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On the boundaries of the Hollywood cinema: Art and the films of Albert Lewin

Felleman, Susan, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1993

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On the Boundaries of the Hollywood Cinema: Art and the Films of Albert Lewin

by

Susan Felleman

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1993

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Table of Contents

Title i
Copyright ii
Approval iii
Acknowledgments iv
Table of Contents ix
Note on the Text xi
List of Illustrations xii

Introduction 1

Part I. That Masculine Object of Desire (in black-and-white, *avec "l'irruption en couleurs du tableau"*): Albert Lewin's Films of the 1940s 27

1. Botticelli in Hollywood: The Moon and Sixpence (1942) 28

2. Dr. Look: The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945) 50

3. The Moving Picture Gallery: Painted Portraits in Hollywood Films of the 1940s 92

4. A Café Called *Désir*: The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947) 112

5. The Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene 141

Part II. Reincarnation, Voodoo, Lycanthropy and Other Feminine Destinies (in Technicolor, on location and on paper): Albert Lewin's Films of the 1950s 168

6. *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*: Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951) 169

7. "Their blessed benightedness": Saadia (1954) and The Living Idol (1957) 217

Conclusion: Moving Pictures and Magical Idols: A Symptomatology of Hollywood Cinema at Its Limits 237

Appendices 252

Appendix A. Chronology (1894-1968) 253
Appendix B. Filmography 274
1. Completed films as writer, director, producer 274
2. Unrealized projects 278
Appendix C. Art Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Lewin 283

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Illustrations 298

Bibliography: 350

I. By Albert Lewin 350
II. About Albert Lewin, General 351
III. About Albert Lewin's six directorial films 354
A. The Moon and Sixpence 354
B. The Picture of Dorian Gray 355
C. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami 356
D. Pandora and The Flying Dutchman 357
E. Saadia and The Living Idol 358
IV. General 359

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Note on the Text

In general, quotations from foreign language sources have been translated in the text. In these instances, the quotation appears italicized, in its original language, in a corresponding footnote. On a very few occasions, in order to preserve the poetic integrity of short French quotations, they are given in the text and their English translation is included in the corresponding footnote. Where not otherwise indicated, translations from foreign languages are my own. Foreign language words, excluding those in titles, appear italicized in the text (i.e. *mise-en-scène*, *Gesamtkunstwerk*, *non ignoravi*). Foreign language orthography has been preserved.

Full references to the sources cited in brief in footnotes can be found in the bibliography. The only abbreviation of a source found throughout the text is USC, which refers to the Albert Lewin Collection of the Cinema-Television Library and Archives of Performing Arts at the Doheny Library of the University of Southern California.

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List of Illustrations

1. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). The narrator (Herbert Marshall) watches Charles Strickland (George Sanders) draw a Tahitian idol at a Paris cafe {p. 298}.

2. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Strickland knocks down his friend, fellow painter, and mentor, Dirk Stroeve (Steve Geray), whose wife (Doris Dudley, right) he has seduced {p. 298}.

3. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Blanche Stroeve, Strickland, and the narrator at a Paris cafe chess table {p. 299}.

4. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Ata (Elena Verduga, left), who will become Strickland's wife, meets him at the Tahitian hotel of her Eurasian relative, Tiaré Johnson (Florence Bates, right) {p. 299}.

5. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Strickland at his easel {p. 300}.

6. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). A detail of Dolya Goutman's pseudo-Gauguin mural as compared by Life Magazine to a Gauguin's Ia Orana Maria (c. 1891-92) {p. 300}.

7. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). A detail of Strickland's (Goutman's) "masterpiece" {p. 301}.

8. Sandro Botticelli. Primavera (c. 1478). Corresponding detail of the composition upon which Goutman's pseudo-Gauguin was based {p. 301}.

9. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Ivan and Malvin Albright at work on before and after versions of the portrait at MGM 1944 {p. 302}.

10. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's feature on the film showed stills of Dorian (Hurd Hatfield) posing for the portrait (top), as well as before the original and altered versions of the painting (bottom) {p. 302}.

11. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil Hallward (Lowell Gilmore, left) reluctantly introduces Dorian to Lord Henry Wotton (George Sanders, right) {p. 303}.

12. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil working on his portrait of Dorian in his studio {p. 303}.

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13. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Six frames of the dissolve from Dorian's face as he poses, to the dying butterfly, to a still life composition {p. 304}.

14. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). The conclusion of the dissolve {p. 304}.

15. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian enters a cabaret called The Two Turtles, a man wearing a sandwich-board advertisement for "Dr. Look" visible behind him {p. 305}.

16. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Inside The Two Turtles a puppet-xylophone act is underway {p. 305}.

17. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life Magazine illustrates with numbered stills the performance of Sibyl Vane (Angela Lansbury) at The Two Turtles (1) and Dorian's malevolent seduction of her before his portrait at his home (2) {p. 306}.

18. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the first, slight alteration in the portrait (3) and Dorian's refusal to allow Basil to see it (4) {p. 307}.

19. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil's niece, Gladys Hallward (Donna Reed) visits Dorian, who faces a mirror in which a reproduction of Verrocchio's David (c. 1465) is reflected {p. 308}.

20. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian hosts a performance of an Indonesian dance about the life of Buddha (Devi Dja and her Balinese dancers) {p. 308}.

21. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Gladys and her suitor David Stone (Peter Lawford) watching the performance (5), and of Basil's visit to reproach Dorian (6) {p. 309}.

22. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian listens to Basil's reproaches and determines to show him the portrait {p. 310}.

23. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Basil before the uncovered portrait (7) and the shadow of Dorian as he murders Basil (8) {p. 311}.

24. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian stills the lamp that Basil had set swinging when he was stabbed and fell {p. 312}.

25. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Dorian and Gladys visiting Scotland Yard about

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Basil's "disappearance" (9) and Dorian entering the house at Blue Gate Field where James Vane (Richard Fraser, right) is with a French prostitute (Renie Carson) (10) {p. 313}.

26. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). At the house at Blue Gate Field, Dorian stops to speak with Adrian Singleton (Morton Lowry, right), who draws his picture in chalk, while a companion, Kate (Lillian Bond), looks on {p. 314}.

27. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Adrian gives Dorian away to Vane, who follows him outside and corners him, but Vane sees Dorian's youthful face and, believing he has the wrong man, lets Dorian go {p. 315}.

28. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian and Lord Henry on the train to Selby, Dorian's country estate {p. 316}.

29. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). David, Gladys and Henry read the note in which Dorian indicates that he has returned to town and breaks off with Gladys {p. 316}.

30. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). In the schoolroom in which he stores the portrait, Dorian resolves to reform {p. 317}.

31. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the portrait mutating back to its original form after Dorian stabs it through the heart (13 and 14) {p. 318}.

32. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the restored portrait (15) and Dorian's body, which has assumed all the degradation the portrait has lost (16) {p. 319}.

33. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). David escorts Gladys, shaken by the sight of Dorian's horrible corpse, downstairs at the film's conclusion {p. 320}.

34. Aubrey Beardsley. How Sir Tristam Drank the Love Drink, from Le Morte d'Arthur (1893-94) {p. 321}.

35. Ivan Le Lorraine Albright. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1943-1944). Oil on canvas, 217.1 x 106.7 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago {p. 322}.

36. Rebecca (1940), directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Judith Anderson, Joan Fontaine and the portrait of a de Winter ancestress {p. 323}.

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37. Suspicion (1941), directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Cary Grant and the portrait of General MacLaidlaw (Cedric Hardwicke) {p. 323}.

38. Laura (1944), directed by Otto Preminger. Clifton Webb, Dana Andrews and the portrait of Laura (Gene Tierney) {p. 324}.

39. The Woman in the Window (1944), directed by Fritz Lang. Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett and her portrait {p. 324}.

40. Scarlet Street (1945), directed by Fritz Lang. Joan Bennett and Edward G. Robinson {p. 325}.

41. The Two Mrs. Carrolls (1945), directed by Peter Godfrey. Barbara Stanwyk and her portrait {p. 325}.

42. The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947), directed by Joseph Mankiewicz. Gene Tierney and the portrait of Captain Gregg (Rex Harrison) {p. 326}.

43. Portrait of Jennie (1948), directed by William Dieterle. Cecil Kellaway, Joseph Cotton and the portrait of Jennie (Jennifer Jones) {p. 326}.

44. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Albert Lewin examines submissions by (left to right) Ivan Albright, Dorothea Tanning, Abraham Rattner, Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, and Horace Pippin at Budworth's in New York, March 20 (photo by William Leftwich) {p. 327}.

45. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Albert Lewin gesticulates before Ivan Albright's Temptation of Saint Anthony (photo by William Leftwich) {p. 327}.

46. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Judges Marcel Duchamp, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., and Sidney Janis contemplate Max Ernst's winning submission (photo by William Leftwich) {p. 328}.

47. Max Ernst. The Temptation of Saint Anthony (1945). Oil on canvas, 108 x 128 cm. Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum, Duisburg, Germany {p. 328}.

48. Poster for The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947) {p. 329}.

49. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges Duroy (George Sanders), plays with his "Stick" and attracts the interest of dancer, Rachel (Marie Wilson), as he sits with his friend, Charles Forestier (John Carradine) at the Café Desir {p. 330}.

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50. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine Forestier (Ann Dvorak, center) introduces Georges to her friend, Clotilde de Marelle (Angela Lansbury) at a dinner party at the Forestier home {p. 330}.

51. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Clotilde and Georges in a carriage on the way home from slumming at the Reine Blanche {p. 331}.

52. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine Forestier packs for a trip to the country with her consumptive husband as Georges declares his interest in her {p. 331}.

53. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges unsuccessfully pursues the virtuous Marie de Varenne (Frances Dee) outside the Cathedral of Notre-Dame {p. 332}.

54. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine works with her scissors, while Georges, now her husband, broods over her inheritance from the Comte de Vaudrec {p. 333}.

55. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine and Georges ready themselves for the Walters' party {p. 333}.

56. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges and Virginie Walter (Katherine Emery) in front of the Karl Marcowitch (Max Ernst) painting of the Temptation of Saint Anthony {p. 334}.

57. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). The duel in the rain. Georges must stay put while his wounded opponent, Philippe de Contel (Richard Fraser) attempts to return fire {p. 334}.

58. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). The narrator, Geoffrey Fielding (Harold Warrender), restoring a Greek vase {p. 335}.

59. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). A flamenco dancer (La Pillina) performs at Las Dos Tortugas {p. 336}.

60. Man Ray. Explosante-fixe (illustration to Breton's L'Amour fou), 1934 {p. 336}.

61. Man Ray and Ava Gardner in his Hollywood studio, 1950, with his portrait of her as the mythical Pandora (not used in the film) {p. 337}.

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62. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick van der Zee (James Mason) and Pandora Reynolds (Ava Gardner) with his painting of Pandora (by Ferdinand Bellan) in the cabin of his ship {p. 337}.

63. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora assaults Hendrick's painting of her {p. 338}.

64. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora interacts with a dancing statue on the beach as Hendrick watches {p. 338}.

65. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora, alarmed by a dream, attempts to enter Hendrick's bungalow {p. 339}.

66. Man Ray. The Net (1931) {p. 339}.

67. Man Ray. Untitled (c. 1929) {p. 340}.

68. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick, Geoffrey, and Stephen Cameron (Nigel Patrick) await Pandora as she leaves Juan Montalvo's deathbed {p. 341}.

69. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). In flashback, Hendrick at the deathbed of his murdered bride {p. 341}.

70. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick explains their history to Pandora aboard his ship, with the hourglass and the miniature portrait (a color photograph by Man Ray) in the foreground {p. 342}.

71. Man Ray. A stream of milk endlessly pouring from a glass breast (illustration to Breton's L'Amour fou). 1930s {p. 342}.

72. Saadia (1954). Seated, left to right, in the Caid's quarters: Si Lahssen (Cornel Wilde), Henrik (Mel Ferrer), and the Khadir (Cyril Cusack) {p. 343}.

73. Saadia (1954). The sorceress, Fatima (Wanda Rotha), focuses her homeopathic powers on figurine representing Saadia {p. 343}.

74. Saadia (1954). The bandit, Bou Rezza (Michel Simon), embraces Saadia (Rita Gam) {p. 344}.

75. Saadia (1954). One of Si Lahssen's obsessive portraits of Saadia {p. 344}.

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76. The Living Idol (1957). Dr. Alfred Stoner (James Robertson-Justice, center) explains to Terry Matthews (Steve Forrest), the resemblance between Juanita Acosta (Liliane Montevecchi) and an ancient Mayan figure {p. 345}.

77. The Living Idol (1957). Carlos Mérida's illustration of an ancient Mesopotamian sacrifice, one of eighteen used to illustrate Stoner's lecture on the history of human sacrifice {p. 345}.

78. The Living Idol (1957). Juanita is used by Stoner to model sacrificial robes and to assume the posture of a virgin sacrificed to the Mexican jaguar god {p. 346}.

79. The Lewin house at 514 Ocean Front, Santa Monica, designed by Richard Neutra (1939). Interior view (photo by Fred R. Dapprich) {p. 347}.

80. The Lewin house at 514 Ocean Front, Santa Monica, designed by Richard Neutra (1939). Exterior view (photo by Fred R. Dapprich) {p. 347}.

81. Angna Enters. A Party (1948). A painting of the Lewins' thirtieth anniversary dinner party {p. 348}.

82. Albert Lewin in his New York City apartment, early 1960s {p. 348}.

83. Jean Renoir admiring Paul Delvaux's painting, The Summons (1944), in Albert Lewin's New York City apartment in the early 1960s (photo by A.P. Raisbeck) {p. 349}.

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INTRODUCTION

What is my ambition? It is just this - though I should perhaps call it a hope rather than an ambition. I hope to make a few pictures which will be both commercial and artistic, and which will have enough originality and distinction to be remembered for a little while.

