

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 36

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM PRESENTS FIRST MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL CINEMA

The first comprehensive series of Anthropological Cinema to be made available to the public will be held at The Museum of Modern Art starting May 17. This retrospective covers seventy-five years of film beginning at the turn of the century, when movies were intended as a tool for scientific exploration before becoming converted almost entirely to entertainment.

The seven-week program, conceived by guest director Emilie de Brigard, deals with human behavior in various parts of the globe and at different points in time. Consisting of approximately 85 films, it begins in 1901 with Edison's American Indian films, such as "Parade of Snake Dancers Before the Dance"; includes an all-Kwakiutl melodrama, "The Vigil of Motana" (1914); and "Sucking Doctor" (1964), a recent documentary of a healing ceremony among Kashia Pomo Indians of California. "Now that the Buffalo's Gone" (1968) is an "expanded cinema" impression of the destruction of Indian culture in America.

Besides American Indians the present retrospective embraces other cultures: child-rearing in New Guinea; cattle-raising in Ethiopia; the political orientation of modern-day Parisian students; carnivals in Belgium; Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert; and the typical reactions of Japanese, English, French, and Italian families observing animals in a zoo.

While this eclectic program traces the history of anthropological films, it also contains detailed studies of the Netsilik Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic, the Yanomamo Indians of Venezuela, and the Bushmen of Botswana, Africa. The series concludes with a seven-hour film, "Towards Baruya Manhood" by Ian Dunlop, which is being shown in the U.S. for the first time. A visual immersion into the culture of a New Guinea people, it consists of nine films made in 1971 of a tribe that once practised cannibalism. Agriculturalists, they live without a chief or political leader in an individualistic society. Every two years the male initiation ceremonies take place and feuds are forgotten through physical and spiritual

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displays of strength and unity to make a new generation of Baruya warriors. "Towards Baruya Manhood" will be shown in parts in three successive programs and then presented in its entirety beginning at noon on July 3, the final day of the retrospective.

Over 30 years ago Margaret Mead urged her colleagues to make more use of films; more recently she has stated that only film can capture the essence of a culture. For anthropological cinema combines the aesthetics and skills of the filmmaker with the objectivity and knowledge of the anthropologist, and in the present series, according to Ms. de Brigard, who is an ethnographic film historian, "The stylistic diversity of its films equals the diversity of the people shown in them. But all deal in ways that are more or less artful and scientific with human universals -- making a living, the life of the spirit, family life, culture contact, and change." Ms. de Brigard, who studied anthropology at Radcliffe and film at the University of California at Los Angeles, feels that ethnocentrism prevails when Westerners view these films relying on cultural preconceptions that are not personal or idiosyncratic, but part of our cultural defenses.

It is expected that the Anthropological Cinema Retrospective will enhance the spectator's knowledge of unfamiliar worlds, even though it includes known classics such as Dziga Vertov's 1922 newsreel "Kino Pravda" and Robert Flaherty's "Nanook of the North" and "Moana," "The Wedding of Palo" by Knud Rasmussen, as well as the famous "Grass." Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack went to Iran to film this lyrical exploration of the Bahktiari nomads on their annual migration with their flocks. In recent years older men who were shown the film joyfully recognized themselves as children on the screen.

Less familiar are the films of the Australian Aborigine in "Desert People," who spend much time collecting edible grass and lizards which are then cooked and eaten. "Gunabibi" by Roger Sandall is a record of an aboriginal fertility ceremony which Ms. de Brigard feels has the blood and grandeur of Wagnerian opera: "Australian Aboriginal rites may seem offensive to some Westerners -- there's nudity and painting of the body with blood -- but to me because of films such as these Aborigines are among the most beautiful of people."

To organize this retrospective Ms. de Brigard traveled to Europe, South America and North Africa to search in museums, universities, government and private collections for

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representative films. The World Ethnographic Film Sample at Columbia University's Choreometrics Project provided a foundation for the Museum program. The Project, directed by Alan Lomax, uses dance films by the hundreds from which has emerged a valuable cross-cultural comparison of human movement styles that provides "a measure of man." "Films in Progress" from Choreometrics are scheduled as part of the series.

Many are the subjects encompassed in this retrospective, from dance to bread-making in rural Pennsylvania and Afghanistan; from legal matters to the after-life; not to mention records of "cultural pockets" in contemporary America as, for example, "Spend it All," dealing with music and leisure time activities of the Louisiana Cajuns. In addition, we see the Pittsburgh police and small-town life in South Dakota.

