, compulsive demands of others. And, having her own Elizabeth, she has no further need of the other woman.

At the end of the film she takes a last look in the mirror, says goodbye to her reflection (Elizabeth's image is superimposed) and goes away.
blick blick 23567
flashing loop of film
lens turn dark
electrodes separate
fade to grey.

Flim Flam Man a Walt Disney Epic

by Frank Liebeck

The Flim-Flam Man, the Flim-Flam Man, how wonderful to be the Flim-Flam Man. He has the knowledge of life's secret plan, and makes a lot of bread on the side. George C. Scott plays this man who is kind, and gentle. George C. Scott does a lousy job.

Perhaps I expect too much from him, but after his performances in Dr. Strangelove and The Hustler, I feel I'm entitled to demand more than a cartoon character. He spends too much time conveying old age, rather than a sly, old con artist.

The entire movie borders on Walt Disneyism, about as sophisticated as Tugboat Annie. It's good for the kiddies, which means half of York should enjoy it.

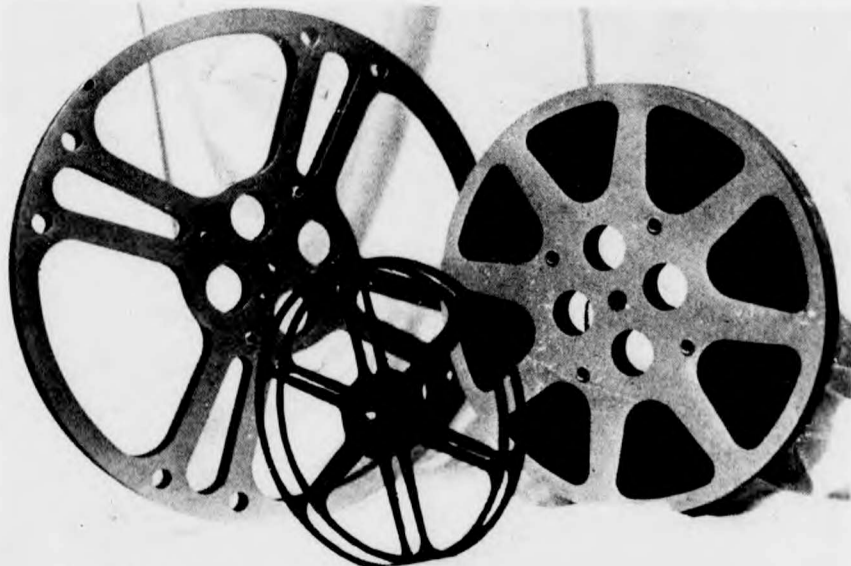
There is a new star in this film. It says "Introducing Michael Sarrazin". Well, Mr. Sarrazin, now that we've been introduced, I hope this is the last I see of you. If prizes were given for consistency, he should get one for his blank expression, which doesn't change a shade,

except for one moment in the picture where he is asked to act beyond his capabilities.

In this scene he must choose between going with George C. Scott, or Sue Lyon. That was the log that broke the beaver's

back. If the director had established a warmer and closer understanding between the two men, it would not have looked so campy.

I'm glad he chose Sue Lyon. She can't act either, but she played Lolita, and you should have seen Lolita. Michael did.



The Flim-Flam Man a reel bomb.