

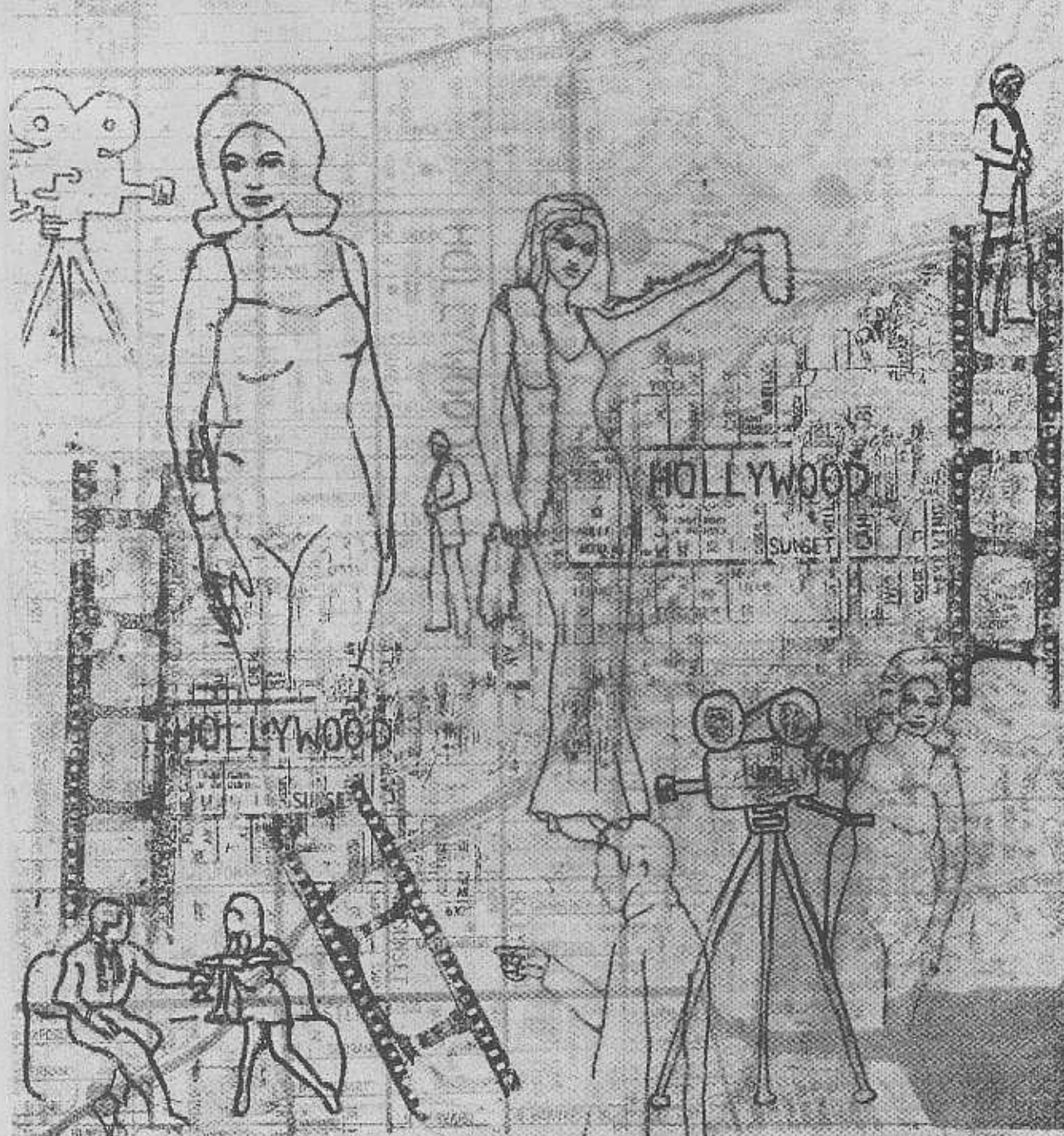
The Hollywood Issue

also inside:

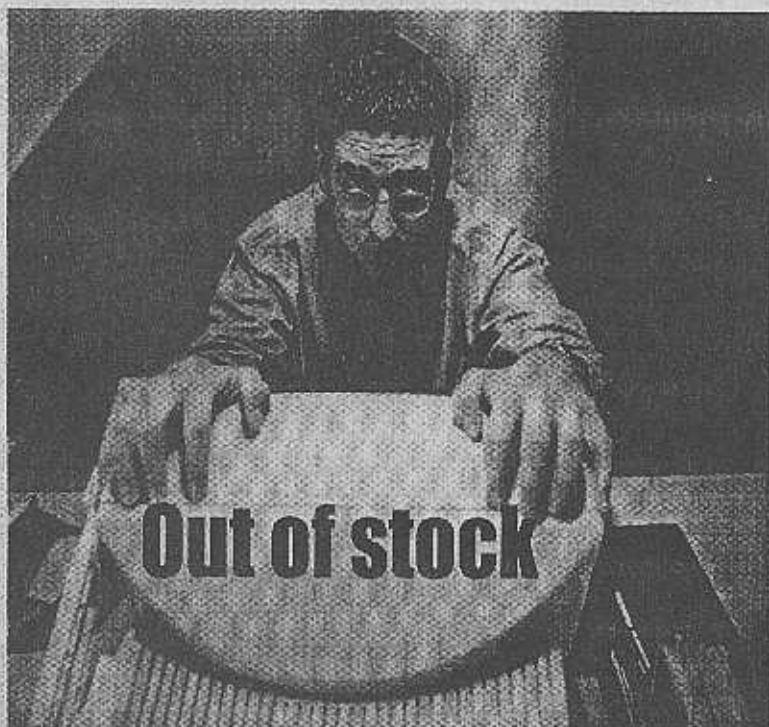
Trailers, Film Language, the FAC,
Interviews w/ UCSC Filmmakers,
& Mini Reviews



FILM JOURNAL AT UCSC
DECEMBER 1999 - NO. 2



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from the directors:

We hope you'll enjoy our second issue of Eye Candy. Our theme this issue focuses on exploring the Hollywood empire in relation to its history, audience, themes, competition and technology.