A legal system is also examined in "To Make the Balance," where community government in the Spanish Zapotec town of Ralu'a, Mexico, follows an unwritten village legal code and resolves conflicts by minimizing the sense of injustice felt by all parties. The unpaid court official -- the presidente -- handles five disputes; and the narrator-filmmaker, Laura Nader, shows the presidente scolding, giving advice, lecturing on duty, marriage, property rights. Laura Nader, incidentally, is a sister of Ralph Nader.

Religion is not sacred either in front of the cameras. Two films of religious experiences offer a study in contrast: the dionysiac African frenzy of "Les Maitres Fous" by Jean Rouch, points out the anthropologist Luc de Heusch contrasts violently with the contemplativeness, introspection and masochism of Christianity in Georges Rouquier's "Lourdes et ses Miracles."

The Anthropological Cinema has for so long been unrecognized, despite its importance in recording fast-disappearing cultures, that only distorted exploitations like "Mondo Cane" have reached a large public. The present retrospective was designed to focus on the vast array of authentic filmed material available. For even though the anthropological film has remained "underground" until now, it has a loyal following among both anthropologists and among young filmmakers today. The filmmakers want to add their technical skills to the understanding of the scientists in capturing our vanishing cultures.

The Schedule follows.

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL CINEMAMay 17 - July 3, 1973

Guest Curator: Emilie de Brigard

Thursday, May 17 (8:00) - THE MARCH OF PRAYER AND ENTRANCE OF THE DANCERS. 1901. Edison. (Library of Congress.) PARADE OF SNAKE DANCERS BEFORE THE DANCE. 1901. Edison. (Library of Congress.) MOKI SNAKE DANCE BY WOLPI INDIANS. 1901. Edison. (Library of Congress.) THE VIGIL OF MOTANA. 1914. Edward S. Curtis. (Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago.) GLIMPSES OF LIFE AMONG THE CATAWBA AND CHEROKEE INDIANS OF THE CAROLINAS. 1930. Frank G. Speck. (University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.) SUCKING DOCTOR. 1964. William R. Heick. INTREPID SHADOWS. 1966. Al Clah. (Center for Mass Communications, Columbia University.) NOW THAT THE BUFFALO'S GONE. 1968. Burton Gershfield. (Creative Film Society, Van Nuys, California.)

Friday, May 18 (2:00) - see Thursday, May 17 at 8:00

Saturday, May 19 (3:00) - KINO PRAVDA. 1922. Dziga Vertov. HOUSING PROBLEMS. 1935. Arthur Elton, Edgar Anstey. CHRONICLE OF A SUMMER - PARIS. 1961. Jean Rouch, Edgar Morin. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Saturday, May 19 (5:30) - see Thursday, May 17 at 8:00

Sunday, May 20 (5:30) - see Saturday, May 19 at 3:00

Monday, May 21 (2:00) - see Saturday, May 19 at 3:00

Monday, May 21 (5:30) - NANOOK OF THE NORTH. 1922. Robert Flaherty.

Tuesday, May 22 (5:30) - MOANA. 1926. Robert Flaherty.

Wednesday, May 23 (Noon) - MICROCULTURAL INCIDENTS IN TEN ZOOS. 1971. Ray L. Birdwhistell, Jacques D. Van Vlack. LECTURE ON KINESICS BY RAY L. BIRDWHISTELL (abbreviated version). 1964.

Thursday, May 24 (2:00) - see Wednesday, May 23 at Noon

Thursday, May 24 (5:30) - CARNIVALS IN BELGIUM. 1972. Henri Storck.

Thursday, May 24 (8:00) - LAND WITHOUT BREAD. 1932. Luis Buñuel. THE NUER: LIFE IN THE DRY SEASON. 1970. Hilary Harris, George Briedenbach. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Friday, May 25 (2:00) - see Thursday, May 24 at 8:00

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Saturday, May 26 (3:00) - ABORIGINES OF CENTRAL AND NORTHERN AUSTRALIA, 1901-1912. Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer. (Australian News and Information Bureau.) DESERT PEOPLE. 1969. Ian Dunlop. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.) GUNABIBI. 1971. Roger Sandall. (Extension Media Center, University of California, Berkeley.)

