



What Are the Young Films Saying?

THE NEW FILM directed by Elliot (Cat Ballou) Silverstein, *The Happening*, is at once the most fascinating and exasperating American-made movie dealing with what *Time* has termed the Now Generation. To be sure, the comparisons are not particularly flattering, consisting on the one hand of the Elvis Presley-Frankie Avalon chrome-plated beach parties, and on the other hand of scruffy Underground paens to the pleasures of the beatnik way of life. Although *The Happening* begins with a beach party, the subsequent events have nothing to do with American-International's world of bikini-nied teen-agers and their rock 'n' roll frenzies; and while all four of the young "beats" involved in this film — Faye Dunaway, George Maharis, Michael Parks, and Robert Walker—are intent on getting their kicks, they obviously derive little pleasure from them.

The jump-off point for *The Happening* is the quartet's impromptu abduction of a grizzled ex-gangster (admirably played by Anthony Quinn). At first unaware of their captive's identity, they discover as he makes frantic phone calls for ransom money that he is not only the part-owner of a Miami hotel, but also has important Mafia connections. And to their dismay, they also discover that each of his contacts—his wife, his partner, his Mafia chief—has a good, selfish reason for turning him down. Not only is the man completely useless to them, but they realize (at least flickeringly) that what began as a mindless prank has resulted in the total destruction of a life. It is this recognition of consequences that provides the film with its finest scene and its deepest reason for being.

For the rest, although it clicks along at a fast pace and with considerable humor, *The Happening* is often disconcerting. One recognizes the youthful types—the well-muscled beachboy with a chip on his shoulder, but nothing on the ball; the moody dropout whose family sends him \$400 a month just to keep him away from home; the hippy hanger-on ready to undertake anything except responsibility; the clean-cut college girl who asks nothing more from life than a few thrills. One recognizes them, but the film does little to make them more understandable. Similarly, one recognizes the members of the older generation—the bitchy wife, the money-grubbing friend, the bombastic police and politicians; but all are mere caricatures.

This might be all very well if the en-

tire film were told in terms of satire; and the implication is crystal clear that, so far as the makers of *The Happening* are concerned, it is the callous, self-serving hypocrisy of the adult population that produces the wary, uncommitted attitudes in the young. But with Quinn at the center of the film—vital, human, and touching—neither types, caricatures, nor satire seem quite sufficient. Nevertheless, although *The Happening* is rarely searching enough to supply answers, it is certainly provocative enough to stimulate a useful re-evaluation of what is happening today, and why.

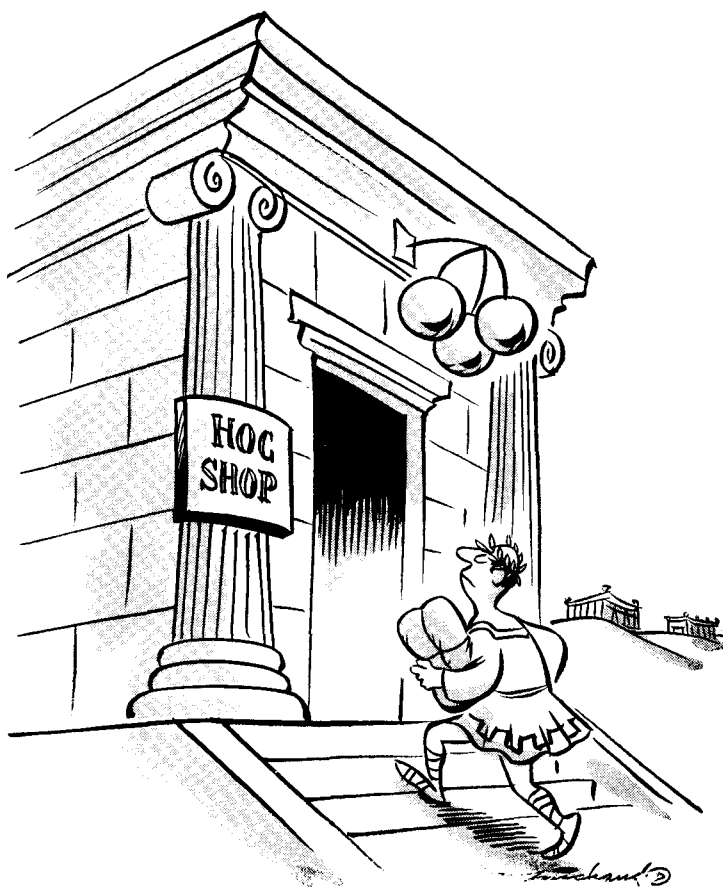
PERHAPS TYPES, caricatures, and satire can be more readily packaged in a musical comedy format, because this is precisely what we are presented with in the film adaptation of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*—and it all works. Once again, the picture takes a dim view of the older generation—a nitwit crowd of sycophants, lechers, time-servers, and opportunists. Pitted against them is a youthful climber (Robert Morse) who uses his own rules to

