

The Museum of Modern Art

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CINEPROBE BEGINS SEVENTH SEASON AS FORUM FOR INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS

Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art's series devoted to the independent filmmaker, will begin its seventh season Tuesday, October 8, at 5:30 P.M., with "Native Land," the pioneering independent film completed in 1942. Leo Hurwitz, who co-directed the picture with Paul Strand, will be present to discuss the film.

Cineprobe was initiated in 1968 to provide exposure for the independent filmmaker, a category including both radically experimental filmmakers and directors of more conventional films which do not receive commercial distribution. The filmmaker is present at Cineprobe screenings, which are usually held two Tuesdays each month at 5:30 P.M.

"Native Land" was made by Frontier Films, a non-profit group which was active from 1936 to 1942. Its makers termed it a "dramatic documentary" since it reconstructed actual events on film. The picture presents a series of assaults on civil liberties in the United States during the 1930s, among them the murder of a union organizer, the slaughter of Arkansas sharecroppers, and the Memorial Day Massacre of peaceful pickets outside a Chicago steel plant. The various dramatic episodes are connected by a commentary spoken by Paul Robeson.

Three years in production, "Native Land" was not financed by a major studio; approximately 5000 individuals contributed to the film's budget. The finished product earned the praise of critics. Christian Science Monitor critic John Beaufort wrote: "In matter and treatment, 'Native Land' is a sensational and revolutionary film.... 'Native Land' creates a shattering emotional effect." Bosley Crowther of The New York Times called it "one of the most powerful and disturbing documentary films ever made."

Future Cineprobe evenings will include Polish animator Jan Lenica with his full-length animated film "Adam II" (October 22); Ralph Bakshi with his newest effort

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"Coonskin" (November 12); and American avant-gardist Barry Gerson with a program of recent work (November 19).

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