Saturday, May 26 (5:30) - see Thursday, May 24 at 8:00

Sunday, May 27 (5:30) - see Saturday, May 26 at 3:00

Monday, May 28 (2:00) - see Saturday, May 26 at 3:00

Monday, May 28 (5:30) - CARNIVALS IN BELGIUM. 1972. Henri Storck. DEDEHEIWA TELLS THE MYTH OF NARO; DEDEHEIWA WEEDS HIS GARDEN; DEDEHEIWA WASHES HIS CHILDREN. 1972. Napoleon Chagnon, Timothy Asch. (Documentary Educational Resources, Somerville, Massachusetts.)

Wednesday, May 30 (Noon) - GROWING UP AS A FORE. 1968. E. R. Sorenson. FORE CHILDREN VI: A DOCUMENTARY RECORD OF NATURALLY OCCURRING CHILD BEHAVIOR. 1963. E. R. Sorenson.

Thursday, May 31 (2:00) - see Wednesday, May 30 at Noon

Thursday, May 31 (5:30) - FAMILY. 1970. Hubert Smith. (National Audio-Visual Center, Washington, D.C.) FARREBIQUE. 1947. Georges Rouquier. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Thursday, May 31 (8:00) - KAOBABA TELLS THE MYTH OF NARO; MAGICAL DEATH; CHILDREN'S MAGICAL DEATH; THE FEAST; CHILDREN ROAST MEAT; MINI-FEAST. 1970-72. Napoleon Chagnon, Timothy Asch. (Documentary Educational Resources, Somerville, Massachusetts.)

Friday, June 1 (2:00) - TIDIKAWA AND FRIENDS. 1972. Jef and Su Doring. (Vision Quest, New York City.)

Saturday, June 2 (3:00) - see Friday, June 1 at 2:00

Saturday, June 2 (5:30) - LEARNING TO DANCE IN BALI. 1938. Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead. HITLERJUNGE QUEX. 1933. Hans Steinhoff; analysis by Gregory Bateson.

Sunday, June 3 (5:30) - LEARNING TO DANCE IN BALI. 1938. Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead. FARREBIQUE. 1947. Georges Rouquier. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Monday, June 4 (2:00) - FAMILY. 1970. Hubert Smith. (National Audio-Visual Center, Washington, D.C.) HITLERJUNGE QUEX. 1933. Hans Steinhoff; analysis by Gregory Bateson.

Monday, June 4 (5:30) - IMAGINERO. 1971. Jorge Preloran. English version by Robert Gardner. (Image Resources.) THE LAST OF THE CUIVA. 1972. Brian Moser (Granada Television, London.)

Tuesday, June 5 (5:30) - see Monday, June 4 at 5:30

Thursday, June 7 (5:30) - SANTISIMOS HERMANOS. 1971. Gabriella Samper. THE LAST OF THE CUIVA. 1972. Brian Moser. (Granada Television, London.)

Thursday, June 7 (8:00) - SANTISIMOS HERMANOS. 1971. Gabriella Samper. MEDIEVAL MODERNS. 1928. J. A. Haesler. (American Museum of Natural History.) SOL SVANETII. 1930. Mikhail Kalatozov.

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Friday, June 8 (2:00) - see Thursday, June 7 at 8:00

Saturday, June 9 (3:00) - THE WEDDING OF PALO. 1937. F. Dalsheim, Knud Rasmussen. THE NETSILIK ESKIMO TODAY. 1972. Gilles Blais. (Education Development Center, Newton, Massachusetts.)

Saturday, June 9 (5:30) - see Thursday, June 7 at 8:00

Sunday, June 10 (5:30) - Four films from the "Netsilik Eskimo" series. 1963-1973. Asen Balikci, Quentin Brown. (Education Development Center.)

Monday, June 11 (2:00) - see Sunday, June 10 at 5:30

Monday, June 11 (5:30) - REGARD SUR L'AFRIQUE NOIRE. 1947. A. Mahuzier. TO LIVE WITH HERDS. 1972. David MacDougall.

Wednesday, June 13 (Noon) - Selected films from the Encyclopaedia Cinematographica, Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film. (Pennsylvania State University.)

Thursday, June 14 (2:00) - see Wednesday, June 13 at Noon

Thursday, June 14 (5:30) - see Monday, June 11 at 5:30

Thursday, June 14 (8:00) - CHOREOMETRICS. Work-in-progress. Presented by Alan Lomax, Director, "Choreometrics Project," Columbia University.