I despair of achieving that hope at any big studio, even at the most wonderful of them all, M-G-M. This is not the fault of M-G-M, but of my own difficult and thorny personality, which demands more independence than it is possible to grant to an individual in so complex an organization. That is why I am asking you to release me from the remainder of my contract.[1]

Ironically, these rueful lines from a letter Albert Lewin wrote to a M-G-M executive were composed during post-production of what was probably his most commercially and artistically successful directorial effort, The Picture of Dorian Gray, a film that is much better remembered today than its maker and one that was made, though not without conflict, entirely within the confines of one of Hollywood's most restrictive studios, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, at the height of the studio system's "Classical" period. In an interview, shortly before his death, the writer-producer-director, Albert Lewin, echoed his earlier thought. "I always tried to make pictures that would please me and some of my intelligent friends and still please the general public enough to pay off," he recalled. "I did it as a kind of tight-rope walking. I was a bit of an equilibrist."[2]

---

[1] Albert Lewin, letter to Eddie Mannix of M-G-M, 11 March 1944, USC.

[2] The Real Tinsel, p. 123.

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Lewin did have a modicum of success in his effort to equilibrate between the commercial expectations of the Hollywood studio system and his own more artistic aspirations, no doubt, in part, because during his long years in Hollywood he had witnessed the success of some films he himself deemed artful, including (and especially) silent films by directors Victor Sjöström, Rex Ingram and Erich von Stroheim.[3] Of Lewin's six directorial films, at least two (the first two: The Moon and Sixpence and The Picture of Dorian Gray) turned a profit, and four (those two, as well as the two that followed: The Private Affairs of Bel Ami and Pandora and the Flying Dutchman) were received with some, if not unanimous, critical admiration. But his profit-making peaked with his first, inexpensively produced, film, and his critical acclaim reached its apex one film later. Only among an eccentric and select audience, were his increasingly mannered and esoteric films esteemed, and by the 1950s, with the utter failures of his last two

---

[3]During his first year in Hollywood, Albert Lewin was a founding member with, among others, Rex Ingram, Ernst Lubitsch and Maurice Tourneur of an organization, "Little Theatre Films," which promoted cinematic artistry. Films Lewin admired and thought worthy of broad-based exposure included a number that reveal how consistent his ideas on film were from the very beginning of his career. These were: Maurice Tourneur's Prunella (1918); Victor Sjöström's Körkarlen/Stroke of Midnight (1920) Lupu Pick's Scherben/Shattered (1921); Jacques Feyder's Crainquebille (1922); Dmitri Buchowtzki's Othello (1922); and, of course, Robert Wiene's The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1920). (Lewin letter to Mrs. Soper, 15 November 1923, USC). All of these films are characterized by anti-naturalistic imagery, driven by fantastic, psychological or supernatural themes.

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films, Saadia and The Living Idol, and his inability to realize some of his most cherished and ambitious projects, it was clear that Lewin's day had passed.

I had the good fortune some months before his death to have met Edward Fry. The well-known historian and curator of modern art quizzed me on my work and I described to him what I felt were the fascinating and salient facts of Albert Lewin's career. Like many intellectuals of his generation to whom I have spoken about Lewin, Fry remembered The Picture of Dorian Gray and one or two other of Lewin's films well, without any particular knowledge of the "auteur" who produced them.

Fry listened with great interest to my description of Lewin's role in Hollywood, as a writer, then producer for Irving Thalberg at M-G-M, then as a writer-director of six rather unusual films, his rare academic background as a scholar and instructor of English literature, his early experience as a film and drama critic, his key friendships with figures as diverse as the writers Djuna Barnes and Charles Reznikoff, the visual artists, Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst, filmmakers Jean Renoir and Robert Flaherty, and, later, with thinkers Will and Ariel Durant, Robert Graves and Cyrus Gordon, among others. Fry summed up Lewin's strange career quite succinctly: "So, he was a kind of go-between," he suggested.

I was very impressed by the elegance of Fry's epithet, and thanked him for suggesting a possible title for this

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study. Later, however, I began to dwell on the metaphorical import of his insight. Part of the beauty of the term, after all, is that it, itself, is a movie title. Joseph Losey's 1971 The Go-Between is a rather morbid tale of a boy who is emotionally distressed by his assignment, which is to traverse the dangerous ground between an aristocratic woman and her lover, a farmer. It is a story of class and the pitiless chasm which surrounds it. As a metaphor for Lewin's career, the term perpetuates an idea of popular culture and high art as of different orders, or classes, between which intercourse is, if not impossible, strained, anxious and treacherous. It describes Lewin as attempting to traverse a no-man's land that separates the two.

Lewin's own metaphor (he was, perhaps, inordinately fond of metaphor) has also rather arresting implications, if ambiguous. In describing himself as an equilibrist, Lewin employs, too, a topographical metaphor of space traversed. His metaphor derives from the circus--a classless domain--or rather, a domain in which, like the carnival, class is willfully suspended. And one might picture the diminutive and quite deaf, white-haired and bespectacled, dandified gentleman who called himself a tight-rope walker, teetering precariously on high, traversing a sharply inclined rope stretched taut between the poles of popular culture (low) and the intelligentsia (on high). But in this picture, what lies between the two poles? What exactly is the space that

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separates high and low and what is the threat into which the equilibrist may descend?

One might more fruitfully imagine Mr. Lewin walking what to him appeared a fine and shifting line between fine and commercial art--not a chasm across which a line is suspended, but two contiguous domains through which a boundary is drawn, as though in the sand. In this picture, the equilibrist fails, not by falling into an abyss to his death, but by stepping over the border into either recondite unsalability or into remunerative cliché. This latter picture, to me, reflects more accurately what Lewin himself believed to be the topography and the dangers of his culture.

Go-between or equilibrist? The question then is a very thorny one. It is one that is equally applicable to my project. I desire to discuss the "oeuvre" of a Hollywood filmmaker, a desire inherently wrong-headed according to some theories of popular culture and Hollywood cinema. I wish to discuss this oeuvre primarily as visual art, although I recognize that the medium is a composite of visual and temporal elements, including also music, narrative, movement and drama, and I shall not fail to incorporate consideration of these elements. Additionally, I aspire to discuss this oeuvre in the context of the industrial conditions that both allowed and limited it, as well as the individual, collaborative, cultural and historical conditions that specifically molded it.

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I intend, then, to consider this oeuvre as the unique result of an interaction between the particular intentions and achievements of its author, talents of his collaborators, and formal properties of the medium, as well as the social and material conditions that constituted the horizon of Hollywood production in the 1940s and 1950s and the particular cultural forms and ideas that permeated and penetrated the milieu of the films with which I am concerned. I shall factor in, too, the historical circumstances which allowed and sometimes demanded particular representations and the psychological forces that certainly, if almost ineffably, contributed, as they must always contribute, to both the production and reception of these films. It is my conviction that the films of Albert Lewin are not simply peculiar, but peculiarly illuminating.

They shed light on corners and corridors of the commercial film industry of the 1940s and '50s that are rarely examined for what they reveal about exactly where individual license ended and corporate exigency took over; how precisely art and commerce came together and parted; when and how conventional and restrictive studio practices, at every stage from pre-production story development to post-production censorship could be evaded and transgressed, and when and why they could not. Lewin's films shed light, too, in another direction: into the seemingly separate and more elite worlds of the intelligentsia and the avant-garde,

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with which Lewin mixed quite freely, and which turned out, after all, not to be so entirely separate and elite.

I shall then myself weave a thread between the methodological strategies applicable to so broad a range of artistic, material, social and historical considerations. And this thread will be the tightrope I shall have to tread with care. As in Lewin's case, it is debatable whether the methodological strategies I adopt abut one another or are separated by chasms. I prefer the former view and aim to approach the many artistic and historical issues implicated by this topic by means that I find wholly credible and consistent with one another. This means, no doubt, that I will adhere to no global theory, since there is none I know that adequately embraces and articulates the problems at issue. But mine is a global approach, one that flirts dangerously with what many consider outmoded convictions about art, culture and subjectivity.

Contemporary cinema studies are now dominated by theories that deny authorship, be these structural, semiotic, psychoanalytic, Marxist, or all of the above, while contemporary art history remains, even where it has been influenced by theoretical developments in other fields, for the most part, committed to the artist, his/her(?) authority, the oeuvre, and to preserving a (perhaps spurious) distinction between mass and elite cultural forms. The two disciplines, therefore, present attitudes largely at odds with one another. I shall not enter into theoretical

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debate with the strategists of these two fields gratuitously, but rather shall engage specifically with the theories that support or reject my analysis only as this proves necessary to clarify individual points and general theses. It is more important to this project to expand art history's field of vision to include a major visual art, generally excluded from its collective disciplinary consciousness, than to propose a global theory of popular cinema or to engage in the many arduous debates endemic to its study.

That popularity (either as an intentional objective or as a result) should itself be a criterion by which an art work, or, indeed, an entire art form, is deemed both inherently inferior in form and implicitly corrupt in content is a still powerful assumption, the legacy of which is undoubtedly to be found in both an adversarial stance toward institutions and a general contempt for people (dehumanized by such terms as "the public" and "the masses"), born and refined among groups of really rather alienated individuals in the Modern period.[4] This is not meant in any way to suggest that the personal or collective, conscious or unconscious, aesthetic or political reasons by which such individuals became alienated from, hostile toward

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[4]The increasingly hierarchical organization of American culture in the 19th and early 20th century is effectively traced and analyzed by Lawrence Levine in his Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America (Harvard 1988). Levine does not link the phenomenon to a comparable, though somewhat earlier, trend in Europe.

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and contemptuous of either institutions or people were necessarily unjustified, only that alienation, hostility and contempt, themselves, independent of either the context in which they are manifested or the forms with which they are associated, seem to have assumed primary importance in establishing "value" among various "elites" in the Modern period, and continue to assume such today.

One of the ironies of this is that such elitist assumptions inflect not only the more traditional discipline of art history, at least in its treatment of Modern art, with its focus on the person of the artist, but also many trends in contemporary cinema studies, in which, paradoxically, artists themselves are often grouped with their audiences as dupes of an apparatus or system. Thus films, often discussed in terms of their appeal, on a psychic or ideological basis, to unconscious needs, are believed to be produced under conditions as predetermined and unconscious as they are thought to be consumed. While I neither want to nor can dismiss the persuasiveness of arguments that focus on the technological, ideological or psychological forces that constrain film production and reception, I do reject any theory of any art form that offers so inflexible a view of individual production or individual reception. And I maintain that artists working within an "avant-garde" or otherwise elite context, as well as their audiences, are, existentially speaking, really not

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much freer from such constraints than "popular" artists and their audiences.[5]

It is, to my mind, the basic and relatively unencumbered experience of particular art objects and films, which enthrall one's senses and stir one's imagination, that lies behind (or at least should) the more general exploration into a form. It is perhaps a desire to master the unruly effects of such experience, especially when it comes into conflict with more cerebrally acquired convictions, that gives rise to the theorization and analysis of art. There is certainly nothing wrong in this. But, for me, when the tension between the sensual, intuitive appeal of the original objects of interest and the analysis or theorization of their existence is lost, something essential is lost with it, and possibly the validity of the whole endeavor. I find it no more useful to view art as a product of either Ideology or the Unconscious, than as an act of God. People make it, people see it, and people theorize it. And as constrained by society, technology, psychology, their bodies, and, even language as people are,

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[5]For an interesting view of convention of and constraints upon various "foreign" and "independent" and "art" cinemas, see David Bordwell and Janet Staiger, "Alternative Modes of Film Practice," in Bordwell, Staiger and Kristin Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960 (New York, 1985), pp. 378-385.

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we must for my argument remain as diverse and unpredictable as we look.[6]

In my view, there are forces that will have more or less generalized effects at either or both the production and reception ends of a work's existence. Popularity, simply put, can be considered an index of the presence of forces at work whose efficacy or appeal must be very broad-based, though not necessarily universally or eternally so. This may be so obvious as to not warrant stating. But I state it nonetheless to establish a context other than hierarchy for the use herein of the word "popular."

The "commercial," which is so often elided with that of the popular, is another trap--a usually unexamined term of disparagement. It should be obvious that almost all art participates in commerce, more or less directly and more or less intentionally. At one end of the commercial scale one may locate phenomena such as the paintings of Frida Kahlo,

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[6]As D.N. Rodowick eloquently remarks in his preface to The Difficulty of Difference: Psychoanalysis, Sexual Difference and Film Theory (New York, 1991) pp. viii-ix: "Textual analysis has accomplished much in suggesting how positions of identification and meaning are coded by film texts. But in my view, one must accept fundamentally that these positions exist only as potentialities that are ultimately undecidable with respect to any given spectator. This, for me, is an indispensable political *a priori*. The more I work on this problem, the more I believe that ultimately each encounter between text and subject is historically contingent and unpredictable. Film theory has too often envisioned this encounter as one of ideological overdetermination (where filmic text and cinematic apparatus set the formal conditions for reception) rather than as a potential site of resistance, reappropriation, and rereading."

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intensely private and hardly exposed to either an audience or marketplace in her lifetime, yet now, along with her "life," of stunning "commercial" and "popular" value, or the intentionally anti-commercial ephemera (performances, installations, concepts) of certain avant-garde artists, which may finally, however, be metamorphosed by the marketplace into something saleable, be it in the form of graphic or photographic preparation or documentation, fragments, copyrights or other traces.

At the other end is art that "aims" primarily to be sold and it is a necessarily nebulous and subjective judgment that locates this end, be it at the multiples of Andy Warhol, Marvel comic books, Madison Avenue advertisements, bubble gum wrappers, or that whole domain of the utilitarian which includes clothing, housewares, furniture, appliances, automobiles, etcetera, and which is usually cordoned off under the category of the "applied." The cinema has generally been placed, for obvious reasons, somewhere at this saleable end of the scale, but in terms of either commercial intention or commercial viability runs the entire gamut, from films that can be "sold" only to a government or museum (i.e. are supported only by grants and are seen by very few and paid admission to by even fewer, e.g. George Landow's Film in which there appear sprocket holes, edge lettering, dirt particles, etc., 1966) to the more liminally avant-garde (Yvonne Rainer's Film About a Woman Who..., 1974), to the more liminally commercial (Jean-

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Luc Godard's A Married Woman, 1965), to the commercial failure (Roger Vadim's 1988 remake of his And God Created Woman), to the sleeper (Paul Mazursky's An Unmarried Woman, 1978), to the blockbuster (Garry Marshall's Pretty Woman, 1990).