Additionally, our features this issue span from interviews with UCSC faculty to highlighting films and videos that deserve support and recognition.

Tell us what you think: email:

ucseyecandy@yahoo.com.

Happy Holidays,

-Sarah, Nikki, & Beth

p.s. thank-you to all of our new and continued supporters: Shelley Stamp, Eli Hollander, Mary Hiatt, Linda Potzus, and the UCSC Film Department, Dean Houghton, Peggy Jones and the UCSC Arts Division, Robin Chanin and the UCSC Press Center, Robert Campbell, Brian O'Connell and the Bay Tree Bookstore, Jason Dreier, Pergolesi, Caroline at Polar Bear Ice Cream, our cover designer Angelina Primavera and finally our great crew.

eye candy credits: cast & crew

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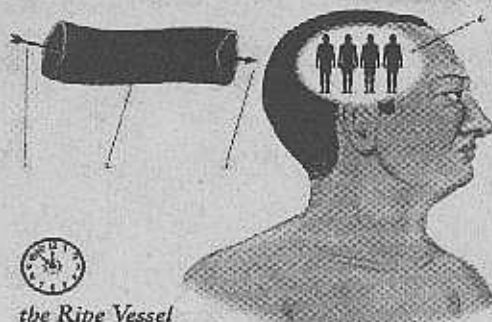
Seeing John Malkovich

Before seeing *Being John Malkovich*, I tricked myself into thinking the experience would be similar to guzzling gasoline from a pump. Amazingly, I actually found watching the film to be even better than that. It was exactly like drinking the best over-the-counter WD40 (wildly exciting). In fact, Charlie Kaufman's first script is immensely intriguing and original.

The wonderfully imaginative plot is as follows: a struggling street puppeteer (John Cusack) finds a portal at his new job on the seventh and a half floor which can take anyone inside the mind of John Malkovich (Malkovich plays himself). He then shows his co-worker (Catherine Keener) and his wife (Cameron Diaz), thus giving birth to the strangest love triangle in cinema history.

Part of film's success is the acting which, even under the most insane circumstances, maintains every character's vivid believability. Spike Jonze, directing his first film, also helps hold *Being John Malkovich* together, when it certainly has the opportunity of overwhelming audiences. Jonze, now ripe for stardom, started his career making skateboard films and rose to fame with his commercial and music video work (Beastie Boys' "Sabotage", Weezer's "Buddy Holly" and "Sweater Song", Fat Boy Slim's "Praise You", among countless others) and can be seen in *Three Kings* as Pvt. Conrad Vig. I found every corner *Being John Malkovich* turned overtly entertaining and this independent film is destined to become a classic, so plan on watching it a decade from now when your children rent it on DVD. Oh yeah, I almost forgot, Sam actually did *Quantum Leap* into John Malkovich once in 1975 to see the premiere of *Jaws*, where he enjoyed an ice cold cup of oil, on the balcony.

-Ryan Reyes



the Ripe Vessel

Why Didn't Sam Ever Quantum Leap Into Malkovich?

Classic Video Pick: MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO

There are many factors which may keep you from renting *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988). It's a cartoon, it's in the family section, and the cover looks cheesy. But I challenge you, as a fan of cinema, to not let preconceptions prevent you from bringing it to the counter. And this is why: *My Neighbor Totoro* is one of the best films of all time.

The storyline follows two young sisters, Satsuke and Mei, who move out to the countryside with dad to be closer to mom in the hospital. But that all falls to the wayside about 20 minutes into the film when the true meaning kicks in. This is a film about what it is like to be a kid.

It starts with the dustbunnies. The scene comes without warning, and suddenly there is something more happening than a linear story. Writer/Director Hayao Miyazaki locates the ineffable magical essence of "kid" with a deliberate editing pace and frame perspective. The dustbunnies give us a glimpse into the surreal, but Miyazaki is careful not to rush into it. The film practices an awesome patience, gently carrying us deeper into the imaginary while balancing it with reality. Then we meet the Totoros. The small white one and the medium blue one; they collect acorns. Mei follows them deep into a large forest where the real reward waits: The large gray Totoro. Miyazaki makes this Totoro so tangible, so furry and real, you will believe.

And it just gets better. Those who have seen this film know that the Cat Bus scene holds a special place in the Hall of Greatest Film Scenes. I am always reminded here of the crop duster scene from Hitchcock's *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* because both moments carry a similar poetic quality. I promise that you have never seen anything quite like the Cat Bus scene. After this film, you will want to have a big gray Totoro of your very own.

-Kevin Crook



Mia rolls three Totoro deep.

