

FILM SECTION
MUSEUM OF ART
CARNEGIE INSTITUTE

COLLECTION SCREENINGS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1977
8: P.M.

LEAD SHOES 1949 Directed by Sidney Peterson in collaboration with his class at the California School of Fine Arts. b/w, sound, 18 mins.

FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON 1951 Directed by James Broughton. b/w, sound, 15 mins.

THE BED 1968 Directed by James Broughton. Color, sound, 20 mins.

THIS IS IT 1971 Directed by James Broughton. Color, sound, 9 1/2 mins.

HIGH KUKUS 1973 Directed by James Broughton. Color, sound. 3 mins.

"Be wary: life is what happens while you are doing something else."

Broughton, in SEEING THE LIGHT, 1972

Both Peterson and Broughton began making films in the creative excitement which surrounded the Art in Cinema screenings at the San Francisco Museum of Art in the late 1940's, where such European masterpieces as Bunuel's UN CHIEN ANDALOU and Cocteau's BLOOD OF A POET were screened, together with the work of the emerging American avant-garde. In 1946 these two poets collaborated on THE POTTED PSALM. Peterson abandoned filmmaking after THE LEAD SHOES. Broughton has continued to make films, in addition to his poetry, his involvement in the theater, and his teaching activities.

Broughton, together with filmmaker Joel Singer, will be present at the MOA to screen and discuss his recent works on Tuesday December 6th.

LEAD SHOES by Sidney Peterson

LEAD SHOES is based on the superimposition of two English ballads, "The Three Ravens" and "Edward", fragments of which are discernable in the sound track. The spatial and temporal ellipses in this film are ambiguous to the point that the events can have only an associative, rather than directly causal, relationship. The "illogical" ordering of events is echoed in Peterson's use of reverse motion, and action speeded up and slowed down by the camera, as well as the use of a distorting anamorphic lens. In viewing the film, one is therefore led to apply to the metaphors an awareness of cultural context:

"On addition to the transference... of diving suit to coffin to knight's armor, Peterson has short-circuited the ballads so that the scavenging mother assumes the role to the fallow deer in "The Three Ravens" who carried off the body of the dead knight: Edward becomes the ravaging ravens, a symbolic cannibal." (P. Adams Sitney Visionary Film, p. 78)

In the shifting mother-father-son triangulation of forces in LEAD SHOES, Freudian implications are unavoidable, as are the Dionysian aspects. There is evident in this film a spontaneity which permits the audience a glimpse into the film-making process which preceded the final film. More importantly, we are invited -- as so often in poetry -- to provide the connectives toward which Peterson steers us.

-Bill Judson

FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON

James Broughton's FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON presents a series of four vignettes on a single theme -- love -- which are accompanied by verses from a collection of Broughton's poems, MUSICAL CHAIRS. According to the filmmaker's notes, these sequences

depict two men and two women "at four ages and four stages: the girl of 10: the lad of 20: the woman of 30: and the man of 40." Broughton considers the four sequences in musical terms: the first episode, "Game Little Gladys" is Allegro: "The Gardener's Son" is Adagio: "Princess Printemps" is Scherzo, and "The Aging Balletomane" is Lento. This experience combining the lessons of the arts has prompted Broughton to comment (in P. Adams Sitney's Visionary Film): "I have learned more about the writing of poetry from music than from literature. And more about the making of film from dance than from cinema."

While the tempo of each of the four sections is derived from analogies to music, **FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON** also has its own filmic structure, based in part on increasingly complex spaces. The naive simplicity of "Game Little Gladys" is reflected in her movements often parallel or perpendicular to the picture plane. The adolescent "Gardener's Son" inhabits a more complicated space (with its mythological references) -- people appear and disappear behind on-screen barriers -- statues or other people -- and vectors of vision or movement are more frequently at a diagonal to the picture plane. The ritual romp of the princess and her suitor occur within an elaborate architectural setting: mammoth columns and a huge staircase dwarf the couple: the scale more appropriate for giants than for human lovers.

In the final sequence, both the Balletomane and the ballerina of his memory, project themselves into and out from the frame of the image, often at a diagonal, establishing a complex relationship between on-screen/off-screen space; the dream-like complexity of this relationship is reinforced by the use of slow motion and reverse motion.

In all four sequences, the theme of love is presented within the context of ritual movement and dance, drawing in part on the tradition of the early silent cinema and centering on the interaction between the images and text spoken by Broughton's off-screen voice.

-Annette Chizeck

THE BED by James Broughton

THE BED is a playful merry allegory which celebrates impudently and imaginatively just about everything that could happen in bed (and some things that couldn't) -- birth, young love, loneliness, dream and death amid all sorts of hanky-panky from fetishism to plain old lechery.

THIS IS IT by James Broughton

This is It
This is really It
This is all there is
and It's perfect as It is

A little Zen poem about the Eternal Now and the Eternal Child, a home made fable, a philosophical profundity. -- and a gentle jibe at Broughton's friend Stan Brakhage, who had recently completed his epic **SCENES FROM UNDER CHILDHOOD** (1967-70).

HIGH KUKUS by James Broughton

Using selections from short poems published under the same punning title as the film -- and with a single continuous (and ever-changing) image, Broughton creates a vision of the universal.

JAMES BROUGHTON AND JOEL SINGER WILL BE PRESENT TO SCREEN AND DISCUSS THEIR WORKS
NEXT TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1977 in the M.O.A. THEATER AT 8:00 P.M. ADMISSION \$1.00

CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF ART

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