The almost ubiquitous commercial aspirations of the cinema relate to the enormous expenses involved in making anything more involved than a short, silent, non-narrative, eight-millimeter film. The resources necessary to produce a film demand that the product be marketable at least to the extent that it support the next project or inspire funding for it. This is, of course, equally true for any material art, and the artist's desire to "sell" is often motivated by this if by no other factor (although there are almost always other factors in a culture in which the notions of salability and legitimacy tend to fuse, never mind the demands of the ego). If it appears that I am again stating the obvious, it is to the service of again differentiating the terms of my discourse. My point is that the commercial nature of a work of art is a virtual given, be it a blatant or subtle one.

This point has been made many times before, on one occasion in a manner particularly relevant to my discussion of the films of Albert Lewin: In the early 1930s Erwin Panofsky composed a lecture to solicit support for the new Film Library of the Museum of Modern Art, which according to

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him was considered "a rather queer project at that time."[7] The lecture was delivered to an audience at Princeton University and first published by its Department of Art and Archaelogy in 1934. It was revised and published in 1947.[8] In it, Panofsky insisted on viewing cinema as an important, new, visual art form. He anticipated various objections to his assessment of both the importance and the essential visuality (the talk was composed several years into the "talking" era) of the medium, then suggested a comparison which seemed calculated to offend some of his fellow art historians:

> It might be said that a film, called into being by a co-operative effort in which all contributions have the same degree of permanence, is the nearest modern equivalent of a medieval cathedral; the role of the producer corresponding, more or less, to that of the bishop or archbishop; that of the director to that of the architect in chief; that of the scenario writers to that of the scholastic advisers establishing the iconographical program; and that of the actors, cameramen, cutters, sound men, make-up men and the divers technicians to that of those whose work provided the physical entity of the finished product, from the sculptors, glass painters, bronze casters, carpenters and skilled masons down to the quarry men and woodsmen.

Panofsky then anticipated protest:

> This comparison may seem sacrilegious, not only because there are, proportionally, fewer good films than there are good cathedrals, but also because the movies are

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[7]This remark is quoted, source unindicated, in the editor's introduction to the Panofsky essay as it appeared anthologized in Film: an Anthology, Daniel Talbot, ed. (Berkeley 1966), p. 15.

[8]Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures," Critique, Vol. I, no. 3 (January-February 1947), pp. 5-28. In its original form, the essay was reprinted in Transition 26 (1937) and in Preface to Our Day, 1940.

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> commercial. However, if commercial art be defined as all art not primarily produced in order to gratify the creative urge of its maker but primarily intended to meet the requirements of a patron or a buying public, it must be said that non-commercial art is the exception rather than the rule, and a fairly recent and not always felicitous exception at that. While it is true that commercial art is always in danger of ending up as a prostitute, it is equally true that non-commercial art is always in danger of ending up as an old maid. Noncommercial art has given us Seurat's "Grande Jatte" and Shakespeare's sonnets, but also much that is esoteric to the point of incommunicability. Conversely, commercial art has given us much that is vulgar or snobbish (two aspects of the same thing) to the point of loathsomeness, but also Dürer's prints and Shakespeare's plays.[9]

Choosing, somewhat ambivalently, to overlook the striking and powerful sexism of Panofsky's prostitute/old maid metaphor, I emphasize here instead his confidence in the plastic artistry of the young medium, his refusal to bow to the elitist dismissal of the commercial cinema, and his comparison of its collaborative nature to that of the cathedral. Elsewhere in the essay, Panofsky relies again on the metaphor of the cathedral, this time to put the filmic scenario in its proper place:

> As the success of a Gothic jamb figure depends not only upon its quality as a piece of sculpture but also, or even more so, upon its integrability with the architecture of the portal, so does the success of a movie script--not unlike that of an opera libretto--depend, not only upon its quality as a piece of literature but also, or even more so, upon its integrability with the events on the screen.[10]

Coincidentally or not, Albert Lewin employed the same comparison to similar ends in a testimonial he contributed

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[9]ibid., p. 18.

[10]ibid., p. 10.

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to a special, Surrealist number of the French journal, Études cinématographiques in 1965. Explicating the "deliberately surrealist intention" of his film Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, Lewin enumerated a number of scenes that reflected this:

> Another incident which has an especially surrealist quality is that of the dance on the beach at night in which men in full dress suits dance with girls in bathing suits to the music of "You're Driving Me Crazy" played by a jazz combination erotically disposed among fragments of ancient statues with the sea in the background. This also, I was told [by the film's financiers], should be eliminated as having nothing to do with the story, but it remained in the finished film. Perhaps the sculpture on the Cathedral of Chartres should be removed because the building would stand up without it.[11]

While Panofsky's use of the analogy emphasizes the mistake of thinking of jamb figures as autonomous sculptures, Lewin's warns against the complimentary possibility of thinking of architectural sculpture as structurally "necessary." Both, however, employ the Gothic cathedral as an archetype for cinema in terms of its integration of manifold media, images and meanings into a perfectly coherent whole.[12] This and other, equally

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[11]Albert Lewin, letter to Yves Kovacs, 1 July 1964, USC. The substantive parts of Lewin's letter, written in response to a request, were translated into French and published in a "Témoignages" section of "Surréalisme et Cinéma," ed. Yves Kovacs, Études Cinématographiques, no. 38-39 (Spring 1965), pp. 167-169.

[12]Perhaps Lewin, in drawing on the Chartres analogy, was alluding to Panofsky's essay, which it is likely he knew, or perhaps he preserved a trace of memory of a letter he had received during post-production of Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, from an enthusiastic British picture executive uninvolved with the film: "Edana gave me a copy of

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compelling similarities between Panofsky's cinema essay and Lewin's various theoretical writings[13] suggest to me that

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your screenplay 'Pandora' to read, saying how much she liked it and how hard she fought to get it on the screen. I have read it and can only say that I consider it the most perfect piece of cinematic writing I have ever set eyes on and cannot describe to you the sheer physical joy and extasy [sic] I experienced in reading it; the construction can only be compared with the Chartres cathedral in its perfection." Rudolph Cartier (Devon Motion Film Studios), letter to Albert Lewin, 15 March 1950, USC.

[13]As theorists, both Panofsky and Lewin stress the fallacy of thinking of cinema as a descendant of stage drama. "The living language, which is always right, has endorsed this sensible choice when it still speaks of a 'moving picture' or, simply, a 'picture,' instead of accepting the pretentious and fundamentally erroneous 'screen play.' (Panofsky's "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures, p. 7); "Nothing of significance can be achieved in the movies," wrote Lewin in his review of <u>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</u> (the film which on many occasions he claimed inspired him to enter the business), "until we discard the idea that they are plays at all, and accept them instead as an independent art, a medium as distinct as painting, music, or poetry." ("Playthings," <u>The Jewish Tribune</u>, Vol. 37, No. 25 [June 10, 1921], p. 10). Both Lewin and Panofsky focus, as well, on the particular "limitations" of the medium: "The evolution from the jerky beginnings to this grand climax offers the fascinating spectacle of a new artistic medium gradually becoming conscious of its legitimate, that is, exclusive, possibilities and limitations" ("Style and Medium," p. 13) and "an art exists <u>because</u> of its limitations, not in <u>spite</u> of them." (Lewin, letter to Dwight MacDonald, 18 March 1958, USC). The most striking parallels between the two authors' understandings of the medium's limitations relate to its dynamism. "These unique and specific possibilities can be defined as *dynamization of space* and, accordingly, *spatialization of time*," wrote Panofsky in his essay (p. 8). Many years earlier, during the silent era, Lewin expressed many of his life-long convictions about cinema in an unpublished essay entitled, "Dynamic Motion Pictures" (USC), in which he emphasized that "the art of the screen is closer to the dance than it is to the drama,...drama adapted to the screen loses whatever dynamic or explosive power it may originally have had and becomes flat and devitalized." There are differences, too, mainly revolving around the introduction of synchronous sound, which, ironically, Panofsky seems to have adjusted to more readily than Lewin ever did (at least in his

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the enthusiasm and attitude that brought Lewin into the film industry as a young academic and that sustained him there were not, despite their rarity, altogether eccentric. In fact, Panofsky, although he may have been in something of a minority among academics in his generous appraisal of the status of cinema, was not alone. There were other art historians and critics who joined the bandwagon, most notably Elie Faure, whose "The Art of Cineplastics," was an early and euphoric consideration of the cinema from the point of view of the history of the visual arts, and one with which Albert Lewin was certainly familiar.[14]

Faure, Panfosky and other art historians who made early forays into the field of the criticism and theorization of moving pictures, fully expected, no doubt, that further and more specialized investigations would follow from future generations of their discipline. That has not been, unfortunately, the case. Art History, of all the disciplines with an interest in the phenomenon of moving pictures, has done perhaps the least to claim cinema for itself. Art

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theoretical statements).

[14]Originally published serially in The Freeman in 1920, Walter Pach's translation of Faure's essay was published in 1923 by the Four Seas Company of Boston. Another early and enthusiastic foray into cinema studies by an art historian was Herbert Read's "Toward a Film Aesthetic," Cinema Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Autumn 1932), pp. 7-11. Lewin had evidently read Faure's writings on cinema by 1921, when he cited Faure's description of Charlie Chaplin as "cinemime" in a review of Chaplin's The Idle Class in his "Play Things" column, The Jewish Tribune, Vol. 37, No. 42 (October 7, 1921), p. 18. References to Faure's cinematic theories recur in later Lewin writings, as well.

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History's neglect of moving pictures has resulted in, among other unfortunate circumstances (including the sad curricular schism between the histories of photography and cinema), a relative poverty in terms of close and sophisticated visual scrutiny of films, especially in relation to the other plastic arts.

It is for this reason that this study will concentrate for the most part on the visual aspects (form, style, content) of Albert Lewin's films. Lewin was a student and instructor of literature, then a drama critic, before entering the movie business in 1923.[15] But he, as much as Elie Faure or Erwin Panofsky, strongly emphasized the independence of cinema from theater and literature, stressing its closer relationship to the plastic arts and to dance, regretting, somewhat surprisingly, since he only directed sound films, the complications that synchronized sound brought to the moving pictures a few years after he entered the industry.[16] Nonetheless, his films, four of

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[15]After graduating from New York University in 1915, Lewin undertook graduate studies in English Literature at Harvard University, from which he earned a Master's degree in 1916. He was an instructor in English at the University of Missouri from 1916 to 1918. After brief (domestic) military service, he acted as Assistant National Director of the American Jewish Relief Committee in New York and also became a drama and film critic for The Jewish Tribune, which he departed in 1922 in order to break into the movie business as a reader for Samuel Goldwyn.

[16]Lewin expressed this sentiment in many of his writings, but perhaps most strongly in a letter to Dwight MacDonald (18 March 1958; USC): "Inspired especially by 'The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari', I started working in silent pictures because I thought the movies were an exciting new

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the six of which are literary adaptations (the other two are from original scripts), are quite layered and complex in terms of their literary, musical and dramatic aspects. In accordance with what I believe to be the priority of the visual, for cinema in general and for Lewin's films in particular, it will be emphasized herein, but not at the expense of honestly representing its synthesis with the other, temporal elements of music, dialogue and drama.

In visual terms, Lewin's six directorial films fall into two very distinct groups. The first three, all made during the 1940s, all black-and-white (with important, select color sequences), all filmed entirely within Hollywood studios, comprised mostly of fastidious interiors, and all set in *fin-de-siècle* Europe, constitute one very coherent oeuvre. These are The Moon and Sixpence (1942), adapted from W. Somerset Maugham's novel; The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945), adapted from Oscar Wilde's novel; and The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947), adapted from Guy de

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art. I was young, too, and I wanted to take part in the development of this new art. I was betrayed by the inventors. With the use of synchronized sound, the movies ceased to be an art and have never recovered. I am still at it, but without hope of finding that 'counterpoint', that non-synchronous co-ordination of visual and auditory images that Eisenstein was not permitted to experiment with. The simple truth is that an art exists because of its limitations, not in spite of them. The theorizers and critics clap their hands and jump up and down in joy whenever another limitation is removed and we take a further step in the direction of the last banality. The history of the movies has a happy ending if it is told backwards." Within months of dispatching this letter, Lewin suffered a heart attack and, on doctor's orders, never directed another film.

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Maupassant's Bel Ami. The three films share many other common features, including the actor, George Sanders, who has a leading role in each, themes involving art, aestheticism and decadence, centered on a male protagonist who is an overestimated object of desire, as well as a scoundrel of sorts.

The second group strikes a marked contrast to the first. Lewin's three films of the 1950s were all filmed in vivid color on location abroad: Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951), in coastal Spain; Saadia (1954), in Morocco; and The Living Idol (1957), in Mexico, and each relies heavily on the beauty and exoticism of the landscape and culture of its locale. Of these three films, two (Pandora and Idol) were from original scripts and the third from an obscure novel, Francis d'Autheville's Echec au Destin. All are set in the 20th century, but deal with ancient and ineffable themes. All feature female protagonists who are beset by supernatural forces.

In view of these two distinct parts of Lewin's oeuvre, I have chosen to organize this study into two main parts, one dealing with each. Within these major sections, chapters will investigate each individual film, as well as topics closely relating them, mainly in order to contextualize their common historical and formal features. Thus, in "That Masculine Object of Desire (in black-and-white, *avec*

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l'irruption en couleurs du tableau)," [17] in addition to chapters dealing with each of the films of the forties, there will be a chapter that focuses on the appearance of painted portraits in Hollywood films of the 1940s ("The Moving Picture Gallery"), and another ("The Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene") that considers two atmospherically rich scenes from two of Lewin's films of the forties that stand out from their more ironic and self-conscious surroundings and that I take to represent isolated instances of experimentation with the possibility of an ideal filmic *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

The second major section, "Reincarnation, Voodoo, Lycanthropy and Other Feminine Destinies (in Technicolor, on location, and on paper)," will discuss the three films of the 1950s in terms of the very different conditions of commercial filmmaking in that decade, the background of these, the shift in intellectual currents experienced by Lewin along with many of his peers in the immediate post-war period, and the unrealized film projects which round out a picture of Lewin's work of that decade.