Warning: Exposing the Truth May Be Hazardous



Although there was not a single action sequence in the film, the auteur style of Michael Mann is clear in his latest film, *The Insider*. Starring Al Pacino (who also starred in Mann's *Heat*, 1995) and Russell Crowe (looking a bit heavier than his previous starring role as the suave detective in *L.A. Confidential*, directed by Curtis Hanson, 1997), this film takes us on the inside of a scandal involving CBS and the tobacco industry. The film is based on an article titled "The Man Who Knew Too Much" by Marie Brenner that appeared in an issue of *Vanity Fair* magazine, but some of the scenes were obviously enhanced to bring tension to the surface of the film. Through his use of extreme close-ups, a bluish tint to many of the film's scenes, and wide shots, tension becomes the key to the film's plot and success with the audience.

The film follows the "true" story of Jeffrey Wigand (played by Russell Crowe), a former research biologist for Brown & Williamson tobacco company, who, after losing his job, starts receiving threats to keep quiet about research he performed while employed there. When he is approached by Lowell Bergman, producer of *60 Minutes* (played by Al Pacino), for another story, Bergman senses a bigger story that Wigand wants to tell. They discuss the possibility of an interview that will not violate the confidentiality agreement Wigand is urged (and even threatened) to stick to by Brown & Williamson. Eventually, Wigand agrees to an interview that violates the agreement and further destroys his marriage. But CBS attorneys advise CBS News not to air the segment because the tobacco industry is a major financial supporter of Westinghouse, a corporation looking to buy CBS at the time.

The film elegantly weaves through the twists and turns of the chain of command, leaving the audience hungry to see the action played out, even though the outcome is already known. It is 157 minutes of quality filmmaking, intelligently exploring an interesting story about truth within the media. Rated R, Buena Vista/Touchstone Pictures.

-Elizabeth Bour

Classic Hollywood



Following the Yellow Brick Road
Down The Industry's Memory Lane

by Elizabeth Bourg

If asked to describe Hollywood's infant and toddler years in a few words, some might say, "boring and awful," while others would say, "nostalgic and sweet." I for one would have said, "bordering total crap," that is, before writing this article. It turns out that Hollywood spawned some quality material from this period, before and after the production code of 1932, for you technical critics. The ironic part of it is that I discovered these facts in my own bedroom by taking a book off my shelf and (I know this is tough for many film buffs) actually reading some of it. Further taking my research to the unfamiliar rough terrain of McHenry Library, I discovered a slew of materials on the subject. Several factors of early Hollywood cinema need to be taken into consideration before making a judgement about films of that time, and from what I found, strong arguments can be made on behalf of anyone who thinks Hollywood cinema from that time was great entertainment.

Let's take a favorite genre for starters, shall we? Gangster movies. There have been more than just Howard Hawks's *Scarface* (1932); no, this is not the one starring Al Pacino. Gangster films have been plentiful since Hollywood's birth and before. One of the more interesting short films I ran across

was a comedic look at a city ridden with mobsters called *The High Sign* (1920) by Buster Keaton. The film sets up the possibility that any of the fruit

peddlers on the streets are potential hit men. Some later titles include *Little Caesar* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1930), and *Blood Money* (Rowland Brown, 1933). The Warner Brothers studio was known for making gangster films in its early years.

So, you are not convinced yet. You are sitting here, reading this article, thinking to yourself, "early Hollywood cinema? Quality filmmaking? How can that be when MGM was churning out musicals by the dozens?" Oh, the horror! But let's not let ourselves get too tightly wound. I ask you, film buffs what about RKO? Yes, Radio-Keith-Orpheum. We must thank the good people at RKO for giving us an alphabet of films from *King Kong* (Merian C. Cooper, 1933), to



Judy Garland admires the boy next door

Citizen Kane (Orson Welles, 1941); since it was a smaller studio it was able to take more risks with their films



A cult classic, courtesy of RKO Pictures

without the hassle of worrying about losing too much money. Among the famous directors that got their start at RKO are Alfred Hitchcock, Fritz Lang, and Howard Hawks; Katherine Hepburn, Fred Astaire, and Ginger Rogers were some of the actors and actresses.

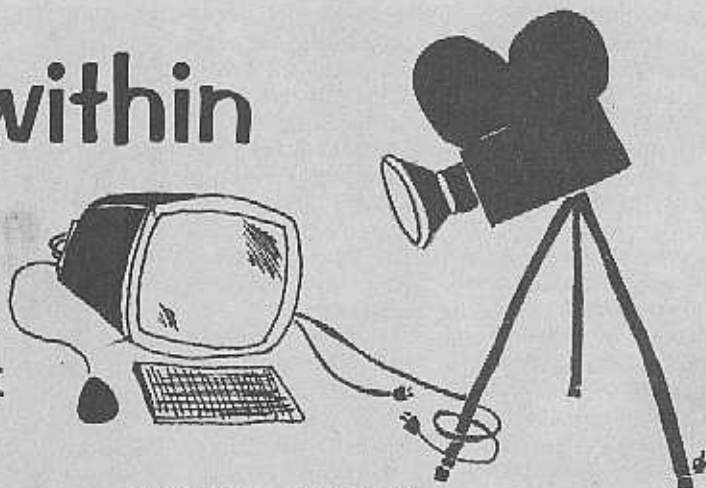
Universal Studios, obviously a major player in Hollywood, actually made some horror films which came to be cult classics among film audiences of today. Included are *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931), *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931), and *Freaks* (Tod Browning, 1932); how that one slipped by no one may ever know. Universal also pulled a somewhat revolutionary stunt with some of their films. Some intelligently made women's pictures were made starring Irene Dunne, Margaret Sullavan, and Diana Wynward that have been rediscovered in the recent decades. Universal was also responsible for distributing a few nicely done big budget films, including *Show Boat* (James Whale, 1936), and *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Lewis Milestone, 1930); both were unique in style and form, and were able to grab more attention from critics and fans.

