

# Jump Cuts

by Jack Vermece

It is with some reluctance that I attempt to discuss the work of critic/director Francois Truffaut. As he is one of my two favorite directors, a discussion of his life and work presents a unique problem. How can I produce a coherent, satisfying column, on a man I've been thinking and reading about for a couple of years, without becoming hopelessly simplistic, and thereby producing a piece of trash? I probably can't, but....

One of the first things that attracted me to Truffaut (other than his reputation as the leading proponent of the "auteur theory") was his obvious, near-pathological obsession for everything that is film. Any biography of Truffaut makes you realize how thoroughly he was (and, by all accounts, still is) possessed by the spirit of the movies.

The product of an unhappy home, Truffaut, at the age of twelve, would skip school constantly, sneak into the cinemas of Paris and watch films all day. (He still lovingly talks about these times.) At fifteen his growing passion lead him to form a film club, called "Cercle Cinemaine" that tried to compete with Andre Bazin's more prominent and prestigious cine-club. Of course Truffaut's club failed and he was jailed because of the club's unpaid bills. Bazin (who was in the process of becoming one of the most influential of modern film critics) negotiated Truffaut's release and gave him a job writing about film. Said Truffaut, "It was the first happy time of my life...watching films, talking about them, and to top it off, I was getting paid for it!"

Truffaut, and newly-found companions Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol,

Eric Rohmer and Jacques Rivette, spent the 50's writing and learning about film. When they had learned enough and solidified their philosophy of film (the "auteur theory" - the director should be the author/creator of his film and the film should reflect the personality of the director) they turned to making films. What followed was, of course, the onslaught of the French New Wave.

Of the New Wave invaders it is perhaps most obvious in Truffaut's case that "the cinema is the man and the man is the cinema." He has made a series of five autobiographical films termed the "Antoine Doinel cycle" which trace the life and loves of Doinel/Truffaut from pre-puberty until his 30's. He even used the same actor, Jean-Pierre Leaud, from age 11 or 12 until his 30's. How much more personal could a director get? Truffaut's *Day for Night* shows us.

*Day for Night* is the absolute apotheosis of Truffaut's personal cinema and a perfect example of all that is good in a Truffaut film. It is a movie about making a movie that stars Truffaut in the role of (what else?) a film director. Its wonderful combination of love and loathing, tragedy and comedy, wistful romanticism, in-joke tributes to other directors and total devotion to that god known as film, make *Day for Night* both a celebration of all that it is to be human and a perfect example of the cinema of Truffaut.

As a final note I would be dishonest if I didn't mention one more reason for loving Truffaut. His life in film is the ideal that every would-be film critic/maker wishes for: being able to view film after film after

film, having similarly obsessed friends to discuss these films with, writing about films, learning how to make them, eventually making them, and finally achieving recognition for your efforts. An irresistible lifestyle n'est-ce pas?

Films for your viewing pleasure:  
*Grand Hotel* (1932) The enigmatic loveliness of Greta Garbo is featured in this star-studded (John and Lionel Barrymore and Joan Crawford) drama. I'm going for Garbo, alone, March 4 (7:00 pm.) at the Princess.  
*Diva* (1981) Bad guy punks with crew-cuts and dark glasses, exotic opera stars, corrupt

cops, great chase scenes, deus ex machina, homages to earlier French films, and, above all, scrumptious cinematography make this much applauded thriller/romance both totally implausible and a lot of fun. March 3 (9:45), 6 (9:15) and 9 (9:25) at the NFT.  
*Sabrina* (1954) William Holden overacting outrageously as a brash young playboy boob? Humphrey Bogart as his mature sensible older brother? Audrey Hepburn as a chauffeur's daughter sought after by both boob and bro? Bizarre casting makes this film an interesting and funny comedy/romance. March 6 (7:00 pm.) at the Princess.

## Orchesis varied and unusual

by Jim Miller

I managed to slip in and preview the up and coming production of the Orchesis amateur dance group which operates under the auspices of the phys-ed department.

I will admit I am a relative neophyte entrant to the field of dance appreciation, so please take what I have to say with a grain of salt.

The first number after the first curtain was jarring and shocking.

The music consisted of a sustained monotone with drum rhythms for a background rising gradually to a screaming pitch. All I can say for the dance that accompanied it (people being dragged around; picking aimlessly at non-existent flowers; disjointed group movements) is that it followed well with the sound. It reminded me of an allegorical piece on the development of intelligence.

Next was a short individual number to

an uptempo rhythm. The movements were smooth, fluid and a lovely respite to the ponderous nature of the piece before. Alas it ended all too soon.

Eleven women in long flowing dresses were well choreographed to a slow Spanish tune, next. The introduction of them all facing the audience and then gradually turning individuals 180° was fascinating.

Later in the number I had trouble—a change of pace saw these elegant long flowing dresses twirling each other around like a village folk dance. Somehow it broke the mood.

A male dancer was just beginning to dance to an on-stage grand piano as I slipped out.

If you're a dance afficianado or if you're a newcomer exploring a new art form I think the variety of this production will offer something to enjoy.

## Up & Coming

National Film Board presentation premiere of *The kid who couldn't miss*, directed by award-winning Canadian film producer Paul Cowan today at 8 pm, Centennial Library, free admission (Another look at the life of Billy Bishop, WWI flying ace).

Also starting tonight, the Orchesis dance troupe is doing their show until Saturday at SUB Theatre, 8:00 pm, \$5.00.

## Louis Falco breathtaking

Louis Falco Dance Company  
Jubilee Auditorium  
February 28 and March 1

by Dave Cox

Fluid ferocity of dancing and an eerily exciting background score combined to make the Louis Falco Dance Company show Tuesday night a success.

The show literally gave me chills. Perhaps because it relieved an otherwise bad day, it seemed just right to me, but my reaction was shared by an appreciative Jubilee Auditorium crowd.

The first number, *Hero*, highlighted the dynamic, continuous-action style of Louis Falco's choreography. The unique stylizations of the posing and the action riveted observers.

The second and keynote piece, entitled *Black and Blue*, was positively stolen

by the performances of Ranko Yokoyama and Juan Antonio.

As (respectively) Babyface the Third and Kid Washington, they acted parts in a boxing match which very cleverly metaphorized the struggles of life. Ranko Yokoyama's dancing here, as throughout the other two pieces, were breathtaking.

The background music the Falco company uses adds greatly to the impact of the dance. The dance itself celebrates the body as the best dance should.

Imago was a fitting finale. To an African rhythm, and in costumes that looked something like a New Wave-jungle- explosion, it closed the show with a bang.

The company deserves to bear the name of its choreographer— Louis Falco has a fine eye for the visual, and presents the audience with a thorough treat.

What more need be said?

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