Both sections will devote a good deal of attention, not only to the content and composition of the film frame, which is always, in a Lewin film, very exactingly and complexly

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[17] "*l'irruption en couleurs du tableau...*" (the eruption of a painting in color...), Jean-Claude Biette, "Les Fantômes du Permanent, 13 inedits." Cahiers du Cinéma, no. 309 (March 1980), p. 26. This phrase provides part of the title to my first section.

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constructed, often including distinct art-historical references, but also to the incorporation in each of his films of works of art. Artists and art works are thematically involved and visually foregrounded in each of the six films, most significantly in the first four. The Moon and Sixpence's protagonist is a painter whose life is based on that of Gauguin. The Picture of Dorian Gray revolves around a portrait, rendered for the film by Ivan Albright, and the painter of it is a major character. The painting that appears in The Private Affairs of Bel Ami is not really central to the film's narrative, yet the unexpectedly violent and anachronistic "eruption" of a decalcomaniacal Max Ernst painting in lurid Technicolor during an elegant fin-de-siècle Paris party scene has an even more disconcerting effect than the same trope had in Lewin's two previous films. The painting was chosen for the film by means of an invitational competition, juried by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Marcel Duchamp and Sidney Janis, the submissions to which were organized into a travelling exhibition that became controversial when there was an attempt to ban it in Boston. This fascinating and little known episode will itself warrant discussion. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman features two portraits; one is photographic and was provided by Lewin's friend, Man Ray, but plays the role of a Dutch miniature in the film; the other, a painting, derives from the style of Giorgio de Chirico, Paul Delvaux and other Surrealist painters and, in

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the film, performs a feat of the uncanny. These four films also include a myriad of other *objets d'art*, from a (pseudo) Tahitian idol and non-Western objects from a range of cultures, to classical and Renaissance statuary and a book illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley.

The last two films that Lewin directed, Saadia and The Living Idol, though accorded less focus in this study, also feature art, predominantly "primitive" objects, including a voodoo doll in the former and the famous red jaguar from Chichén Itzá in the latter, as well as modern works, most interestingly a commissioned series of pictures on the theme of human sacrifice by the Guatemalan-born Mexican artist Carlos Mérida used to illustrate an anthropologist's slide lecture (!) in The Living Idol. In these two films, Lewin's increasing taste for the exotic and primitive is indulged perhaps at the expense of the truly exciting strain between modernism and anti-modernism, culture and nature, intellect and instinct evinced in the four films set in Europe. In fact, these dynamics, which were an undercurrent that energized the previous films, are so explicitly thematized in the last two, that they are rendered perhaps too transparently academic.

Lewin's relationship to Surrealists and Surrealism is one of the most important aspects of this study. It is most clearly relevant to the analysis of three of his films: The Picture of Dorian Gray, The Private Affairs of Bel Ami, and Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, the last of which involved

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concertedly Surrealist themes and exercises. I believe that these three films are, as well, Lewin's best, and for that reason, they will be accorded, along with their Surrealist allusions and effects, the closest and deepest scrutiny herein.

After closely examining Lewin's films, I conclude with "Moving Pictures and Magical Idols: A Symptomatology of the Hollywood Cinema at its Limits," in which I aim to draw together the material of the preceding chapters into a coherent picture, not only of Albert Lewin and his films, but also of his and their ability to illuminate the obscure but very significant connections between domains generally regarded as unrelated and even adversarial: the refined realm of the intelligentsia, the bohemian sphere of the avant-garde, the vulgar terrain of Hollywood, and last, but not least, the pedestrian world of the vast movie-going public. I will also in this conclusion discuss generally the reception of Lewin's work, at home and abroad, and examine the ambivalence and intensity with which his films were often greeted by critics and audiences whose expectations and experiences of Hollywood cinema had not prepared them for such strange films.

As an addendum I include a Chronology, detailing not only the events of Albert Lewin's personal life and film career, but also indicating the scope of some of his many very influential friendships. Another addendum will provide a thorough filmography, not only of Lewin's completed

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directorial projects, of which there were only six, but of films written and produced by him prior to his directorial career, as well as unrealized projects that he undertook as a potential writer, producer and/or director. A third addendum, vital to this study, indicates Lewin's activities as an art collector by means of a list of works known to have been in his possession.

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PART I

THAT MASCULINE OBJECT OF DESIRE

(in black-and-white, *avec "l'irruption en couleurs du tableau"*)

ALBERT LEWIN'S FILMS OF THE FORTIES

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Chapter 1. BOTTICELLI IN HOLLYWOOD: THE MOON AND SIXPENCE (1942)

> If Albert Lewin hadn't existed in the cinema, it would have been almost impossible to invent him....In the 50s and 60s, the question of what he had to do with cinema or cinema to do with him created a sense of unassimilable peculiarity.[1]

The '50s and '60s to which Richard Combs refers above are, of course, the decades of auteur criticism. And it is ironic that Lewin, perhaps the most bookish and literary film director of his time, as well as one who wrote his every script, should have been unassimilable by an auteurist view of cinema, that is a view that considers a film's director, quite literally, its "author." In fact, Lewin was not unassimilable in France, where auteur theory was born. He and his films, particularly Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, appear repeatedly and comfortably in many of the film journals, including Cahiers du Cinéma, issuing out of France in the 1950s, and he was honored, his films collected and exhibited, by the Cinématheque Française. It was auteur criticism's American strain, led by Andrew Sarris in the 1960s,[2] which found Lewin's films indigestible, and in this

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[1]Richard Combs, "The Picture of Dorian Gray," Monthly Film Bulletin, Vol. 52, no. 622 (November 1985), p. 355.

[2]Sarris included Lewin in a section called "Strained Seriousness" in The American Cinema: Directors and Directions, 1929-1968 (New York, 1968), p. 197: "There is an ironic moment in Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, Lewin's most memorable film, when Ava Gardner has just defaced James Mason's painting of her, and the doomed painter declares that the desecration introduces the element of accident to his art. Would that there were more room for accident in Lewin's clogged literary narrations and his naïve conception of refinement in the cinema, a refinement that presumes to

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respect Sarris was repeating a general attitude of scorn for Lewin's style among a number of prominent Anglo-American film critics that dated back to Lewin's directorial debut in 1942.[3]

* * * * *

> The Sears Roebuck catalogue had nothing to do with my delay in writing to you. I have begun to be a little busy at last with a book called "THE MOON AND SIXPENCE." The catalogue might make a very good movie, but it's all I can do to tackle a simple narrative.[4]

Albert Lewin, who had been a more or less successful and more or less satisfied movie producer at two major studios for almost fifteen years,[5] embarked upon his career as an auteur, he often claimed, for financial reasons. He and his old college friend, David Loew, had formed a small, independent production company, and Loew suggested that it would be cost-efficient for Lewin, who had earlier been a screenwriter, to undertake the adaptation of Somerset Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence himself. When Lewin had

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vulgarize Wilde, De Maupassant, and even Somerset Maugham for the sake of bringing kulchur to the masses."

[3]Lewin's reception in here and abroad will be discussed in my conclusion.

[4]Albert Lewin, letter to Ernestine Evans, 9 October 1941, USC.

[5]To be precise--more successful and satisfied during his service under Irving Thalberg at MGM (1927-1936) and less so in both respects during his three-year stint at Paramount (1937-1940).

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successfully accomplished that money-saving feat, Loew went on to urge him to direct.[6]

The Moon and Sixpence was shot quickly and inexpensively,[7] and because of its relatively low cost and quite popular reception, made a greater profit than any other of Lewin's films. Less consistent in its construction of a highly formalized, artificial mise-en-scène, less deliberate in its performances and pacing, and less daring in its anachronisms than the Lewin films to come, the film can nevertheless be seen as a kind of dress rehearsal for the two much more carefully and expensively planned and executed films that followed it in the 1940s, The Picture of Dorian Gray and The Private Affairs of Bel Ami. One of the most unusual characteristics of The Moon and Sixpence in its time may fail to strike us now--that is its narration. Lewin was particularly proud of his solution to the problem of adapting Maugham's novel:

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[6]This explanation appears repeatedly in the Lewin literature, including in the interview in Rosenberg and Silverstein, The Real Tinsel (New York, 1970), p. 115: "...we decided that the next picture we'd make very cheaply. I hadn't written a script for fifteen years. David wanted to save the price of a writer, so he turned to me, 'You're a writer. For God's sake, write.' I wrote the script and let Somerset Maugham read it. I knew him a little bit, and he wrote me that he couldn't imagine a novel being adapted in a better way....

"We began looking for a director, but a big director in those days cost around $100,000. David said, 'Why the hell don't you direct it? Look at all the money we'd save.' This was a case of economic determinism."

[7]In thirty-two days, costing $401,000, according to Lewin in Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 115.

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> We bought it from MGM for $25,000. The contract came out of the MGM legal department faster than any other contract in my experience, they were so glad to get rid of it. They thought we were screwy. But I had an angle. The reason it couldn't be adapted was that it was told in the first person and because the author at times became a participant in the action. The transposition was very, very hard to do, and the people who had tackled it never solved that problem. For this, I owe a debt of gratitude to Sacha Guitry, who made a wonderful picture called The Story of a Cheat, which used a narrative technique for the first time in a theatrical film. He told his story in the first person, the action carried it along, and at intervals when necessary, he talked again. I thought this was a most original and exciting thing, and became the first one to use this narrative technique in American films.... After that, everybody used narrative technique like mad, even when it wasn't particularly necessary.[8]

The use of voice-over narration, which one now associates particularly with the rather self-conscious "genre" of *film noir*, was rarely, if ever, used in the 1930s for reasons that relate above all to the anti-naturalistic effect of

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[8]Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 118.

Guitry's Le Roman d'un tricheur (1936), generally considered the French director's best film, is "told entirely from the point of the leading character, Sacha Guitry, who describes the action in a running commentary while the characters act in pantomime." Georges Sadoul, Dictionary of Films, translated, edited and updated by Peter Morris (Berkeley, CA, 1972), p. 317.

Erwin Panofsky (p. 16) rightly observed that The Story of a Cheat betrays "a kind of nostalgia for the silent period and that devices have been worked out to combine the virtues of sound and speech with those of silent acting," in films such as Guitry's. The idea of nostalgia is central to Lewin's The Moon and Sixpence and his borrowing of Guitry's trope reveals a similar yearning for the effects of the silent cinema, the loss of which Lewin mourned and attempted to compensate for throughout his career.

The use of the voice-over narrator contributed undoubtedly to the economy of The Moon and Sixpence, since it allowed entire scenes to be shot without synchronized sound.

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such techniques.[9] The Moon and Sixpence illustrates this anti-naturalism graphically in its opening scene, which, in the final film, is realized very much according to Lewin's script:

> This introductory episode is played between the rich and famous popular novelist, Geoffrey Wolfe, and his valet...[whose] activity primarily consists of picking things up--a movement which punctuates the monologue of the novelist. At no time do Geoffrey and his valet betray, by the slightest sign, that either is aware of the other's presence. Geoffrey's remarks are not addressed to Maitland and they are ignored by him. The monologue is a comment meant for the audience and Geoffrey and Maitland never once look at each other.[10]

In this scene, Geoffrey, the narrator, does look directly at the audience (camera), from vantage points as unusual as his mirror, while shaving, and his bathtub. This is an irregular movement for a character in a Hollywood drama, even one with a narrator, who is in general either omniscient and invisible or addresses his narration, more

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[9]Sarah Kozloff, in Invisible Storytellers: Voice-Over Narration in American Fiction Film (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 32-33, attributes to the first decade of talking pictures an over-identification with the theater and a fascination with the novelty of synchronous speech that mitigated against the use of external narration. Using a very broad definition of the term "voice-over narration," she dates the wholesale introduction of the technique in the U.S. to 1939, when "several major releases incorporating voice-over, including Wuthering Heights, Juarez, The Roaring Twenties, and Confessions of a Nazi Spy, simultaneously appeared, and the ice was broken. At the start of the 1940s the stream of narrated films deepened into a flood..." By Kozloff's criteria, then, Lewin was mistaken in believing that he had introduced the technique to Hollywood.

[10]Albert Lewin, unpublished screenplay of The Moon and Sixpence, 1st draft, dated January 16, 1942, introductory note to scene 1. USC.

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naturalistically, to someone or something within the film's diagesis.[11] As the opening scene of Lewin's directorial oeuvre, the scene signals a singular disregard for the more academic conventions of Hollywood drama. Such reflexive gazes are rare in Hollywood cinema and, when they do appear, usually do so in the context of certain genres, such as the comedy or the musical, where absorption in a naturalized dramatic scene is not the desired effect.[12]

And there is nothing inviting or absorptive about this opening scene, which can only be characterized as comedy, although it frames a very serious and disturbing story, one based loosely upon the life of Paul Gauguin. The dissonance here takes its lead from, or perhaps even comments on, the arrogant and misanthropic tone of Maugham's narration in his novel, which tells an absorbing and inherently dramatic tale of passion, genius and degradation from a strangely ironic and supercilious distance. The very choice of material for his film debut, indeed, reveals what one might call a certain perversity on Lewin's part:

> Everybody felt we'd make, at most, an artistic flop. David's friends tried to dissuade him, but he was steadfast. They said the story of a disagreeable

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[11]As, for instance, Fred MacMurray does, when he addresses his narration into a dictaphone, intending it to be heard by Edward G. Robinson, in the framing scenes of Billy Wilder's Double Indemnity (1944).

[12]See David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema (New York, 1985), pp. 36-37.

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> character, a painter whose paintings are burned and who dies of leprosy--this is entertainment?[13]

Lewin related the doubts of those around him regarding the viability of both form and content of his film in a letter to his friend, Charles Reznikoff, upon completing The Moon and Sixpence early in 1942:

> The general impression around here seems to be that it will make a fine picture and a commercial flop. My indurated contrariness finds this very encouraging.[14]

Lewin's indurate contrariness, a characterization of self that I see as parallel to a kind of contrariness, even perversity, in his films, here and in the films that follow The Moon and Sixpence, lent itself to defiance of some of Hollywood's most sacred conventions.

In his review for The Commonweal, Philip Hartung described The Moon and Sixpence as "a strange picture--perhaps as strange as W. Somerset Maugham's novel; and it is unusually faithful to the original novel, at least in spirit. It neither condemns nor defends Charles Strickland as it reveals the extraordinary story of the man who, at the age of 40 after many years of life as a prosaic London stockbroker, suddenly deserts his wife and children to go to Paris to become a painter."[15] Hartung remarks upon what will be one of the most consistent themes in Lewin's oeuvre,

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[13]Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 118.