Each Hollywood studio has at least one great film they can claim from the early years of cinema. Interestingly enough, they might not be the same films

that critics and fans of film today would agree were the best films of the early years. I mean, somebody could probably make a great case for *Reeler Madness* (Louis J. Gasnier, 1936), being one of the best films of the early period of cinema, which was not even a film made by any of the major studios. And there are still plenty of people who believe in the universal appeal of Judy Garland, and could say that *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1939) is one of the best early films. The idea that we could argue the best films of the early period of cinema and Hollywood confirms there actually were some quality films made and distributed during that time. One of my personal favorite films of all time is actually an early Hollywood piece, a remote, small budget film called *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Vincente Minnelli, 1944). The film is an American classic, an epic family piece starring Judy Garland, and it's (prepare yourself) a musical! Yes, folks, I have to admit my admiration for this film, even though I would rather watch Andy Warhol's *Empire* (1964) before watching most musicals. So, in conclusion, it can be said that early Hollywood cinema can provide us with entertainment, nostalgia, a few laughs, and overall, some quality films.

the war within

an ongoing battle
between the silver
screen and the box



by Nicole Brack

Have you ever seen a film about the evils of the telephone? Probably not, though you've undoubtedly seen movies about the evils of other everyday technologies like TV and computers. Fortunately for the phone, its technology was established before film, so Hollywood never considered it a threat. Newer technologies do challenge Hollywood entertainment and movies have responded.

Hollywood film has never been friendly toward the idea of technology. From the 1926 film *Metropolis* to this year's blockbuster *The Matrix*, film stories have had a decidedly anti-technology bent. Films like *Blade Runner* and *Jurassic Park* warn of the dangerous world technology can create. Even Luke Skywalker defeated the high-tech Dark Star by eschewing his computer-guided bombing system in favor of "The Force" - the natural power over-coming the man-made. Ironically, the very films that speak most loudly against technology have needed the most progressive high-tech tools to be made.

Television began the technological challenge to Hollywood's entertainment stronghold. Through most of the 1950's and 60's, as television started to become a regular part of Americans' daily lives, Hollywood essen-

tially ignored TV on-screen. During these years, only a handful of films dealing with TV were made, and in other films television was almost never seen as part of a living room sets despite its central place in most American homes. Instead, Hollywood used its own new technologies to try to compete for American's attention. Larger film formats like

Cinemascope were introduced to overshadow the tiny TV screens. Additionally, better color techniques provided competition with TV's black and white images. Hollywood needed to prove that it could provide experiences people couldn't get at home.

Despite these innovations, the threat of TV only increased with time. In the late 1960's and early 1970's Hollywood figured out what it could use to really entice the public that couldn't be found on TV - sex and violence. Taking advantage of changes in censorship codes, Hollywood began producing films with open sexuality and extreme violence unlike what had been seen on-screen before.

At the same time, Hollywood realized it couldn't continue to avoid depicting television on-screen. Hundreds of movies about TV have been produced since then, beginning with the likes of *Medium Cool* and continuing to the present with films like *EdTV*. Films about TV have always been negative in their assessment of the medium. While most films about Hollywood are also negative, they differ from those about TV in a significant way. From *Sunset Boulevard* to *The Player*,

films about movies generally decry what the industry does to the people who work within it, but don't criticize the medium. Films about television tend to expose how the medium tries to manipulate the public - a recent example is *Wag the Dog*. TV is shown as bad for us while even the most negative films about Hollywood still show movies themselves to be magical.

After television, Hollywood's next challenge was video, with the advent of VCRs and video games. While the industry did have to adjust to the demands of the VCR, it controlled the films on tape and found profit in the technology.

Video games were the first interactive entertainment technologies, starting in the 1970's and taking off as home systems became popular in the 1980's. Starting in the early 80's, Hollywood began to respond to this newest threat, with films like *War Games* and *Tron* continuing Hollywood's anti-technology theme and tying it to video games. In an unusual move, Hollywood did produce one pro-technology film, 1984's *The Last Starfighter* in which the main character saved the universe with the skills he learned playing video games. Perhaps this aberration came about when Hollywood realized it could make money from licensing films for game versions.

The new media of the 1990's has led to an explosion of expensive high-tech Hollywood films with anti-technology themes. The anti-video

game themes of the 80's have morphed into anti-virtual reality themes.

This can be seen in numerous films including *Total Recall*, *Virtuosity*, *Strange Days*, *eXistenZ*, and *The Matrix*. While some of these films do deal with games gone out of control, the critique has gone beyond gaming as many focus on virtual reality replacing true reality. This is a reaction to our increasing reliance on the Internet where the people and institutions we interact with may or may not actually exist.

Another avenue for Hollywood's denigration of new media and the Internet centers on peoples' fears of the loss of privacy. The 1995 film *The Net* spoke specifically to this fear as the main character was seduced then had her identity destroyed by enemies using the Internet. The films, *EdTV* and *The Truman Show*, while about television not the Internet, really address the same invasion of privacy fears in this era of 24-hour webcams.

Hollywood movie plots have not yet addressed the coming of original Internet programming that will compete directly with film and television. As the media companies merge, this will undoubtedly come in part from companies like Dreamworks with interconnected film and new media departments. However, it is unlikely that the first film showing a behind-the-scenes view at a digital production house will be pro-technology. Instead, expect more high-tech effects with anti-tech themes.