beat them at their own game. Somehow, despite Morse's mechanical softening of heart in the final reels, the effect is quite exhilarating.

Although the world of big business is unmercifully caricatured, the outlines are hard enough to make the values and the ethics of corporation executives so real and dubious that their overthrow on their own terms comes as a double triumph. I suspect that it is this hard core under the surface humor, the triumph of Jack and the Beanstalk over the Jolly Green Giants of industry, that made the show a surprise long-run hit on Broadway and will give it its primary appeal on the screen. This and the sparkling score and witty lyrics of Frank Loesser, and the bubbling good humor of David Swift's adaptation, both as writer and director. I have never seen a show that smiles so much—at the underlying situation, at the lyrics, at the characters themselves.

By a happy circumstance, the people who made the show so sparkling on Broadway—Morse, Rudy Vallee, Michele Lee (who joined the Broadway cast late)—recreate their characters on the screen. Virgil Partch has been brought in to trick up the material with bright visual gags. And a woman named simply Micheline (who is really Mrs. David Swift) has dressed the cast so attractively that even the meanest is part of the fun.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.



Russian Record

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to the Russian reader than Babi Yar. Then, in 1961, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, the professionally rebellious Siberian, electrified the Soviet Union when he first recited and later published a poem devoted to the fading memory of Babi Yar. It began with the words: "No monument stands here . . ." Every Soviet reader got the message. Tens of thousands of Jews had been killed at Babi Yar; yet, perhaps because they were Jews, their memory had not been worthy of a monument in a nation covered with monuments. The stigma of anti-Semitism, a chronic ailment in the western part of the Soviet Union, had been spotlighted in a most embarrassing fashion.

Nikita Khrushchev attacked the poem; so did his then loyal polemicists. Not only Jews died at Babi Yar, they shouted; many Slavs died there, too. Often visitors to Kiev, including this reviewer, were denied official permission to visit Babi Yar.

So the situation remained until *Yunist'* decided last fall to publish Kuznetsov's story. Moscow raised no objections. It was important, one Soviet official explained, that Babi Yar be remembered as a national tragedy, touching all Soviet citizens, rather than as simply a Jewish tragedy. Now the city authorities of Kiev are reportedly planning to build a monument to those who were slaughtered at Babi Yar, a belated bow to their memory.

Anatoly Kuznetsov, the twelve-year-old boy who has grown into a mature and talented Soviet writer, spent nearly twenty-five years collecting material for this book. An English-language serialization appeared in the United States late last fall in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, a weekly compendium of translations edited by Leo Gruliov.

Babi Yar, now ably translated into English by Jacob Guralsky, is not a typical Soviet novel—not by a long shot. Its characters suffer and bleed and die and many seem never to have read *Pravda*, much less wrapped their bread in it. They are not the usual wooden symbols of Soviet progress, the muscular giants fighting for the rights of man. Some actually collaborate with the Nazis; others, hungry and frightened, sleep with them. The narrator's grandfather, a selfish, loud-mouthed peasant, despised Soviet rule and cheered the arrival of the Germans. His grandmother, completely illiterate, worshipped Jesus Christ, not Karl Marx, and often prayed before a stand of ikons placed discreetly in a corner of their hut. His father, Vasily, was a Bolshevik who left his wife and never answered her wires asking for help just before the Nazis stormed into Kiev. The Germans are at times unfeeling robots, herding thousands of people into gas chambers or deep ravines; at other times they are generous human beings trapped in a war they did not start and do not admire.

