

gree, whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

All these are matters of record, and will remain so unless—which I do not expect—the Doublethinkers get control of the country and “make sure that all written records agree with the orthodoxy of the moment.” Until then, they are more of a nuisance than a menace—as they were in the days when they thought that salvation was to be found in Moscow. They are religious people, but a special kind of religious people; as Dr. Schlesinger has pointed out, a man may be religious without feeling certain that he has the complete and unalterable final truth and that those who disagree with him are damned in time and in eternity. But these people must feel that. Some of them, finding that final truth is not in Moscow, have sought and found it in Rome; harder characters become their own Popes, and are just as sure of their own infallibility as they were in the days when they parroted the resolutions of the Comintern.

**T**HERE is another kind of thinking, which some religious people find not inconsonant with their view of the relations between man and God. I described it in these pages twenty years ago and it seems pertinent to quote that description now:

To admit that there are questions which even our so impressive intelligence is unable to answer, and at the same time not to despair of the ability of the human race to find, eventually, better answers than we can reach as yet—to recognize that there is nothing to do but keep on trying as well as we can, and to be as content as we can with the small gains that in the course of ages amount to something—that requires some courage and some balance.

That kind of thinking has played a great part in American history, from Benjamin Franklin down to John Dewey; and it has worked. But the Communists about whom I was writing then had no use for it, nor have most of them now that they are ex-Communists. There must be a final truth and they must have it; experimental thinking is only sounding brass and tinkling cymbal; and if its successes are written in the record of American history from Jefferson (yes, and Hamilton) through Lincoln down to Franklin Roosevelt, that fact can be obliterated by remembering that events happened in the desired manner—by knowing that press and radio and schools and colleges are all controlled by the Communists and that the Roosevelt administration had its critics shot.

I repeat—one becomes bored.

# The Film Forum

## ART ON FILM

## The Saturday Review's Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films

**JACKSON POLLOCK.** *Produced by Paul Falkenburg and Hans Namuth. Distributed by A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. (11 min., color.)*

Undoubtedly one of America's most talked about painters is Jackson Pollock, who uses canvas fifteen feet long and paint by the bucketful—as well as sand, broken glass, nails, and other materials. His technique and pictures may be controversial, but there is nothing about this film that isn't totally acceptable, except for a few weaknesses in the delivery of the spoken commentary by the artist himself. Pollock and his paintings are well suited to motion picture treatment, both being highly photogenic, sharp, and interesting in close-up. Definitely worth seeing.

**JOHN MARIN.** *Produced, directed, and photographed by James E. Davis. Distributed by A. F. Films, see above. (20 min., color.)*

The main attraction of this film is that it is the only one of its kind, showing the distinguished American painter at work in the New Jersey Palisades area and on the coast of Maine. Its faults are many—particularly the camera's many shaky panning motions and the repeated detailed close-ups which seem inappropriate to the style and wholeness of Marin's paintings.

**MARK TOBEY: ARTIST.** *Produced by Orbit Films. Distributed by Dimensions, Inc., 2521 Sixth Ave., Seattle 1, Wash. (20 min., color.)*

Just about every visual thing in this cine-poetic investigation of the world of West Coast painter Mark Tobey is a thing of beauty. Photographically the film is composed with originality, skill, affection, and directness. The painter and his canvases do not crowd out the film, they only belong to it, and to the surrounding world from which they are taken.

The stunning attractiveness of its color photography and the internal composition is rarely seen on the screen. Not so the spoken words, which seem to have been added by people who have little faith in visual art, photographic or painted. Such lines as “How does it feel to be tolerated?” and “Do you paint to live or live to paint?” only detract from the portrait of the artist. His dull-hued, small-patterned pictures are, according to the film's complaint, not “fashionable.”

The film's music, composed by the artist himself, is far more in keeping with the tone of the pictures and the

film. Too bad there wasn't more of it and fewer words.

**THE BIRTH OF A PAINTING.** *Produced and distributed by Thomas Bouchard Productions, 80 West 40th St., Studio 72, New York 36, N. Y. (35 min., color.)*

Here is another example of how a film can show the work and technique of a living painter. This time Kurt Seligman is the artist, and the work progresses step by step from ink drawing to black and white on canvas, to layer after layer of color, in which Seligman mixes oil and water bases alternately. No effort is made to explain the style of the painting, merely the artist's technique of using paints. The commentary, by the artist, is warm and friendly.

**LOOKING AT SCULPTURE.** *Produced by Realist Film Unit. Distributed for the British Information Services by Brandon Films, 200 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y. (10 min.)*

Three pieces of sculpture are singled out and analyzed in some detail—each a Madonna and Child, each of a different period and style. First is a whalebone carving of English Romanesque style, then a German Gothic piece by Veit Stoss, and third an Italian Renaissance terra cotta by Rossellino.

In many ways “Looking at Sculpture” promises a new kind of excellence in art films, but doesn't quite realize the promise. Michael Redgrave gives a stylish reading of the narration. “Looking at Sculpture” was photographed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and produced by Alexander Shaw.

**VAN MEEGEREN'S FAKED VERMEERS.** *Produced by Sofedi. Distributed by Films of the Nations, 62 W. 45th St., New York 36, N. Y. (27 min.)*

Newspapers carried the story of the recent art hoax in which a number of paintings which were “discovered” and accepted as seventeenth-century Vermeers were subsequently claimed as the work of a little-known twentieth-century portrait painter named Hans Van Meegeren. This film reconstructs the story like a police dossier, making good use of various cinematic devices. The faked canvases are analyzed through microscopic and radiograph camera devices, and the film includes a bit of why and how Van Meegeren managed to create the amazing frauds in the first place. —CECILE STARR.

\*For rentals consult the list of SRL Film Referral Libraries, available at 10c a copy from Film Department, Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York 36, N. Y.

## FICTION

(Continued from Page 12)

tuous with golden lamps, incense, and processions, and the gods are everywhere, to be placated and adored and spoken to as one would speak with familiar friends. And Bhattacharya has described to perfection the richness of that ritualistic life set against a glowing landscape.

At a time when we need to know more desperately than ever how the Indians think and behave, "Music for Mohini" acquires an added importance. The books on the nature of Indian polity and political development are legion, but they tell us too little of the living India, the faith by which the peasants move and how they react to Western ideas and on what hopes they build their lives. The answers—most of them—are here, written in a language as unexpected and graceful as Mohini herself.

## Fiction Note

**DREAM OF INNOCENCE.** By Turnley Walker. David McKay. \$3.50. Mr. Walker forsakes here the inspirational note which characterized his earlier accounts of his battle with polio, "Rise Up and Walk" and "Journey Together," to take up some novelistic matters which are sordid, sensational, and pretty close to salacious. Geraldine Lowell, our heroine, the lower depths of whose mind we are to explore, is a "high grade" call girl. The "high grade" refers to her prices. As Mr. Turnley shows in innumerable scenes of considerable drive and brilliance, Geraldine is an amoral trollop of no loyalties and little intelligence. A vicious hedonist, she is capable of murder to achieve her rather erratic ends. The story of how Geraldine fouled herself up involves detailed and often clinical descriptions of her relations with fellow whores, a driving madame, some customers, and some ambitious youngsters on the fringe of the theatrical world. The scene in which Geraldine and a girl friend absently but efficiently murder a "protector" for his automobile provided material for a more effectively handled short story by Mr. Walker. Here it loses force in the general welter of irrational violence and perverse lust. Mr. Walker's undoubted power of writing and his ability to penetrate the jungle psychology of his moral cretins does not quite justify his extended celebration of their lives.

—EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

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(Continued on page 34)