[14]Albert Lewin, letter to Charles Reznikoff, 1/26/42, USC.

[15]Philip T. Hartung, review of The Moon and Sixpence, The Commonweal, Vol. 36 (October 2, 1942), pp. 566-567.

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the morally neutral or ambivalent treatment of deliberately shocking material. Especially in the films of the forties, Lewin's protagonists, exhibiting disdain and effrontery toward general mores, stand out in sharp relief against a carefully conventionalized social fabric.

George Sanders plays Strickland as two almost entirely separate characters. The first is an utterly bland pillar of family and society, whose flacid gestures and facial expressions (Lewin's use of voice-over narration allows him to be seen but not heard in the pantomimed scenes that precede Strickland's transformation) betray the meagrest of temperments. The second, endowed with the superior, scornful voice that Sanders became famous for, is a man possessed. Strickland the second is so consumed by a drive to paint, that he has abandoned all remnants of etiquette and propriety. His obsession allows or forces him to manifest an indiscriminate cruelty toward anyone and anything that impedes him. His greatest acts of cruelty are levelled at the only individual who recognizes his artistic "genius," Dirk Stroeve (Steve Geray), a Dutch artist of mediocre talents but excellent judgment, and a woman, Dirk's wife Blanche (Doris Dudley), who despite her better judgment, cannot help but desire Strickland passionately and fatally (see fig. 2). Strickland's cruelty is evident in his brutal and acerbic remarks, in his conduct and, in the film, is figured metonymically, too, as described by Lewin himself:

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> George Sanders is talking to this unfortunate Dutch painter, whose wife he has seduced and who has subsequently committed suicide. And he's a rather sadistic character. So during this scene I had him grinding paint in a mortar and I had him tightening a canvas on a stretcher. Well, that's perfectly normal business for a painter to do. However, in this situation it's what I would call a kind of metonymous symbolism.[16]

Blanche's fatal attraction to Strickland is echoed by that of the young Tahitian woman, Ata (Elena Verdugo), who becomes Strikland's second wife in his island paradise (for reasons dictated by the Hays office censorship guidelines, Lewin's Strickland, unlike Maugham's, divorces his first wife and marries Ata), who displays her desire plainly. Although these female characters are cliché in conception and realization, revealing a schism between the transcendent passion for art of the masculine "genius" and the imminent passion for love of the feminine sensibility, the film anticipates the even more startling focus on a male object of female desire that is thematized in Lewin's future films.

In the three films of the forties there is a mounting tension between a profound misogyny articulated by male characters within the diagesis, particularly by whichever character is played by George Sanders (Strickland in Moon, Lord Henry Wotton in Dorian Gray, and Georges Duroy in Bel Ami), and a distinct sense of female agency. This agency is weakest in The Moon and Sixpence, a film based on a deeply misogynistic novel, in which the desire of both Blanche and

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[16]Albert Lewin, audiotape recorded on the occasion of the Gallery of Modern Art's retrospective in 1966.

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Ada for Strickland is seen as instinctive and masochistic. One female character, Tiaré Johnson (Florence Bates), a good-humored, fat and middle-aged Eurasian hotel keeper on Tahiti, is allowed a rather more robust sexuality, which she manifests in her keen reminiscences of her six marriages, in her aggressive match-making (fig. 4), and during the scene of Strickland's and Ata's wedding feast, in which she is the focus of a lascivious dance. In Dorian Gray and Bel Ami, younger, more "viable" female characters are agents of an active desire, along with the films themselves, taking the title male characters as their objects. This "impossibility" will be examined in more depth in discussions of those films.

> I am not entirely unfamiliar with the great Catholic writers, and I do not believe there is any incompatibility between Christian morality and good literary style. I still think that the final title in its present form is in execrable taste, whatever other virtues it may have. As a matter of fact, it is not only badly written, but gratuitous besides, since it says nothing which has not already been far more effectively shown in the picture....
>
> But if you are convinced that the bad rhetoric with which the picture now ends is necessary to save Christian morality in a world in which it is struggling so desperately for survival, I am prepared to make this slight sacrifice for so great a cause.[17]

As one might expect, Albert Lewin had a bit of trouble with the censors, internal and external, whose business it was to protect innocent moviegoers from corruption and sin. The sarcastic letter quoted above was not, in fact, sent to

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[17]Albert Lewin, unsent letter to Rev. Patrick J. Masterson, National Legion of Decency, 10/20/42, USC.

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Reverend Masterson of the Legion of Decency, the Roman Catholic reviewing and rating body that exerted such pressure on the film industry to censor itself or be boycotted.[18] Lewin's hackles were raised over a moralizing warning that the Legion of Decency had attached, against Lewin's strong protestation, to the opening and closing credit sequences of The Moon and Sixpence.[19]

Compromises to the Hays Office, Hollywood's own self-censoring authority, through which all films were vetted, were made in all of Lewin's films, yet he seems to have made a point, in many cases, to figure visually, or to encode, the narrative material he was forbidden to relate. This is most graphically the case with Lewin's next film, The Picture of Dorian Gray, in which a strong homoerotic subtext had to be suppressed. By the completion of Bel Ami in 1946,

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[18]On censorship, see: Richard Randall, "Censorship: From The Miracle to Deep Throat, in The American Film Industry, Tino Balio, ed. (Madison, Wisconsin, 1976), pp. 432-457; Olga J. Martin, Hollywood's Movie Commandments (New York, 1937/1970), which includes as an appendix, "The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930."

[19]"They made me put a terrible title on the front of the picture which read something like this: 'We don't want you to have the impression that the character we are telling the story about is an admirable character. He is not.' And then we had to repeat that at the end of the film. The phrasing wasn't even good English....I rewrote the title....They thought about it and read it and reread it and then decided to accept it. I was relieved... I took the train to California. I got to my office and I found a letter on my desk. They had changed their minds. It went back to the original title. I guess they didn't trust me, even if they couldn't see why. Maugham hated it. Everybody hated it. It finally got lost on most of the prints." Rosenberg and Silverstein, pp. 120-121.

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Lewin's treatment of previously taboo themes had earned him the "unrivaled reputation for bringing viciousness to the screen with the approval of the Production Code censors" and he was considered by then to have established a tradition of "censor-proof depravity."[20]

Depravity was undoubtedly an interest of Lewin's; it is suggested by many of his films. But The Moon and Sixpence was not so much about a depraved individual, as it was about an artist. Maugham's novel and Lewin's film both take the life of Gauguin as an exemplary instance of "genius" escaping the bonds that fetter it and both are attempts to fathom the forces that might enable a once "civilized" human being to release himself from the constraints which are assumed to inhibit this genius. Both novel and film, however, betray a certain cynicism, and neither succeeds in finding the germ or spark that explains the mysterious workings of art. The investigative format, whereby Geoffrey Wolfe, rather like the reporter in Citizen Kane, interviews various Tahitian characters who had met up with Strickland during his years there, allows the life to be reconstructed topically, but leaves the ultimate questions unanswered. There is, in The Moon and Sixpence, no "Rosebud." Or rather,

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[20]According to the Times as quoted in Robert Sitton, "Albert Lewin: Director and Innovator," Park East, Vol. 3, no. 11 (March 24, 1966), p. 8, wherein Lewin is himself quoted as having said that the compromises he was forced to make were "kind of a challenge... I'm not too keen on these recent films that are overt about sex... You don't need that to make a great love story. What was it Mallarme said? 'To name is to destroy; to suggest is to create.'"

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if there is a symbol that stands in for something inexorably lost, it much more obscurely stands for something never gained in order to be lost--something always already lost.

In Strickland's meagre, sordid garret in Paris, stands an idol--a Tahitian idol. It is absent from the narrative exposition, but figures prominently in several scenes set there. And during the film's most probing dialogue, set at a café, Strickland obsessively sketches the idol as he attempts to answer Geoffrey's questions about his motives (fig. 1).[21] Paradoxically, in discussing the film years later, Lewin characterized this idol as signifying Strickland's "nostalgia" for Tahiti, a place the character had as yet never been.[22] The choice of the word

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[21]"Don't you want fame? It's something that most artists haven't been indifferent to," asks Geoffrey. "Why should I care for the opinion of the crowd, when I don't care twopence for the opinion of the individual?" responds Strickland. "I wonder if I could write on a desert island, with the certainty that no eyes but mine would ever see what I had written," muses Geoffrey in response to Strickland's indifference to his reception. Strickland's response is slow, troubled, contemplative: "I've sometimes thought of an island, somewhere off the map, where I could live and work in a hidden valley, among strange trees, alone, in silence," he says while sketching the idol.

[22]"The symbol was not at all metonymous, it was actual. You see, in Somerset Maugham's brilliant book, there was nothing that I could actually photograph that represented the nostalgia of this painter for the tropics. So very early in the film you will observe there was this image. This image was carved by a very talented Icelandic sculptress named Nina Saemundsson, deriving, however, from an actual painting by Gauguin, and it is a Tahitian goddess, and the painter acquires this even in Paris. And you see at the end of the sequence, I drew the camera back and this image came up very prominently in the foreground." Albert Lewin, audiotape recorded on the occasion of the Gallery of Modern Art's retrospective in 1966.

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"nostalgia" was certainly deliberate, for the later scenes set in Tahiti were filmed in sepia, as opposed to the standard black-and-white used for the London and Paris scenes.

One might expect that the island paradise in which Strickland found the liberation and vision, the clarity and freedom he had sought and that enabled him to paint the masterpieces of vivid color that are implied, would be shown in color and opposed to the black-and-white prosaism of the world he left behind, much as Dorothy Gael's dream is in The Wizard of Oz. But color is here reserved for the brief glimpse of the paintings that Strickland made there, and the colorful island paradise is rendered in the softer, aged sepia tones generally associated with photographs of the irretrievable past. The nostalgia whose object is always already absent provides the palette which (de)colors the world in sepia. What are meant to be "indescribably wonderful and mysterious...tremendous, sensual, passionate,...horrible...primeval...terrible...magic... beautiful and obscene" visions of the birth of the world painted by a blind man in the last stages of leprosy,[23] take their color and vividness from the strength of something internal--something eternal, as well, something like memory, desire and phylogeny all wrapped up in one.

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[23]From the same passage in Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence (New York, 1955), pp. 185-186.

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Maugham's novel, and, somewhat more ambivalently, Lewin's film, in passages such as these articulate the myth of modernist primitivism so strongly associated with Gauguin, as Abigail Solomon-Godeau has effectively described:

> Gauguin's voyage of life was perceived in both the most literal and gratifyingly symbolic sense as a voyage ever further outward, to the periphery and margins, to what lies outside the parameters of the superego and the polis.... Common to both the embrace of the primitive--however defined--and the celebration of artistic originality is the belief that both enterprises are animated by the artist's privileged access, be it spiritual, intellectual or psychological, to that which is primordially internal.... the artist "recognizes" in the primitive artifact that which was immanent, but inchoate; the object from "out there" enables the expression of what is thought to be "in there."[24]

Lewin had intended to reproduce an actual Gauguin painting, Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?, at the end of the film, when Strickland's work is seen for the first time, and he had obtained permission from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, but as the production was about to get underway, he was threatened with a lawsuit by one of Gauguin's sons and had to abandon the plan.[25] Lewin

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[24]Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Going Native: Paul Gauguin and the Invention of Primitivist Modernism," in The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History, Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, eds. (New York, 1992), pp. 314-315.

[25]"Movie of the Week: The Moon and Sixpence," Life, Vol. 13 (September 14, 1942), p. 50. The Life article relates that Loew-Lewin and United Artists (who released the picture) "received a stern letter from the painter's eldest son, Emile Gauguin, who now lives in Philadelphia. Emile threatened to sue if any Gauguin art was used in the movie, as this would conclusively identify Maugham's disreputable hero with his father."

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had to satisfy himself with translating Gauguin's pictures into some of his own filmic compositions,[26] and was faced with the problem of showing suitably exotic pictures when Strickland's masterpieces, the wall paintings in his Tahitian house, are revealed in color at the film's climax. To solve this problem, he hired a young Russian painter named Dolya Goutman, who:

> had to create works of genius in about a week. I knew that Dolya Goutman, or Leonardo da Vinci, could not fulfill this...assignment in a week, and so what I did was this: I got a copy, a photograph, of a very famous painting (well, there's probably no more famous painting except the Mona Lisa). The painting was Botticelli's Spring, and I had Botticelli's Spring blown up until it was the size of a whole wall and then I said to Dolya Goutman that he should repaint all the classical figures, not change the composition a bit, but to make all the figures Tahitian girls,.. and the cyprus trees...all palms. And Dolya did that.... And we did another painting, on the other wall, by a pupil of Leonardo's named Bernadino Luini, of Milan. It was called "The Bath of the Nymphs." It was a rather neo-classical canvas with nymphs around a formal pool. And that became a Tahitian pool, with Tahitian girls around it and palm trees, too. Of course that wasn't so dangerous because he wasn't quite so well known a painter, but I was terribly worried about Botticelli. So when the picture came out, finally, I was waiting in fear and trembling for someone in the audience to jump up and cry out, 'Botticelli, Botticelli!' And not a single person ever discovered it--no critic, nobody in the audience, nothing![27]

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[26]For instance: several shots of Ata recall Gauguin's paintings of Tahitian women seated on the ground. One scene, set in the darkened hut afer Strickland's death shows the grieving Ata, lying face down in the dark, suggesting Gauguin's Manao tupapau (1892) or Nevermore (1897). A Tahitian man is seen in the exact pose of the Man with an Ax (1891). The wedding feast recalls Upaupa (1891).

[27]Albert Lewin, audiotape recorded on the occasion of the Gallery of Modern Art's retrospective in 1966.

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In fact, the Goutman murals (see figs. 6 and 7) are not particularly distinguished paintings and they hardly could be considering the circumstances under which they were made.[28] They were subjected to a good deal of derision by critics who bothered to remark on them, none of whom saw through Goutman to Botticelli.[29]

Leaving aside questions of the quality of the Goutman paintings, I should like to focus on the question of nostalgia as conceived in The Moon and Sixpence. Botticelli, although second choice (after Gauguin) for Strickland's surrogate (or ghost painter?), is perhaps not a random one.