The novel flows easily from one episode to another, interrupted every now and then by a short political speech by the author, directed, it seems, more at his literary agents in the Communist Party than at his readers. His main point is that no one could have lived through the Nazi occupation without its having affected virtually every aspect of his subsequent life. "After all," Kuznetsov says, "it is his generation that is taking control now, after having come through *that*, through a war that shook it to the core. The experience must affect everything that generation does."

Those who wonder why the Russians get so upset these days over the question of Germany's acquiring nuclear weapons, ought to read *Babi Yar*. It helps put things into perspective.

The Other Half

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deep-lying differences that set apart the world of Portuguese Brazil from that of New Spain. The final chapter, "Appointment with Necromancy," discloses the influences based on traditions, prejudices, religious taboos, and pagan practices, whether of Indian or African origin. This area has indeed been *terra incognita* for Yankees.

Arciniegas, whose published works began to appear in the 1930s, was born in Colombia in 1900. He served his country in various diplomatic assignments, and as Minister of Education. He also spent some years as editor and contributor to Colombian and Argentine newspapers, and later held professorships at home and in the United States. Gunther was born in 1901 and began publishing his series of biographies and "Inside" books in the Thirties. Arciniegas's volume has an outstanding bibliography, several maps, a score of artistic illustrations, and an amazing twenty pages of chronological tables covering literary, artistic, and political developments. Gunther has an unusually complete subject and name index, five maps, and a chart of demographic and political data arranged by country. Though not writing at the height of their powers, both authors bring to their present works long and varied experience that comes to a focus in their value judgments and the priorities they ascribe to different but equally important elements contributing to the present scene. Originally issued in a Spanish language edition in 1965, Arciniegas's work was translated by Joan MacLean in a workmanlike if uninspired manner, and not without some oddities of syntax and choice of words.

In his eighth chapter, "Big Neighbor, Communism and the Alianza," Gunther offers, as in one earlier chapter, several capsules of intercontinental relations, including sketchy, piecemeal remarks on the Monroe Doctrine, the Good Neighbor Policy, Intervention.

IN well-defined chronological order Arciniegas shifts from political history to the architectural, educational, and literary components of the eras of discovery, exploration, colonization, independence, and republican growth. He not only has a masterful sweep of historical events and trends but packs into each chapter a multitude of facts, evoking the life and fashion of successive decades. Nor does he neglect the impact of divergent schools of philosophy.

Whether read in preparation for summit meetings or for personal edification, John Gunther and Germán Arciniegas furnish a unique opportunity for cross-bearings to be taken.

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An Exaltation of Evil

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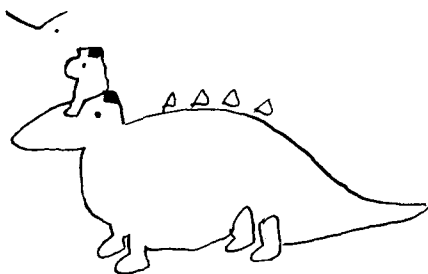
and only when the latter is clearly in focus can the beauty of the former arise. It is not in spite of his chains but because of them that Harcamone is a god, and the vision of the mystical rose that comes to Genet does not supplant but, rather, adds meaning to the manacles the criminal wears:

The transformation began at the left wrist, which it encircled with a bracelet of flowers, and continued along the chain, from link to link, to the right wrist. Harcamone kept walking, heedless of the prodigy. The guards saw nothing abnormal. I was holding at that moment the pair of scissors with which, once a month, we were allowed, each in turn, to cut our fingernails and toenails. I was therefore barefooted. I made the same movement that religious fanatics make to seize the hem of a cloak and kiss it. I took two steps, with my body bent forward and the scissors in my hand, and I cut off the loveliest rose, which was hanging by a supple stem near his left wrist. The head of the rose fell on my bare foot and rolled on the pavestones among the dirty curls of cut hair. I picked it up and raised my enraptured face, just in time to see the horror stamped on that of Harcamone, whose nervousness had been unable to resist that sure prefiguration of his death. He almost fainted.