Friday, June 15 (2:00) - SIA CHORUS. 1972. Adrian Gerbrands. (Stichting Film en Wetenschap, Utrecht.) TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE OF SIKKIM. 1973. Fredric Lieberman, Michael Moore. SPEND IT ALL. 1972. Les Blank. (Flower Films, Hollywood, California.)

Saturday, June 16 (3:00) - LOURDES ET SES MIRACLES. 1954. Georges Rouquier. (Les Films du Parvis, Paris.)

Saturday, June 16 (5:30) - see Friday, June 15 at 2:00

Sunday, June 17 (5:30) - LES MAITRES FOUS. 1972. English version of 1953 Jean Rouch film. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.) LOURDES ET SES MIRACLES. 1954. Georges Rouquier. (Les Productions du Parvis.)

Monday, June 18 (2:00) - see Sunday, June 17 at 5:30

Monday, June 18 (5:30) - MONDO CANE. 1962. Gualtiero Jacopetti. (Macmillan Audio/Brandon.)

Tuesday, June 19 (5:30) - see Monday, June 18 at 5:30

Wednesday, June 20 (Noon) - Selected films from the "Bushman" series. 1968. John Marshall. (Documentary Educational Resources.)

Thursday, June 21 (2:00) - see Wednesday, June 20 at Noon

Thursday, June 21 (5:30) - GRASS. 1925. Merian C. Cooper, Ernest B. Schoedsack.

Thursday, June 21 (8:00) - YELLOW CRUISE. 1936. Léon Poirier. (Motion Picture Study Collection, George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.)

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Friday, June 22 (2:00) - see Thursday, June 21 at 8:00

Saturday, June 23 (3:00) - DEAD BIRDS. 1963. Robert Gardner. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Saturday, June 23 (5:30) - see Thursday, June 21 at 8:00

Sunday, June 24 (5:30) - THE HEALER. 1972. Tom Cohen. (Amram Nowak.) DEAD BIRDS. 1963. Robert Gardner. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Monday, June 25 (2:00) - see Sunday, June 24 at 5:30

Monday, June 25 (5:30) - THE MIAO YEAR. 1968. William R. Geddes. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.) GYPSIES. 1972. Documentary Film Studio, Warsaw. (Contemporary/McGraw-Hill.)

Wednesday, June 27 (Noon) - to be announced

Thursday, June 28 (2:00) - see Wednesday, June 27 at Noon

Thursday, June 28 (5:30) - see Monday, June 25 at 5:30

Thursday, June 28 (8:00) - SALAMOU. 1970. Nicole Echard. (Comité International du Film Ethnologique et Sociologique, Paris.) BEHIND THE VEIL. 1972. Eve Arnold. (Impact Films, N.Y.) JOYCE AT 34. 1972. Claudia Weill, Joyce Chopra. (New Day, N.Y.)

Friday, June 29 (2:00) - see Thursday, June 28 at 8:00

Saturday, June 30 (5:30) - INVESTIGATION OF A HIT AND RUN. 1972. John Marshall. (Documentary Educational Resources.) LEGAL DISCUSSION OF "INVESTIGATION OF A HIT AND RUN". 1972. John Marshall. (Documentary Educational Resources.) TO MAKE A BALANCE. 1970. Laura Nader. (Extension Media Center, University of California.)

Saturday, June 30 (5:30) - THE CITY. 1939. Willard Van Dyke, Ralph Steiner. HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY. 1963. Richard Leacock, Joyce Chopra. (Leacock-Pennebaker.) INVESTIGATION OF A HIT AND RUN. 1972. John Marshall. (Documentary Educational Resources.)

Sunday, July 1 (5:30) - Sections I and II of TOWARDS BARUYA MANHOOD. 1971. Ian Dunlop. (Australian Commonwealth Film Unit.)

Monday, July 2 (2:00) - Sections III, IV, and V of TOWARDS BARUYA MANHOOD.

Monday, July 2 (5:30) - Sections VI, VII, VIII, and IX of TOWARDS BARUYA MANHOOD.

Tuesday, July 3 (Noon) - TOWARDS BARUYA MANHOOD (complete).

Additional information available from Lillian Gerard, Special Projects Coordinator, and Mark Segal, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7296, -7295.

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