

The Museum of Modern Art

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NEW CINEMA: AN INTERNATIONAL SELECTION

January 9 - 20, 1967

In connection with the program New Cinema: An International Selection, to be presented by the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art in collaboration with the Committee for New Cinema from January 9 through January 20, Lino Micciché and Bruno Torri, Italian members of the executive committee of the International Committee for New Cinema, will arrive in New York on January 7.

New Cinema: An International Selection will consist of eleven films from Brazil, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, the United States, West Germany and Yugoslavia, selected by the Museum's Department of Film in collaboration with the Committee for New Cinema.

Mr. Micciché is an Italian journalist, critic and filmmaker as well as the Director of the Pesaro (Italy) Festival for New Cinema. Mr. Torri, also a journalist, is the Associate Director of the Pesaro Festival. Both the Italian representatives will participate in the symposium "What is New Cinema?" to be held at the Museum on Friday evening, January 20.

Members of the three-year old International Committee for New Cinema proposed the formation of national committees at their meeting held at the Second International Film Festival in Pesaro, Italy, this summer. Adrienne Mancina, Curatorial Assistant of the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art, was selected as the United States representative for the International Committee and Chairman of the new National Committee, which was organized this fall.

Attached is an excerpt from a personal statement on New Cinema by Lino Micciché.

EXCERPT FROM STATEMENT ON NEW CINEMA BY LINO MICCIONE

Perhaps because we live in a reality which is so often fleeting and ill-defined, the desire to and the danger of making formulas threaten us all the more. Since today's cinema is going through a transitional crisis, this desire and this danger double. More than ever, cinema is not able to be contained in formulas, even temporary ones, and any label is a false label, any definition a false definition, even when they all contain a partial or approximate truth.

New Wave, Free Cinema, New American Cinema, Cinema Novo, Nova Vlna, Nouva Ola are labels that can have a connotative value, useful for journalists, but useless if not dangerous for any serious cultural evaluation. The same is valid, obviously, for those cinematic manifestations which, for the needs spoken of before, use these labels: for instance, the Italian festival at Porretta dedicated to "Free Cinema" or the Pesaro "New Cinema" festival. The risk naturally is not to take these labels for their misleading and connotative value but rather to use them as absolute definitions under which can be filed everything that is "Free Cinema" or "New Cinema"; otherwise, it becomes too easy when we attend such festivals to criticize the films that are shown for lacking the quantity of freedom or originality suggested by the absolutism of the formula.

The point is that definitions like "Free Cinema" or "New Cinema" are usually more concerned about what the cinema should be rather than what it is, that it holds hopes for certain intentions rather than for a reality that is already formed and well-defined. That is because the festivals we have mentioned are directed, not only for the purposes of classification, but more toward the promotion of those cultural phenomena which have contributed to the freedom and originality of the cinema. They are part of complex cultural battles that extend beyond the cinema as it is (the unfree cinema, that is, unfree because it is strongly bound to conservative structures; the old cinema, that is, old because its bondage forbids any substantial innovation and keeps the cinema as it has always been, a kitsch art or a factory of beautiful dreams of escapism) and tries to operate in behalf of a more

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authentic and more independent cinema in which the speech between author and spectator will not be hindered by a complete conditioning to myth, to "idols," to the necessities of the "system."

The characteristics of the new cinema can be seen only in the light of the historical situation in which it is created and from which it has been conditioned. There is not and there will never be a rigid formula; "New Cinema" for these historical and conditioning factors differs from place to place. All that is new and important in the Soviet and Czechoslovakian cinema is substantially different from what is new and important in the American or Italian cinema. And the innovations expressed in these cinemas could not help but be different from those found in the Japanese or Brazilian cinema.

The common aim of many of the "new" film-makers today from all over the world is the fight to be themselves, to break the barriers of a cinema in which the relationship between author-spectator has always been channeled and controlled by others than the author or the spectator. The New Cinema belongs today to those who want to be themselves, to all those who prefer the uncertainty of their own truth to the certitudes of the truth which is officially upheld. Nothing could be more of a mistake than to see this common refusal as a common affirmation.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Linda Gordon, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.