From Independent to Dependent

Is Everything Hollywood ?

By John Travis

Independent films, not produced by big-time Hollywood production/distribution companies, winning academy awards for acting, directing, writing, and production! *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) budgeted around \$40,000 and grossing \$140.327 million as of October 24, 1999, excluding Soundtrack and video profits! *Could this be the end of Hollywood?!*

No. Well, maybe, Sony as a production/distribution film company, and maybe even some of the other larger production companies, but let's face it, Hollywood distribution will, probably, always exist. The reason being; independent directors and producers, whose films are not funded by Hollywood production/distribution companies, as well as Hollywood production companies need Hollywood distribution money in order for an audience to

ever see the product. Even if someone makes the best film of all time, for example (oh I don't know) *Citizen Kane* (1941), if a studio won't distribute it then all he or she can hope for is limited play at film festivals. And that's exactly how many independent films like *The Blair Witch Project* get seen and hopefully picked up by distribution companies. But, the real problem is, a Hollywood distributor won't pick up a film that it believes won't make money. So, if your fairly inventive story of a Media tycoon, doesn't look like a winner in the distributor's eyes, or if it looks too dangerous, then the only people that will ever see your movie will be your friends, your family, the small nerdy group at the film festival,

and then, maybe, in the end some guy suffering from insomnia, whose awake at three in the morning, when your film finally plays on The Independent Film Channel, or PBS. Therefore, knowing this, should Independent directors, screenwriters, and producers make their pictures more like Hollywood films and thus have a greater chance of getting picked up by Hollywood? Or, should Indie directors just make the film they en-



vision and just hope that some distributor will see the merit in a story about a rich, dead, white-guy bastard whose last word is "Rosebud?"

Well the answer varies,

but from this question usually comes the popular belief that independent films are better than Hollywood films because they're freer from the monetary chains that bind Hollywood productions. These economic chains or 'budgetary concerns' hamper the vast majority of Hollywood films in such away as to make the directors and producers sacrifice quality content for formulaic, generic, time-honored stories, stereotypes, and styles. That indie films are works of passion put together by people who are less interested in making a buck and more interested in making a film that will actually say something is a popular idea. And, the truth is that many independent films are very

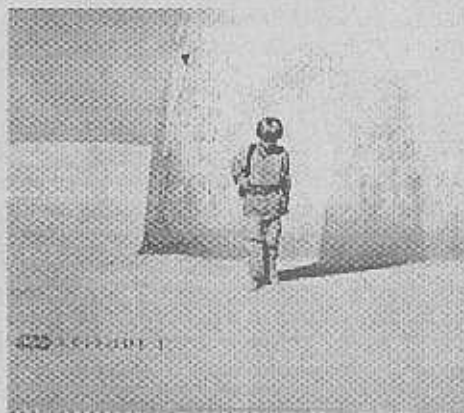
much like that. Many independent films are independent because of their content (not exactly mainstream). However, independent films are in no way all completely free from the fear and greed that control the majority of what Hollywood produces and what the world sees on the big screen. Both *The Blair Witch Project* and *Star Wars: Episode I-The Phantom Menace* were produced straight out of the director's pockets, and both were focused on making as much money as possible. Of course many people would not count *Episode I*, budgeted at \$115 million (as of October 24, 1999 it has made \$427.285 million in the U.S alone), as a very good example of an independent film. Many people would be more inclined to compare George Lucas with Bill Gates instead of with the pair of directors, Daniel Myrick, and Eduardo Sanchez, that produced *The Blair Witch Project*. However, the fact remains that *Episode I* received no production monies from its distributor, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., just like *The Blair Witch Project* received no production monies from its distributor, Artisan Entertainment. Also, both films have that 'Hollywood feel,' that exploitation ideal, that m a k e - money-or-die essence that was felt in most, if not all, of this past summer's blockbusters. *Episode I's* Taco Bell ads, *The Blair Witch Project's* soundtrack (*Jash's*



Blair Witch Mix, which was 'found' in his car) all fit nicely into the Hollywood system, or what the folks at Disney call synergy

You see, Independent films aren't necessarily better than Hollywood films, and Hollywood films aren't all based on whether or not they'll make money (Mr. Steven Spielberg can make anything he wants thank you very much). The real question and answer here is distribution. What will a director sacrifice in order for distribution? But, of course, if Orson Welles had caved in to the studio, and the man his first film was really about, than *Citizen Kane* would never have been seen.

Research: www.IMDB.com



Smoke

and

a hollywood addiction Mirrors

by Sarah Ogletree

The end is near. It has to be. How else can one explain nineteen James Bond films? Why else would Arnold Swartzenegger, champion of the republican party, release a film called *End of Days* if not to educate?

So maybe the apocalypse will not happen next year, but it is bound to happen one day and thanks to Hollywood, when it does, we'll be ready for it. Right?

Actually, no. Although for a century now film has moved its way into the ideology of American culture by focusing on our lives, our loves and our holidays, its main purpose has been for profit, not for education.

It was fear of losing profit that held off the first full length feature films back in the early nineteen hundreds. It was that same fear that kept us in silent films until the 1930's even though we had the capability earlier. And now as we approach the 21st century, this profit factor plagues the industry with the digital revolution threatening to re-define film.