One might ponder long in such a passage the tension between the visionary and the concrete. Here they strain as if to break apart, the rose and the dirty curls of hair startling in their contact. It belongs to Genet's art that he slowly encircles such fanciful elements by ever stronger imaginative bonds. He does it by doing more than simply yoking opposites together: he circles through an event time and again to bring the reader through stages of spiraling ascent from the lower to the higher manifestation. Yet the ascent is also a descent, for the journey is an asceticism in which all levels of self-justification are left behind and one walks, as Genet does at the book's end, like a barefoot penitent whose life is nothing but devotion.

Harcamone's influence acted truly in accordance with his perfect destination: through him our minds were opened to extreme abjection. I cannot avoid using the figurative terminology that is commonly employed. Do not be surprised if the images that indicate my movement are the opposite of those that indicate the movement of the saints in heaven. You may say of them that they rose, and that I lowered myself.

These words open the final section of



the book, thirty-two pages in which Genet describes the vigil he kept during the four nights that led up to Harcamone's execution. Although he lay in the arms of Divers, his mind was occupied with visions of Harcamone's translation. There was a different vision of miracle each night, accompanied by memories of personal shame. Then suddenly everything is over. Genet's friends are dead; Fontevault is only a memory; the prototypes are gone. All that remain are the imaginative reconstruction and the abject author who has allowed us to follow "the very paths" of his heart.

Evil though the desires of Jean Genet surely have been, there is something holy in his bearing. Sartre was not wrong to refer to him as a saint. Genet had already said it, and not entirely with irony. The imagination may devote itself to evil, but it cannot *be* evil. When pushed to the extremes of moral reality, it shows itself as the carrier in man of what is holy as well as evil. It becomes diaphanous, and one feels that he should indeed walk barefoot in its presence. It has been given to a pervert, thief, and coward named Jean Genet to come closer than the man of rectitude to the holy. Genet's head is full of violence, but his heart contains the rose of peace.

LITERARY I. Q. ANSWERS

Column One should read: 11 (Waugh: *The Loved One*), 6, 7, 9, 10 (McCarthy: *The Group*), 12 (O'Neill: *The Hairy Ape*), 2 (Hawthorne), 3 (*A Tale of Two Cities*), 4 (Jack London), 8 (*Death of a Salesman*), 1, 5.

Crooked Path

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from teachers whose job it should be to identify problem children early in life and get them help and guidance; on the other, to provide for older pupils who are unable or unwilling to stay in school a work-experience "related to . . . jobs on which they have a reasonable chance of being employed." It is not surprising that unemployed drop-outs figure most frequently in the delinquency statistics.

We need an enlightened application of strategy, he goes on, by our law-enforcers and custodial institutions; only now is there a dawning appreciation, for instance, that drug addicts need medical and psychological help and not penal action. Not unexpectedly, MacIver is on the side of those experimenting with nonpunitive treatment (Daytop Lodge, a halfway house for addicted probationers; Synanon in California for addicts who come voluntarily), and supports the methadone experiment, whereby doctors are using drugs to counteract the craving for heroin.

Perhaps the most neglected strategy concerns what MacIver calls "*directed prevention*"—services that promptly give guidance to those who are vulnerable. Most states retain a multiplicity of services to the young; he wants to have them coordinated instead of working at cross-purposes.

The pity of a study like this is that it is aimed chiefly at the experts and academics. Would that it had been written in less highfalutin language, without marathon sentences, so that some of those "disprivileged" families, whom it's all about, could perhaps read and be reached. Isn't that what the "disprivileged" are being encouraged to do in all the poverty programs—try to learn and help themselves, just because they are so intimately bound up with the problems of the poor? Perhaps the MacIver team will consider making simple English part of their next project.