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[28]Not only were they executed, according to Lewin, in a week, but they were destined to be burned to the ground, along with the Tahitian hut for which they were made, for the final Tahitian scene in which Strickland's widow, Ata, on his prior instructions, runs from his graveside with a torch and sets the whole place afire. Barbara Gray, who worked on the film, confirms that they were really burned.

[29]Philip T. Hartung (p. 567), who rather liked the film, considered its "greatest flaw... showing us some third-rate art in technicolor near the film's end and telling us that this is the work of a great artist. Why, if we must be shown the products of this film's supposed genius, couldn't we be shown something approaching competence?"

Technicolor, in fact, was not used for the color insert, although virtually every critic described it as such. As Lewin explained to the audience at the Gallery of Modern Art tribute in 1966: "Technicolor at that time had a monopoly on color in Hollywood, and they were able to dictate exactly what they would do. They saw no particular percentage...in putting a Technicolor insert in a black-and-white picture. They refused to do it...and we were determined to have color anyhow. Actually, the color scenes...were photographed in 16mm Kodachrome. The original Kodachrome was very beautiful, but of course we couldn't make prints from it. The problem was to transfer to a negative from which prints could be made and we had to do that in a two-color, rather than in a three-color process, and the loss of quality was enormous."

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The pastiche which results from superimposing exotic detail over a Renaissance composition that itself relies on a mythic reconstruction of the classical, whatever its aesthetic failings, expresses rather well the more complex origins of such seemingly unmediated pictures as Gauguin's Tahitian work.[30] In a long letter, written a few years after the film was made, and in which much consideration is given to the beauty of the lost Medieval French language of the Beroul Tristan et Yseut[31], Lewin digresses toward the Renaissance:

> The women of Botticelli are full of his never-slaked yearning for the model, Simonetta I think her name was, who found him what the French call "sympathique", which means that they like you but prefer to go to bed with someone else. In Botticelli's case, perhaps it was just as well; he put his yearning into the painting instead of the model. His rivals had Simonetta, but didn't paint her as well. Botticelli would understand the nostalgia of Tristan and his language,--the neo-romantic suffused with classic souvenirs. Nostalgia is the clue to a great deal. Love is the nostalgia of the embryo--instinct the nostalgia of the will--sleep the nostalgia of the anatomy itelf. In our dreams our ontology goes home to its philogenetic mother. We swim again, and fly, or break the penitentiary seed-pods in the ooze. This is the enchantment which the early de Chirico understood, and toward which the sur-realists strain.

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[30]What Solomon-Godeau, p. 328, calls "bricolage" and cites Camille Pisarro as having disparaged as "All in all...the art of a sailor, picked up here and there."

[31]"How is it possible to carry over this extraordinary language, not merely the verse, but the language itself, in which all the syllables are softly spoken, the word-endings so feminine as to be downright erotic? I imagine Italian is a little like this lost language, as tender and golden as infantile excrement--a brief and felicitous interlude between Latin and French, as fleeting as Villon's neiges d'antan...." Albert Lewin, letter to Pegeen Sullivan, 16 November, 1945, USC. NOTE: the Lewins had no children.

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This paragraph sweeps transhistorically across centuries of humankind and of Western art and articulates a kind morbid faith in the inchoate and undifferentiated preservation of traces of the past, both cultural and biological, in the aspirations and accomplishments of the greatest art. No differentiation is made between desire and nostalgia; they are both described as ineffable, unfulfillable, ultimately object-less states. And these states are seen as symptoms of an existential condition, which the greatest of art somehow evokes. This is very close to the myth of modernist primitivism that Solomon-Godeau demystifies, a myth which is itself a permutation of earlier myths of artistic genius. Yet sometimes in his films, as well as in his writings, Lewin betrays a strain of doubt, or scepticism toward the cult of genius that he other times seems to support.

Lewin had already literalized this dilemma in 1925 in a published story, "Botticelli in Hollywood," about the pathological possibilities of the cult of genius carried to its most horrible extremes.[32] The story describes its narrator's encounter in a Hollywood restaurant with a literally "starving" young artist, who, in order to paint a sea bass, "as if it were the one final and quintessential fish," or "an orange that would have lived forever as a symbol of all oranges, the genius and Deucalion of its race, rich, sweet, flooded internally with the delectable juices

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[32]In his college fraternity's (Pi Lambda Phi) magazine, The Frater, Vol. 5, no. 1 (March 1925), pp. 3-6.

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of the golden citron,"[33] was denying himself, while surrounding himself with the most luscious of foods, any nourishment at all. As the young artist explains to the story's narrator:

> It was because he could not possess her himself that Botticelli was able to arrest and suspend the ideal Simonetta sub species aeternitatis for the delight of all the world.... I am disciplining myself to be nothing more or less than the Botticelli of the dining room wall--where Botticelli was denied the possession of the woman he loved, I consciously deny myself possession of the food which I crave, and as from his denial flowered Spring and The Birth of Venus, from mine shall some day be expressed the imperishable projection of the spirit of food.[34]

There is a quality bordering on travesty in this story, which near its end invokes Edgar Allen Poe's "The Oval Portrait," a story to which I shall have cause to return, in which a young bride's "blood lent color to the painter's brush until her own life passed into his ideal creation--the obverse to the classic story of Galatea and Pygmalion."[35] The sense of awe and horror that the narrator conveys is countered by a rather parodic purpleness of prose, as in the story's penultimate line: "Oh brave, true Botticelli of the entrails, you merit a more distinguished encomium than mine..."[36]

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[33]"Botticelli in Hollywood," p. 5.

[34]"Botticelli in Hollywood," pp. 4,6.

[35]"Botticelli in Hollywood," p. 6.

[36]"Botticelli in Hollywood," p. 6.

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A faint aura of travesty surrounds all Lewin's oeuvre. It is the quality to which critics such as Sarris have responded so violently, assuming it naïve, vulgar, snobbish, or pretentious. What I call travesty,[37] and others call vulgarity, might be interpreted as the inevitable result of Lewin's avowed aspiration to make films "both commercial and artistic," an aspiration many see as pure folly. I am inclined, however, to see it as a function of two other somewhat contradictory tendencies in Lewin's films: the first is to evoke what he sees as the innate magic, horror and beauty of art and of the world (natural and cultural), an impulse expressed in some passages of Lewin's films with persuasion and grace; the second is to adopt a distance, a scepticism, an analytic posture toward received ideas, toward convention and toward himself. It is this second impulse which peppers Lewin's films with irony.

In other words, in auteurist terms, there is a conflict manifest in all Lewin's work between the effects of Lewin the scholar-critic and those of Lewin the artist. In this respect, he is very like the critic-auteurs of the French New Wave, as well as other European filmmakers, and his work

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[37]Lewin's propensity toward travesty is suggested by an episode associated with the production of The Picture of Dorian Gray, when he leapt at the opportunity, which proved ultimately impossible, to have Greta Garbo perform the role of Dorian Gray. See my discussion of that film, which follows.

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has been compared to that of figures such as Godard,[38] Rohmer and Antonioni;[39] but what is seen as "natural" in Europe, often looks quite abberant in the U.S., where very different attitudes toward cinematic "genius" were, and to a great extent, are still current.[40] This problem will be discussed at greater length in my conclusion.

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[38]"Not since the heyday of Albert Lewin has there been a film quite so stuffed with culture," remarks John Russell Taylor of Godard's Le Petit Soldat (1960) in Cinema Eye, Cinema Ear (New York, 1964), p. 214, for example.

[39]Tom Milne, for instance, in his article about Lewin, "You are a professor, of course," Monthly Film Bulletin, Vol. 52, no. 622 (November 1985), p. 357, claims that Lewin's "style of direction, elliptically elusive and allusive, anticipates the Antonioni-Godard revolution in having actors persistently deliver lines back to the camera or in avoidance of unequivocally direct communication."

[40]Expressed most emphatically by Sarris and by David Thomson's entry in his Biographical Dictionary of Film (New York, 1976), p. 322: "His own films lack exactly those assets a Thalberg henchman might have been expected to command--narrative directness and box-office accuracy. On the contrary, arty aspiration showed like a teenage slip. His own scenarist, he cultivated a garish sophistication--in subject, setting, style and actors--and sometimes achieved real vulgarity."

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Chapter 2. DR. LOOK: THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (1945)

This tension between artistic "sincerity" and critical irony is a quality Lewin shares, not coincidentally, with all three of the authors upon whose novels his first three films were based: Somerset Maugham, Guy de Maupassant and, especially, Oscar Wilde, who divided these two sides of himself among two characters, Lord Henry Wotten and Basil Hallward, in The Picture of Dorian Gray.[1] And the critical postures of Wilde and Lewin share many features, not the least significant of which is their mutual disdain for realism, the dominant literary mode of Wilde's time and the dominant filmic mode of Lewin's, a dominance Wilde resisted throughout his career, as did Lewin, from his first film criticism, to his earliest years in Hollywood, to his death.[2]

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[1]As described, for instance, by Barbara Charlesworth in Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature (Madison, Wisconsin, 1965), p. 54: "...the way in which it might best be possible to understand Oscar Wilde: by separating him, as he separated himself, into several selves (each, however, watching the other selves and offering comments upon or even engaging in dialogues with the self at stage-center), remembering always that the man and his work are inextricable, though the work too is a mask."

[2]Max Tessier described Lewin as having "entered the delicate and poisonous universe of Oscar Wilde with the ease of a gentleman of the same spiritual family, dissatisfied with the world as it is and little interested in undertaking to modify it. (*Albert Lewin allait entrer dans l'univers délicat et vénéneux d'Oscar Wilde avec l'aisance d'un gentleman de la même famille spirituelle, insatisfaite du monde tel qu'il est, et peu intéressée à entreprendre de le modifier.*)" "Albert Lewin," Dossiers du cinéma: Cinéastes, Vol. III (Paris and Tournai, 1974), p. 133.

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> ...if something cannot be done to check, or at least to modify, our monstrous worship of facts, Art will become sterile and beauty will pass from the land....The moment Art surrenders its imaginative medium it surrenders everything....As a method realism is a complete failure.
>
> Oscar Wilde[3]

> In going from the spectacular to the real the movies are losing something for which they will not be compensated until they go on from the real to the symbolic. The danger in the commonplace is dullness. People want to be thrilled.
>
> Albert Lewin[4]

A film made under the auspices of one of Hollywood's largest and most conservative studios in 1945 was subject to a good deal more pressure to conform to conventional realism, however, than any novel ever was, particularly one produced by an already (in)famous aesthete in 1890.[5] But to a rather surprising extent, the danger of the commonplace was successfully avoided in Lewin's second directorial project, The Picture of Dorian Gray (released 1945), a film often criticized at the time and since for either its literary pretensions, its Hollywood compromises, or both. It is, nonetheless, arguably Lewin's best film, and certainly his most critically acclaimed. While avoiding the "dangers"

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[3]Oscar Wilde, from "The Decay of Lying," The Works of Oscar Wilde (Leicester, England, 1987), pp. 912, 930.

[4]Memo to Mr. Block, n.d. (c. 1924), USC.

[5]Although there was some pressure on Wilde from friends and potential publishers to modify certain elements in the novel, which had originally appeared in the July issue of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine; and the book was turned down by one publisher, Macmillan, "on the ground that it contained unpleasant elements," before being accepted by a smaller firm, Ward, Lock & Co. As per Richard Ellmann, Oscar Wilde (New York, 1988), pp. 314-22.

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of the commonplace, The Picture of Dorian Gray remained subject to the "dangers" of Lewin's tightrope act, his equilibristic negotiation of intellectual, artistic and commercial viability.

But it is these very dangers, around which the film is organized, which, to me, make it most interesting. For it is in the visual presentation of a not very visually descriptive text, the divergences, often necessitated by Code, from Wilde's narrative and, in-between these, the figuration and symbolization of content explicitly disallowed or formally problematic, that Lewin's film presents a fascinating mediation between Wilde's effete aestheticism and Hollywood's conventional realism.[6] The Picture of Dorian Gray, in its anxious, equilibristic obsession with visuality, as a central issue of Wilde's novel and as cinematic fact, finally results in an almost clinical case-study of visual experience as the film exactingly and lavishly configures virtually its every frame into a paradoxically seductive affront to conventional cinematic pleasure.

While a central theme of Wilde's novel is the pursuit of aesthetic pleasure and the fatal desire to possess it as

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[6]Cinematic Realism has been the subject of a great deal of contemporary theory. See, for instance: Colin MacCabe, "Theory and Film: Principles of Realism and Pleasure," and Jean-Louis Baudry, "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema," both in Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology, ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia U. Press, 1986), pp. 179-97 and 299-318, respectively.

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material and sensuous, cinema is by its very nature ephemeral: its picture moves and mutates. Like the infamous picture of Dorian Gray, itself, the cinema can be neither fixed nor had. This cinematic evanescence proves, in Lewin's film, more inclined toward the pursuit of a purely scopic pressure--toward a sensibility of desire: an aesthetic of the fetish and the penetrating omnipresence of the gaze, rather than toward the material tension of Wilde's dialectical presentation of Epicurean pleasure where it borders upon sensual passion and folly.[7]

While many film critics would be inclined to investigate the visual qualities of Lewin's film as examples of cinematic excess--that is, as non-diagetic details that represent the return of that which was repressed for the sake of narrative homogeneity[8]--knowledge of Lewin's entire

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[7]For discussions of the tensions and ambiguities characteristic of Wilde's novel, see: Jan B. Gordon, "'Decadent Spaces': Notes for a Phenomenology of the *Fin de Siècle*," in Decadence and the 1890s, Ian Fletcher, ed. (New York 1979), pp. 31-58; and Barbara Charlesworth's chapter on Wilde, pp. 53-80.

[8]On "excess," see: Kristin Thompson, "The Concept of Cinematic Excess," in Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology, pp. 130-142 and Stephen Heath, "Film and System, Terms of Analysis," Parts I and II, Screen 16, nos. 1 and 2 (1975), pp. 7-77 and 91-113, respectively.