Recently, in fact, in an article entitled *Hollywood 2010*, Los Angeles Times writer Michael Hiltzik wrote, "most cinema professionals agree that the transition to digital could be the most dramatic technological change Hollywood ever has faced." Certainly such a statement indicates some kind of approaching finality.

Chances are though, whatever happens, in an industry where success is determined by the amount of tickets sold at the box office, the profit factor will remain essential to Hollywood. The effort to get as many people in the theaters as possible will no doubt, continue. So we are left with

the question of what the content will be.

As indicated by our film history, movies are made in reflection of our growing and changing society. Only for the past thirty years or so the movies that we see reflect



only what we are supposed to want to see.

These decisions to depict our supposed desires are based on what has sold well in the past, what the most popular form is of the period, who the targeted audience is and when it will be released.

Such a pre-determined packaging practice according to film analyst, Jonathan Rosenbaum, author of *Movies and Politics* is called mirroring, he states in his chapter, *Entertainment as Politics* that, "there are two ways you can look at movies- as windows or as mirrors- and for some time now, mirrors are the only thing we are supposed to want."

These mirrors reflect our narcissistic and xenophobic sides and we love it. Look at the allure of James Bond.

He's handsome and lives the life of a playboy but he's not really anything extraordinary. His missions are to destroy people from foreign nations who most likely are conspiring against us. Who wouldn't want his job? Well perhaps those who don't go see his movies, but the targeted audience seems to enjoy the notion reasonably well. Especially considering there have been nineteen films with the same characters in the same role and still MGM (Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer), with *The World Is Not Enough*, took in an estimated \$37.2 million over opening weekend according to Variety magazine in their November 23rd issue.

Bond though is by far not the only example of such mirroring. There's the James Bond take-off *Mission Impossible* which has its first sequel due later next year and the satire

make of *Romeo and Juliette* for example. They too committed the forbidden and they too suffered.

It's all highly reflexive, there's no doubt, Hollywood sells what has sold in the past. With a little luck and a lot of planning they re-package a favored premise, add some popular celebrities and a lot of money and voila *Titanic*. To date, *Titanic* is one of the biggest blockbusters ever, second only to *Gone With the Wind* made in 1939. Could there be any correlation? If not it is quite a coincidence that both were very costly to make for their time, both featured a love story with a back drop of massive imminent death and both were based on partially true historical events.

However, they wouldn't be the top two grossing films of all time in Hollywood if we the Hollywood addicts didn't all go see them.

And there's the catch 22 because we won't stop seeing these films. Especially the ones that everyone is talking about.

The danger though in this Bermuda Triangle spell that Hollywood has us under is in what



we are not seeing. The independent films are becoming buried by the hype of hollywood movies. Entertainment Magazine declares 1999 to be a revolutionary year in film citing the most hyped movies of the past twelve months as inventive and new. Meanwhile the windows are still closing, leaving us alone with our mirrors. And as we slowly suffocate in the illusions of the status quo that we supposedly want to see, a hope emerges, an end is near..

The Seductive Mr. Trailer

by Kevin Crook

The Coke has been purchased. Huge bucket of popcorn is in the lap. The same 'Senseless Survey' has lapped the screen three times and you are ready. The lights dim and NSync is finally cut, replaced by a stronger audio pop. Purposely, you told your friends that the film started five minutes earlier than its ticket time. You knew there was something more. You knew that even if this film was terrible—horrible—it could be redeemed. Because if it

us with an editing pace so extreme that we can only say, Waahoo. Based off these brief clips, which don't really tell us too much about the film, we are expected to donate more money to an industry which tells us what we should like and how we should look; an industry which suffocates creativity and relies on recycled stories. Trailers, like nicotine, maintain our addiction to a product which is not good for our health. Previews are evil, read a



flopped, you could always say: At least the previews were good. Why? Because previews are good.

Movie previews, trailers (if that is your pleasure), are a given for the evening's experience. If none play and they cut straight to the film, you feel cheated. You paid CASH, you want previews. If too many play, say seven, you forget which film you came to see. That's great, that's what I like.

But what are trailers? They are ads. Ads with digital surround sound, but ads nonetheless. They use cheap, exploitative shots of women's cleavage and violence to arouse us. They use various sounds to evoke our emotions. They assault

book instead.

But we like previews. And we know the tricks they use, we're not dumb. No matter what film they are trying to sell, we will always see that passionate thrust shot between a man and a woman, even if that scene has been cut from the film. It is just a marketing fact that sex sells.

We like trailers because of the instant gratification. All the film's drama wrapped into a tasty two minutes. Often this can be an experience more enjoyable than the actual film. Consider the recent preview for *LOST SOULS* with Winona Ryder: A man is destined to become the anti-Christ on his birthday.

Winona is on the case! She investigates. She prays. She smooches. Interesting grainy visual texture, powerful sound, and espresso speed editing. Fabulous! The trailer just saved two hours of my life.

The trailer tradition and its elements are as old as its medium. The silent film trailer lasted an average of thirty seconds and it featured the same basic tenets as its predecessors: Title, witty tag line, highlight clip, and ending title. Provocative shots of passionate embraces were just as important for selling the film then as they are today, it's only been a relaxing of social mores that allow the celebrated thrust shot.

When film made the switch to sound, the titillating shots could be augmented with music and narration. The music helps with mood. It pushes our intuitive buttons which say: SHOCK! SAD! HAPPY! The all-but-extinct melodrama genre is allowed to still flourish in the confines of the trailer score. Then the narrator, this strange man whom we never see, uses his deep voice to breath credibility into broad sweeping lines like, "It was a time... for love."