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MUSIC TO MY EARS

Rostropovich, Off and Running—"Trittico"

STATISTICALLY, it is twenty-six miles, 385 yards from Marathon to Athens, whose running by a messenger bearing news of Greek victory over the invading Persians established the classic distance for the race which climaxes the quadrennial Olympics. Musically, it is even farther from the Saint-Saëns Concerto in A minor to the Britten Symphony for Cello and Orchestra which comprise the Marathon-to-Athens of the twenty-seven-work sequence just commenced by Mstislav Rostropovich and the London Symphony under the direction of Gennadi Rozhdestvensky.

The Soviet cellist began what might well, in future, be termed a "Rostropovich," with a few wind sprints. They were, in addition to the Saint-Saëns, the Concertino opus 132 of Prokofiev and the B-minor Concerto of Dvořák, which served as trials of the course (Carnegie Hall), exercises in fast breaks and sudden stops. The qualities of his art are, indeed, so fully known now that there is little to be added at this time to the phrases descriptive of his command of the instrument. What might be added would be in appreciation of his qualities as a man and an artist. In both respects he seems to have unfolded and expanded since his debut here in 1956. He is now neither sphinx-like nor forbidding, but relaxed and smiling, due in part, no doubt, to elevation in the temperature of what was once called the cold war.

Of the works included on this first program, the most interesting was the Prokofiev Concertino, which was left incomplete when the composer died in 1953. The first and last movements were built up from sketches and stretches of wholly realized score by Rostropovich and Dimitri Kabalevsky, to balance the completely worked out slow movement. If the result is not great Prokofiev—for the reason perhaps that no one can imagine what the composer himself might have done at this or that critical point—it is nevertheless full of his personal accent, especially in the sustained slow movement and the lively, typically unpredictable finale. All the performances profited from the special kind of élan and communal effort that characterizes the London Symphony, efficiently prompted by Rozhdestvensky. Bulletins of the long journey to come will be circulated promptly.

Memories of days when prime instrumentalists (and singers) were collaborators as well as colleagues and con-

temporaries were recalled in warming reality when Erica Morini and Zino Francescatti joined the fine Musica Aeterna ensemble conducted by Frederic Waldman for a pair of programs in the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium at the Metropolitan Museum. As this hall is decidedly intimate, it was almost like sharing an evening of music-making *chez* Francescatti (he was, clearly, host to Mme. Morini's privileged place as *prima* in both works).

These were, as must almost inevitably be the case in such circumstances, the D-minor "doubles" of Vivaldi and Bach. Were one minded to such learned ruminations, the occasion could have been utilized to scrutinize the differing approach of these great men to the same problem. However, there were, more immediately and palpably, the qualities of artistry lavished upon them by the two equally equipped performers. On the first evening of the Saturday-Sunday sequence, the chemical reaction of the players to each other and the surroundings tended to drive the fast movements somewhat more than might have been intentional. But the true distinction emerged in the slow movements, both of which were wreathed in fine-spun filigrees of sound. Waldman's own part of the evening took in Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, Roussel's *Sinfonietta* (op. 52) and the E-major Serenade of Dvořák, played in that order for an audience held captive by promise of goodies to come.

Further to the interest of a week notable for its string playing was the debut in Carnegie Hall, on the evening of the first Morini-Francescatti program, of Uto Ughi, a twenty-three-year-old violinist born in Milan. An attractive, tallish young man, Ughi commended himself for the lovely sound he drew from a Strad once played by Rudolphe Kreutzer. How he handled it in the opening andante of Tartini's G-minor ("Devil's Trill") sonata suggested that he is the product of thorough schooling, in which the development of artistic individuality has had no small part. However, the surroundings were more than he could cope with on even terms, leading to uncertainties of intonation as complications piled up. Tullio Macoggi was his accompanist.

'Tis a pity that Giacomo Puccini could not have lived to enjoy February 23, 1967, at Lincoln Center. An inveterate devotee of his own music, Puccini could have, on this occasion, filled the hours