The supposition that the figurative insights of The Picture of Dorian Gray are "excess," or fortuitous accidents is a commonplace of the film's reception, from Parker Tyler to Réda Bensmaïa. Such assumptions strike me as unfair and unnecessary to the essentially structural view that such critics adopt. One need not assume that its artist is an unconscious cog of the system in order to analyze or "deconstruct" a work. It is not wrong to neglect the issue of intention on the grounds that it is irrelevant, but it must be wrong to assume lack of intentionality in the

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body of work, written and cinematic, consideration of the film's source, Wilde's novel, and close scrutiny of the film itself prove a more concerted theme of visuality, one that lingers deliberately and connectedly below the surface, or, as it were, above it, as a disturbance in the visual field of the industry-constrained version of the narrative.

* * * * *

> Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming....There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.
> Oscar Wilde, preface, The Picture of Dorian Gray[9]

> Art can be *morally good*....Art can be *morally evil*. It has often been argued that art in itself is unmoral, neither good nor bad. This is perhaps true of the THING which is music, painting, poetry, etc. But the thing is the PRODUCT of some person's mind and the intention of that mind was either good or bad morally when it produced the thing.
> The Motion Picture Production Code[10]

As is quite graphically evident in the debate constituted by the positions of Oscar Wilde and Joseph Breen, a Hollywood version of Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray was bound to present certain problems, aside from those implicit problems of adaptation, and, indeed, Lewin again, as he had on The Moon and Sixpence, had

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absence of any research regarding it.

[9]Oscar Wilde, "The Picture of Dorian Gray," in The Picture of Dorian Gray and Other Writings by Oscar Wilde, ed. Richard Ellmann (New York, 1982), p. 3.

[10]The Motion Picture Production Code (The Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Administration's guidelines for self-censorship), cited by Gilbert Seldes in "S-e-x," in Film: An Anthology, ed. Daniel Talbot (Berkeley, 1966), p. 179.

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problems with the censors (and probably would have worried had he not). But like Wilde's novel, Lewin's film manages to advance troubling propositions and disturbing questions about human nature, desire, sexuality and morals. To the extent that these are implicit in the narrative content of the novel, they are essentially maintained in the film, but it is largely in the graphic presentation of the narrative content that they are most provocatively bodied forth.

The narrative alterations to Wilde's plot should be noted. The most significant change is the creation of two new characters, Gladys, who is the niece of the painter Basil Hallward, and David, who is her suitor (see fig. 29).[11] Thus, some twenty years after the death of Sibyl Vane, in Lewin's version, Dorian Gray contemplates marrying again, now to the grown Gladys, who was a child of five or six when the painting was done (and already enamored of Dorian).[12] Although Dorian is infamous for rumors about his indulgences and cruelties, Gladys will not hear a word against him, she believes that beauty is truth. She pursues Dorian aggressively and her gaze, like Sibyl's before her,

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[11]There is a Gladys in Wilde's novel (pp. 167 ff.) and she too desires Dorian intensely. But she is no virgin niece of Basil's, but rather the married Duchess of Monmouth, and does not play nearly so large a role in the novel as the Gladys of the film.

[12]The composition of the scene in which the child Gladys enters her uncle's studio is based clearly, although not exactly, on Velazquez's Las Meniñas, with the child in the foreground, the canvas and painter screen left, and Lord Henry in the background, at the door.

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is riveted upon Dorian. Gladys does, in fact, possess the gaze, and unlike Sibyl, she is not punished for this.[13]

It would appear that Dorian, object of her desire, is to Gladys, finally, what Woman is to the male protagonist of a *noir* film.[14] Dorian is sexually alluring but potentially treacherous; he holds Gladys (and Sibyl) in the same kind of sexual thrall that the *femme fatale* typically holds our hero. Dorian's status as an object of desire, ultimately even to himself, is underlined by the ambivalence with which he is described and characterized. As Parker Tyler has noted, Dorian, as realized by Hurd Hatfield, is a curiously effeminate and narcissistic creature:

> I could not help noting that in certain scenes of the movie, Mr. Hatfield's face and manner of speaking strongly suggested the romantic adolescent style of Katherine Hepburn....It is not only that the structure of Mr. Hatfield's face is similar to Miss Hepburn's, but that the use of his lips and a muted monotone also resemble hers....I mention this only to show that by happy coincidence, screen history provides a handy index to the effeminate defensiveness of Dorian's style. His is a passive, dreamy mask....Not only does Hurd Hatfield create the first male erotic somnambule who is a beauty rather than a Dracula, or such as the denizen of Caligari's cabinet, but he is the first

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[13]It has been proposed in much feminist film theory that the gaze is male--that female subjectivity in cinema is so circumscribed that where it appears it will be punished.

[14]As described by David Bordwell, p. 76. Bordwell is summarizing the best work done on noir, citing: Alain Silver and Elizabeth Ward, Film Noir: an Encyclopedia Reference to the American Style (Woodstock, NY, 1979); E. Ann Kaplan, ed., Women in Film Noir (London, 1978); R. Borde and E. Chaumeton, Panorama du film noir américain (Paris, 1953/1976); Paul Schrader, "Notes on Film Noir," Film Comment Vol. 8, no. 1 (Spring 1972), pp. 11-13; and Janey Place and L.S. Peterson, "Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir," Film Comment Vol. 10, no. 1 (January 1974), p. 31.

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> Great Lover who, despite all Hollywood handicaps, manages to seem more loved than loving....For the meaning of Dorian's life is that he is the detached object of love, not its subject; the beloved, not the lover.[15]

In characterizing Wilde's Dorian, Tyler writes, "...Wilde was the prince of an alien and socially aggressive philosophy, and Dorian Gray was his 'Mata Hari'--a man not in the service of another country but of another sex."[16] Tyler could not have known how appropriate his analogy to Mata Hari was for Lewin's adaptation. But if she and Lewin had had their druthers, Greta Garbo, who had played Mata Hari in 1932, would have played Dorian Gray, too:

> One day I received a message from Cedric Gibbons, who wanted to see me on a matter of urgency and secrecy. Gibby was the only close friend of Garbo around the studio at that time, and he had been deputed to tell me that Garbo wanted to play Dorian. Indeed, it was the only role she would come back to the screen for. Of course I moved heaven and earth to set it up. But everyone had a fit: the censorship problem, formidable anyway, would become insurmountable with a woman <u>en travesti</u> playing the role. I had to give up, but I've always regarded that as one of the screen's great lost opportunities.[17]

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[15]Tyler, "Dorian Gray: Last of the Movie Draculas," <u>View</u>, Vol. 7, no. 1 (October 1946), p. 21.

[16]Tyler, "Dorian Gray: Last of the Movie Draculas," p. 21.

[17]Albert Lewin, quoted in Arkadin [John Russell Taylor], "Film Clips," <u>Sight and Sound</u>, Vol. 37, no. 1 (Winter 1967/68), p. 47.

Cedric Gibbons was the head of the M-G-M art department. The interest in having a woman "*en travesti*" underscores Lewin's penchant for travesty in general.

The casting of the title role in <u>The Picture of Dorian Gray</u> is revealed by correspondance and memoranda (USC) to have been no simple matter. Due to British War Office regulations, English actors could not be released for roles in the U.S. (cable from Ben Goetz to Eddie Mannix, 1943,

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Before the portrait of himself, at the beginning of the film and before mirrors, Dorian's narcissism is underscored (e.g. figs. 10, 19). And although the homosexual subtext of Wilde's novel is suppressed in the film,[18] Sir Henry and Basil Hallward are clearly as captivated by his static and delicate beauty as Sibyl and Gladys.

The ambivalent and almost fetishistic character of Dorian's sexual appeal seems to be codified in one of the film's most striking figures. Early in the film, Dorian has just met Sir Henry at the home of Basil. While Dorian stands, immobile, posing for the portrait Basil is painting, Lord Henry is in pursuit of a butterfly. As he doggedly and dispassionately follows the butterfly about the studio, Henry intones the epigrammatic wisdom of his philosophy of hedonistic pleasure at Dorian:

> ...the aim of life is self-development--to realize one's nature perfectly. That's what we're here for. A man should live out his life fully and completely, give

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U.S.C.) Among American actors, in addition to Greta Garbo, Lewin was interested in Montgomery Clift and Gregory Peck, both stage actors with no screen credits in 1943, when approached. Both turned down the opportunity. Clift indicated to I.I. Altman of M-G-M that, "After reading the script, he thinks it is not the type of role or script for his debut in pictures." (Altman's letter to Lewin, 29 September 1943). Clift's screen debut did not occur until five years later in Fred Zinnemann's The Search, Peck's debut, in Jacques Tourneur's Days of Glory was in 1944. Perhaps wisely (compare Peck's and Clift's careers to Hatfield's), both elected to debut as soldiers (albeit "sensitive" ones), rather than as this "exquisite" aesthete.

[18]Joseph I. Breen, in charge of the Hays office, recommended a number of script changes in order that "there will be no possibility of any inference of sex perversion, anywhere in this story" (Letter of 13 September 1943, USC).

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> form to every feeling, expression to every thought, reality to every dream. Every impulse that we suppress broods in the mind and poisons us. There's only one way to get rid of a temptation, and that is to yield to it (he captures the butterfly under his hat). Resist it (pouring alcohol into a dish), and the soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden to itself. There is nothing that can cure the soul but the senses, just as there is nothing that can cure the senses but the soul.[19]

The younger man is shown enthralled by Henry's "poisonous" monologue, an effect structurally likened to the butterfly's fate.

While the metaphor, to this point, is rather obvious--the beautiful Dorian succumbing to Sir Henry's verbal seduction as the lovely butterfly to his bodily pursuit--the subsequent montage is more complex. After a close-up of Dorian's face dissolves into another of the dying butterfly, another dissolve reveals the now dead butterfly pinned to a card and propped against a figurine in another close-up of

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[19]The scene continues: [Cut to Basil]
BASIL: "Turn your head a little bit to the left, Dorian."
[Cut to Dorian-3/4 length]
HENRY: "The gods have been good to you, Mr. Gray."
DORIAN: "Why do you say that?"
[Cut to Henry, in foreground, with Dorian in background]
HENRY: "Because you have the most marvelous youth and youth is the one thing worth having."
DORIAN: "I don't feel that, Lord Henry."
HENRY: (transferring the butterfly into the dish of alcohol) No, you don't feel it now, but someday you will feel it terribly. What the gods give [cut to close-up of Dorian], they quickly take away. Time is jealous of you, Mr. Gray. Don't squander the gold of your days. Live. Let nothing be lost upon you. Be afraid of nothing. [Cut to close-up of Henry] It is such a little time that your youth will last. And you can never get it back. As we grow older, our memories are haunted by the exquisite temptations we hadn't the courage to yield to. The world is yours for a season."

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an arrangement of objects on a table (figs. 13-14).[20] The figurine represents Venus leaning on an undeniably phallic prop which is in turn directed toward the bronze mouth of a sexually indeterminate bust. For a fleeting moment in the dissolve the phallic form from the sculpture and the close-up of the butterfly are superimposed in an image that quite provocatively suggests a conflation of the male and female genitalia. This striking ensemble occupies the screen for a number of seconds--long enough to register distinctly but not long enough to be contemplated at length. In it, the aesthetic properties of the objects are compounded by the fetishistic, perverse, and polymorphic sexual possibilities described in their combination. Some of these possibilities are echoed after the dissolve when Lord Henry presents the butterfly to Dorian and leans over to blow it dry.

Réda Bensmaïa concentrated on this dissolve in a short paper he delivered at a 1991 Louvre conference, Le portrait

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[20]HENRY: "It would be tragic [cut to close-up of Dorian] if you realized too late, as so many others do, that there's only one thing in the world worth having, and that is youth.

NARRATOR: "Dorian Gray had never heard the praise of folly so eloquently expressed. The creed of pleasure soared into a philosophy of life, while Dorian stood as if he were under a spell. [Dissolve to extreme close-up of the butterfly dying in the dish of alcohol] He felt afraid of Lord Henry's ideas and ashamed of himself for being afraid. It was if he were learning to know himself for the first time; as if a stranger had revealed his own most secret thoughts to him. [Dissolve to a close-up of a table top. At screen-right Henry's hand moves in past some books to pick up the butterfly] For the first time he became conscious of his youth; conscious that one day he would lose it."

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peint au cinéma,[21] observing its condensation of profoundly censorable content in an overdetermined image of the fetishistic and perverse character of Dorian's Gray's psyche, and generalizing from this condensation a propensity of the cinematic dissolve itself to body forth the taboo, repressed, or disavowed content of narrative cinema. I think there is little basis, in fact, for privileging the dissolve as the locus of such a function, except given Bensmaïa's evident conviction, a conviction he shares with many film theorists, that Hollywood films are made in large part, unconsciously. A survey of dissolves, is unlikely, I believe, to yield many in which such stunning content is advanced--most are used as simple transitions between shots or scenes, often denoting a lapse of time. The psycho-sexual "lapse" figured in Lewin's dissolve does indeed articulate content repressed by the overall diagesis, but it is to my mind no accident, rather the director's very intentional method of slipping obliquely and efficiently this content past the producers and the censors.

Another figural index of Dorian's sexual ambiguity and primary narcissism occurs later in the film. In a scene with Gladys, Dorian, with his back to the screen, appears to be directly facing a mirror as he speaks with her, while the

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[21]My discussion of Bensmaïa's paper is based on a typescript of it that he was kind enough to give me. It has since appeared in print as "La Figure d'inconnu ou l'inconscient épinglé: *Le Portrait de Dorian Gray* d'Albert Lewin," Iris, No. 14-15 (Autumn 1992), pp. 177-86; see also note 23 of my next chapter, "The Moving Picture Gallery."

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image reflected in the mirror is not of Dorian, but rather the bronze copy of Verrocchio's David that is part of Dorian's extensive and eclectic art collection (fig. 19). This David, which is prominent in many scenes set in Dorian's drawing room, and a bronze copy of Donatello's David, featured in a scene set in Dorian's club,[22] are meaningful for their general iconographic references to youth, and for their specific representation of sexually ambiguous, narcissistically erotic, adolescent youth, and their meanings literally "reflect" the representation of Dorian himself, who, as portrayed by Hurd Hatfield, negotiates his every move, gesture and expression with considered and self-conscious circumscription, as though he were a somnambule (as Parker Tyler put it) or a living doll (like Pygmalion's Galatea, E.T.A. Hoffmann's Olympia, or Villier's Future Eve).[23]

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[22]The club scene, which in the finished film is a rather short series of shots with voice-over exposition, was evidently much longer originally. It was one of two scenes that Lewin fought a losing battle with Pandro S. Berman to keep in the final cut. One can assume, therefore, that the Donatello David was meant to play a more significant role than it now does. Albert Lewin, letter to Pandro S. Berman, 7 October 1944, USC.