Although its contents remain the same, the trailer's look is constantly evolving. Take the 1958 trailer for *VERTIGO*. The narrator tries to peak our interest through rhetoric: "Who was



this mysterious blonde?" To us, he over-explains the plot and the scene clips run long. In the trailer for the 1997 re-release of *VERTIGO*, the narrator is replaced with dialogue segments that compliment rapidly edited shots of the entire film. The recent trend has been to limit narration only to points of necessity (like a period piece) and to allow image and sound capture the viewer's interest.

The trailer—a movie in itself, an advertisement, a Tootsie-Roll of film—is a part of the movie tradition. Next time you see one, catch its style and see how Hollywood can make a small movie out of a big one; it is quiet a cultural phenomenon.



Cinema: Language of the Next Millennium

by Jessica Gantney

What is the cinema? Is cinema merely a form of entertainment, or is it something more? What is the cinema's basic appeal, beyond the star system and big budget promotions? A motion picture is a series of pictures flashed on a screen to create the illusion of movement. An illusion is a mistaken perception of reality. I would argue that anyone who believes that the cinema is simply truth based on reality is suffering from this illusion. While cinema does present a version of truth, it is wholly on its own from reality; cinema defines its own truth. It has its own set of 'rules', which define its world and create its own reality for this world. It is not a suspension of disbelief we must possess when watching a film, it is a possession of new beliefs for this new world within the cinema. Because of this it is an elitist world, despite the appeal to a mass audience. It is a world that is available in sight and sound and therefore must create the other three in the viewer's mind. Nonetheless cinema is not merely viewed or listened to, because while those are two ways of swallowing cinema, they are not they way to digest cinema.

How is something with mass appeal considered elitist? Because cinema can be considered both high and low art at once. It is because the flashing pictures and booming noises are enough for those who do not know the word montage or the auteur theory. Yet cinema is elitist in that these terms exist, that a higher level of un-

derstanding, and enjoyment, comes from identifying the references to past films, etc. It is within these moments that film transcends enjoyment and becomes a euphoric experience. When a film is not just a film but a piece of every film you have ever watched, no, *experienced* and your mind is not passively creating the illusion of movement but is recreating what must have been the thoughts of the film's authors and creators and historians and theorists that we reach a cinematic nirvana, available only to those who have reached consciousness and cognizance. It is that we understand the exclusionary nature of this 'art'. That we get what those who are blind and deaf in knowledge can not. It is the theorists who will guide us in this new language. Eisenstein is an op-tometris, and Pudovkin a

hearing aid in the world of cinema. It is not our voices telling us what to look at; it is the voices of those who sit on our shoulders whose weight hunches us forward, bending our spines of passive viewing, permanently ruining the posture of our minds. I have cinematic scoliosis because Laura Mulvey won't get off my back.

This is the reason I have studied film, to learn the deeper meanings. It is in debates over meanings that lead to the true enjoyment of film. It is that people may agree that 'rain' on film equals sad, but are we all to also understand that this 'rain' should also equal the moral cleansing of the character who walks through it? Or should we merely understand that the character is having a bad day only made worse by the inconvenience



of getting wet? It is this difference that again points to the elitism of film. While there is a definite system of signs that can be understood universally, there is also a depth of meanings to films that is only attainable through knowledge of these signs. It is that the language and enjoyment of cinema is mastered through the exploration of significance of the obscure parts of the entity that is cinema.

It is often said that people go to movies to escape the world of thoughts, yet I would argue that people are going to escape from one form of thought: an overuse of language. I would argue that films are not to be considered only entertainment because they let a person disconnect from his thoughts, that perhaps films lend the feeling of detachment because the use of inherent senses is the intended form of knowledge that should be in practice. Written words are foreign to the brain and must be taught; sight is developed in most months after birth. It is easier to correct poor vision than teach someone to read. It is in film that there could, someday, be a universal language that would be available to those against whom written words discriminate.

Yet how do I justify the claim that film is the universal language and still refer to it as elitist? It is because, just as when writing and reading were relatively new, there are few of us fluent enough in this language to communicate to the masses. We are nearing a time where all will be fluent in the language of film, and so it is film that will be the vision of the future.

The FAC is Alive and Well

by Ryan Reyes

The Film Arts Coalition (FAC) is a student organization, nonprofit, for Film and Digital Media Majors or anyone who wants to be involved. It was started about

(director and writer of *Killer Flick* Mark Weidman, director of documentary *Independent's Day* Marina Zenovich, and director and writer of *Which Way, Por Fa-*

quarter, the FAC is also planning a cinematography workshop and a filmmaking workshop with UCSC's own Matt Heilman, as well as actively pursuing filmmakers for their

screening/lecture series.

The FAC just put on their first student film festival of the year at Porter Dining Hall. Free to all students, these once a quarter festivals are the equivalency of the Open Studios for the UCSC Art Department, so if you want to see what UCSC Film and Digital Media students have been making in their classes (short films and videos in all genres), attend the future showings.

And if you are not already a member of FAC, you might want to think about joining this quarter. Also remember, today is pure, with sunshine dripping from a baby blue sky onto wet green grass, a bird with opalescent eyes is flying by...the perfect moment to grab a camera.



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four years ago by a dangerous pack of rebels who enjoyed watching and making films, had complaints about the UCSC Film and Digital Media Program, and were motivated enough to become a catalyst for change. Thanks to these revolutionaries, the FAC is now a recognized and respectable organization run for and by students

who want progress, increased possibilities, and share a passion for both film and digital media.

The FAC's function is to do whatever is feasible and whatever contributing members feel is worth doing. Past accomplishments include: indoor and outdoor student film festivals, professional one day workshops (still photography and lighting equipment), discussion groups with professors ("An Evening with Shelley Stamp", "An Evening With Chip Lord"), and a film screening/lecture series with filmmakers from the 1999 SF Indie Festival

vor? Mick Deimer).

Recently the FAC cosponsored the abductions and screening/lectures of Frederick Marx, director and producer of *Hoop Dreams*, and former UCSC film student Brannon Braga, executive producer of *Star Trek Voyager*. Undoubtedly, the FAC offers a plethora of opportunities to any student as well as giving Film and Digital Media students a resource the UCSC Film and Digital Media major does not provide. For instance the FAC is currently planning a trip to Sundance Film Festival, having already been to the Mills Valley Film Festival this year. For next

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9. 400 New Chia Pet Hairdos (includes free pet)
10. Microwave Meals:
The Infinite Love of Popcorn
11. More Microwave Meals:
What Can't You Do With Pâté?
12. The Do's and Don'ts of Street Prostitution

Success is in the eyes of the beholder.

by Emily Anne Schultz

Many dream of "making it" in Hollywood. Writers, filmmakers, musicians, and other artists hope for the recognition, money, and widescale distribution that Hollywood can offer. Yet, an artist working outside of Hollywood may retain more freedom for personal expression. How do filmmakers negotiate between the integrity of their art and the demands of the industry to find a place that confers self satisfaction? Faculty and staff at University of California at Santa Cruz share their knowledge about filmmaking, Hollywood, independent expression, and the places and spaces in between.



Paul Wrangell, Facilities Manager and Engineer at UCSC film department

"There is always a Horatio Alger story in Hollywood but I think that the film industry, like the music industry, is pretty much a very closed group and it's increasingly so because the major studios are owned by large corporations which have nothing to do with filmmaking or entertainment."

Peter Hazard



Matt Heilmann, Film/Video Equipment Manager at UCSC

Hustle to Hollywood...

"People who work in Hollywood are continually dealing with the issue of making compromises because it is a business first and an art second. There isn't a strong moral value system at the center of it. It's whatever sells, and follow the latest trend, and that makes for not only bad products, but it doesn't have an agenda. It doesn't have a reason for existing except that it can sell tickets. And to me that's wrong."

Chip Lord



Gustavo Vazquez, Lecturer: film and digital media at UCSC

"For me, there are too many personal compromises that have to be made in order to gain the distribution power that comes with the Hollywood movie industry."

Paul Wrangell

"There are many examples of (Latino) filmmakers who do not do political or critical cinema. There are people who are just going to do entertaining cinema, and they are doing what they want to do."

Gustavo Vazquez

Making your own Movies...

"You can always do your own work. Everybody has access to other kinds of money. It does, however, take work to gain access to this money. There is also your own pocket. I've taken lots of money out of my own pocket to make my own media just because I believed in my ideas. How many people saw them? Not a lot. But I was able to make my media without compromising the image I had."
Paul Wrangell

"Don't succumb to the demands of the technological world. Succumb to the demands of your own expression. What is it that you want to say? Find the equipment and resources by any means necessary. You can even do things with home camcorders. If the subject is good, it may end up on PBS even though they claim that technically it's not good enough, but if it's engaging, it will find a public."
Gustavo Vazquez

"[Making a good movie] doesn't really rely so much on the technical; it relies on having a good script, having a dedicated entourage of people who are willing to share your vision and take risks to the same extent that you are and to act as a family during the time that you're trying to produce things."
Matt Heilmann

"Waiting for funding, the money, a budget. It impedes your expression. It's like if we don't eat when we're hungry; we wait, and wait, and wait and then we're starving and we would eat anything cause we're desperate. But we can't savour it. The same thing happens with expression. If you don't do it all the time with a proper natural rhythm, I think that you can get out of balance, you don't see, there is no clarity. That's the risk of putting your ideas off until the economic conditions are right."
Gustavo Vazquez



Chip Lord, Professor: film and digital media at UCSC



Peter Hazard, Video Engineer at UCSC

Searching for Success...

"The simple films, the basic ones that are successful, rarely rely on anything other than good storytelling. It is the execution of a good story—developing a good story and then having good actors and good direction to move the story along to its conclusion"
Matt Heilmann

"Sundance [Film Festival] follows that model of sudden superstardom, and every year there's people at Sundance who do get discovered... Who's going to be the next star that's going to show up with a \$25,000 film and walk out of Sundance being the toast of the town?"
Chip Lord

"If they're approaching making a film from a standpoint that they're going to make a lot of money, then that's probably a risky gamble to take. If they're approaching it that it's a story that they really think needs to be told or that they have a real passion to tell, and that they've done their homework—they've tried to make it as unique as they can, and they approach it that way, they have a much greater chance of being successful—having a critically acclaimed film or having a film that has a chance for commercial success."
Matt Heilmann

How do you characterize success in your own life? Hopefully, we will each choose a definition of success that equates to our own happiness. No one should strive for a success that is defined through someone else's eyes. We must all know ourselves very well to discern what will give each of us satisfaction and a sense of achievement.

"The arts help you know yourself. They're really a great avenue to discover yourself, and that is a great value in itself whether you make money or not, whether you get recognition or not."
Gustavo Vazquez

Thanks to all the faculty and staff that contributed their time and experience.