[23]Dorian's likeness to these inevitably female fictions reiterates the "inversion" that is evident in Lewin's construction of Dorian Gray as "the detached object of love, not its subject (Tyler)." In an article on L'Eve Future by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Raymond Bellour excerpts the following: "the creature whom you love, and who for you is the sole REALITY is by no means the one who is momentarily embodied in this transient human figure, but a creature of your desire....What you love is this phantom alone; it's for the phantom that you want to die. That and that alone is what you recognize as unconditionally REAL..." Bellour

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But Dorian is no ordinary somnambule, nor simply a living doll. He is mirrored not only by the Davids, but also, because of the repeated use of mirrors in the film, by his own inert beauty and by that of his portrait. The elision of these stable reflections--David, Dorian, the portrait of Dorian--is a key to what Dorian sees in the mirror. In Lacanian terms, it is a primal, infantile misrecognition: "This image is a fiction because it conceals, or freezes, the infant's lack of motor co-ordination and the fragmentation of its drives, But it is salutary for the child, since it gives it the first sense of a coherent identity in which it can recognize itself. For Lacan, however, this is already a fantasy...."[24] Dorian's revelation and rapture at first seeing the finished portrait, thus, almost perfectly illustrates the Lacanian construction of the mirror stage. Henry's diatribe articulates the "self-consciousness" that had been heretofore and conspicuously lacking in the seemingly unformed Dorian. From the moment he perceives his representation, Dorian is fatally seduced by the fiction

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comments: "The 'ideal-double' whose possibility Edison suggests to Lord Ewald is none other than the ideal-double of himself, projected through Alicia. We shall call this encompassing of doubles the Narcissistic double. It is born from the subject's concern for his own image, and for the conditions necessary for its formation." "Ideal Hadaly," Camera Obscura 15 (Fall 1986) p. 119.

[24]Jacqueline Rose, Sexuality in the Field of Vision (London, 1986) p. 53.

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that is representation (so like the fiction of the mirror image), the myth of a perfect, stable and coherent subject.

Dorian Gray's portait is, of course, like Dr. Jekyll's Mr. Hyde, and so many other literary figures, a variation on the theme of the double, a literary phenomenon analyzed in Lacanian terms by Mladen Dolar, who describes the structural features of the theme as follows:

> The subject is confronted with his double, the very image of himself (that can go along with the disappearance, or trading off, of his mirror image or his shadow), and this crumbling of the subject's accustomed reality, this shattering of the bases of his world, produces a terrible anxiety. Usually only the subject can see his own double, who takes care to appear only in private, or for the subject alone. The double produces two seemingly contradictory effects: he arranges things so that they turn out badly for the subject, he turns up at the most inappropriate moments, he dooms him to failure; and he realizes the subject's hidden or repressed desires so that he does things he would never dare to do or that his conscience wouldn't let him do. In the end, the relation gets so unbearable that the subject, in a final showdown, kills his double, unaware that his only substance and his very being were concentrated in his double. So in killing him, he kills himself.[25]

Lewin was certainly sensible of the distinguished history of the double in literature and, in fact, made an interesting

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[25]Mladen Dolar, "'I Shall Be with You on Your Wedding-Night': Lacan and the Uncanny," October 58 (Fall 1991), p. 11; Dolar also points out in a footnote (no. 14, p. 11) that "the heroes of these stories are always male....the double is also a device to avoid a relationship to femininity and sexuality in general."

The first psychoanalytic study of the theme of the double was Otto Rank's "Der Doppelgänger" (1914), and Rank later explored the theme again in "The Double as Immortal Self," Beyond Psychology (New York, 1958), pp. 602-101. Freud took up the problem, partly in response to Rank, in his essay on "The Uncanny" (1919), Studies in Parapsychology (New York, 1963), pp. 19-60.

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discovery while researching The Picture of Dorian Gray. He found in his own library, when looking into diabolism for the film, a beautifully illustrated edition of Lady Wilde's translation of Wilhelm Meinhold's Sidonia and the Sorceress. The preface to the book, by Henry Gustavus Schwalenberg, included a description of a portrait of Sidonia done when she was a young and beautiful woman to which was later added behind the original figure, another executed when she was a hideous, old witch about to be beheaded and burned for her sins.[26] Although the story of Sidonia is not exactly one of doubling, the portrait described certainly is. Lewin was quite certain he had discovered an important source for Wilde's novel in this translation by the author's own mother and confirmed it to his own satisfaction when he read in one of Wilde's reviews:

> Lady Duff Gordon's Letters From the Cape, and her brilliant translation of The Amber Witch, are, of course, well known. The latter book was, with Lady

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[26]Lewin's discovery is recounted in detail in his letter to Oliver St. John Gogarty of 23 April 1954 (USC). Richard Ellmann claims that Meinhold's story "makes much of a painting of Sidonia which proves to be a double portrait: in the foreground, executed in the style of Lucas Cranach, is a woman golden-haired and richly gowned, while in the background lurks the ravening sorceress in the garments worn at her execution, done in the manner of Rubens. The search for sources of Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray is unending, but here is another analogue to the benign portrait of Dorian by Basil Hallward, and the malign one of Dorian as drawn by his own soul," and Ellmann sites no authority for this interpretation earlier than 1972, so it seems, that, although unpublished, Lewin's scholarship might be able to claim priority on this possibility. See Richard Ellmann, Oscar Wilde (New York, 1988), pp. 20-21.

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> Wilde's translation of Sidonia and the Sorceress, my favourite romantic reading when a boy.[27]

Wilde's variation on the theme of the double, and even more Lewin's filmic version, relocate the moral-psychological schism between selves to the specular register, where, instead of the character splitting into two conflicting subjects, only his visual aspect is split, such that the Dorian who remains to be seen is but a static, invariable simulacrum of an originary scopic misapprehension, or fantasy, while the portrait, no more "real" than the body, records visually the immaterial "substance" of his evil deeds.[28] "The double," as Leo Braudy has remarked, "expresses in terms of theme and plot something of the inner aesthetic of films, the double exposure, the fleeting insubstantiality of the image, its potential lack of authority even at the moment of greatest assertion."[29]

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[27]Oscar Wilde, "Some Literary Ladies" (a review of Three Generations of English Women: Memoirs and Correspondence of Susannah Taylor, Sarah Austin, and Lady Duff Gordon, by Janet Ross), for Woman's World (January 1889), reprinted in A Critic in Pall Mall (in the Ravenna edition of the Works of Oscar Wilde; New York, n.d.), p. 190.

[28]The effectivity of this trope also relies obviously on the kinds of fearful, magical thinking of childhood, when we imagine, and are often, if fact, led to believe, that our "bad" deeds will register visually on our bodies (that is that "making faces" will result in permanent freezing of our expression, or that secret thoughts and deeds will manifest themselves in bodily symptoms).

[29]Leo Braudy, The World in a Frame (Garden City, NY, 1976), p. 227. The theme of the double in horror film is discussed, too, with reference to The Picture of Dorian Gray, by S.S. Prawer, Caligari's Children: The Film as Tale of Terror (New York, 1980), pp. 55-57.

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That visuality is the locus of the disturbances central to this construction of Dorian is further demonstrated in The Picture of Dorian Gray by means of a host of indices, the most immediate and consistent of which are the innumerable references within the film to framing. Windows, doors, mirrors, screens, signs and paintings are among the prominently and insistently featured objects that permeate the film's mise-en-scène. These frames are sometimes used to delineate particular figural messages, as shown above. And often it is Dorian himself who is framed, in mirrors, doorways, and in pictures--Basil's and the dissolute Adrian's (fig. 26).[30] But in other instances, references to the frame are less about that which is framed than about framing itself. These are often scenes in which the narrative exposition is extrinsic to the visual scenario, as in the film's second shot, wherein Lord Henry Wotton is shown inside his carriage, reading a book (Les Fleurs du Mal), while through the carriage's window, which fills over half the screen, the viewer observes the graphic shadow of coach and coachman "projected" by harsh sunlight onto the

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[30]Near the end of the film, when Dorian encounters Adrian Singleton in the den of unspecified iniquities at Blue Gate Field, Adrian draws a caricature of Dorian in chalk on the table, then "frames" the picture with a gallows and noose. This hangman's iconography echoes the inexplicable and fleeting glimpses of a noose evident early in the film, in the scene where Dorian is introduced to Lord Henry. The Blue Gate field scene will be discussed in detail in the chapter, "Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene."

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"moving image" of a London street.[31] As the scene continues, the point of view shifts to above that of the coachman, who opens a hatch on the top of the carriage in preparation to speak to Henry. Through the frame of this hatch, we observe Lord Henry from above. As the coachman informs him that he's reached his destination, the house of his friend, the painter Basil Hallward, Sir Henry begins to move.

In these first two shots, the film establishes its preeminent and characteristic mode of scenic presentation--that is the conspicuous tension between static, manifestly "composed" compositions and cinematic movement. This tension is generally effected in one of three ways: 1) the circumscription of movement within the otherwise static scene, as in the first shot, or 2) in the temporally contiguous manner of the second which progresses from stasis to movement, or 3) through the movement of the camera in a static scene. There is very little use of simultaneous camera movement and dynamic mise-en-scène (i.e. the usually common tracking or panning shots that follow an action). Indeed, when camera movement and character movement are simultaneous, they tend not to be coordinated, as, for instance, when a sudden and rapid horizontal tracking

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[31]The screenplay for The Picture of Dorian Gray indicates that Lewin originally intended to contrast Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal that Lord Henry reads to the coachman's entertainment, a luridly illustrated "Penny Dreadful," such as The Dark Woman or Plot and Passion. Screenplay dated November 5 and 29, 1943, USC.

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movement of the camera in a scene in Dorian's drawing room serves to bring the static Egyptian cat figurine to center screen while Dorian himself has moved slowly to the depth of the set on an orthogonal, through the drawing room doors, closing them, thus in a compositionally vertical direction.

In that this carefully contrived method in many instances reflects no manifest narrative content, so often includes a narratively gratuitous reference to the frame (at least in terms of immediate expository requirements), and, most importantly, draws attention to itself in a manner quite at odds with Hollywood's typical effacement of technique, it functions always as both a stylistic "signature" (i.e. Lewin's) and a signal of style, that is as an anti-naturalistic device that refers at once to the artifices of Dorian Gray and his aesthetic environment and to those of cinema itself. The extent to which this "style" was at odds with Hollywood practice is evident in the following account of the film's production:

> The film went forward, not without difficulties since it ran over schedule and budget. Once [Pandro S.] Berman spent most of the day watching Lewin set up just one characteristically complex shot: that which starts on Dorian, inclined to be contrite for ill-using poor innocent Angela Lansbury [Sibyl] and writing her a letter, then moves over to George Sanders [Lord Henry], who turns and walks away from the camera to deliver the crucial information that the girl has killed herself, then turns back at last, cynically, to observe the effect of his words. Berman watched all this with some mystification, then took Lewin aside. 'Al, I don't see why you're complicating things for yourself. This guy's telling his friend the very sad and tragic news that his girl has died. Why don't you do it in a nice two-shot on the sofa, with over-shoulder close-ups?' Lewin felt there wasn't much point in explaining at length,

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> so he said, 'Well, Pan, that's my style, you see.' Berman was puzzled. 'Style, style, people are always talking about style. What is this style?' Lewin explained that it was the quality which told you at once that a Lubitsch film was by Lubitsch, or if you turned on a radio to Wagner made sure you knew at once it wasn't Mozart or Bach. Berman reflected. 'Oh, so that's style. Well, I don't want it in any of my movies.'[32]

In the film's many interiors, in particular those set in Dorian's and Basil Hallward's houses, this propensity for conspicuous framing is densely impacted and layered by Lewin's lavish use of art works (see figs. 11, 12, 19). These sets are crowded to overflowing with large and small sculptures and figurines, prints, paintings and decorative objects, including, at Dorian's, a book illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley, some identifiable reproductions of Renaissance masterpieces, such as the David already mentioned, an allegorical figure from Michelangelo's Giuliano de Medici tomb at Basil's, and paintings by Giotto and Piero della Francesca. Other prevalent works are nineteenth-century neo-classical sculptures and reliefs of Hellenic and Florentine types, copies of antique statuary and numerous Oriental (e.g. Egyptian, Indian, Indonesian and Chinese) antiquities.

The homes of these aesthetes are clearly distinguished from the two or three other homes represented, which are characterized by less profuse decoration of a generally more

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[32]Arkadin, p. 47.

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banal, late Victorian, neo-Rococo style.[33] They are also composed and photographed in a distinct manner. Scenes that take place in Dorian's home, in particular, display very artificial, often symmetrical arrangements that are equally artificially photographed (fig. 33). There, for instance, most doorways, windows, mantels, and the like, are flanked by complimentary sculptures, paintings or panels and Dorian himself is often shown moving delicately and deliberately on an orthogonal over patterned floors in symmetrically composed shots set up with the picture plane parallel to the rear wall of the room, recalling the austere one-point perspective of Italian quattrocento painting. This very formalized treatment of Dorian's environment clearly reiterates the artificial nature of Dorian's character and his beauty and is quite contrary to the conventions of

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[33]I am indebted to Beth Harris, a student of Victorian art, for her observations about Victorian taste. Lewin himself hired Perkins Harnly, a WPA artist who had been making careful studies of American Victorian and Eduardian interiors, to contribute drawings for the film's interiors for Gordon Wiles and the M-G-M art department to use in desiging the sets. Lewin had seen Harnly's work in an exhibition, "I Remember That," at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1942, had dispatched his friend Charles Reznikoff to track Harnly down (Charles Reznikoff, letter to Albert Lewin, 25 December 1942, USC), and then wrote Harnly to propose he become involved with Dorian Gray (Albert Lewin, letter to Perkins Harnly, 9 April 1943, USC). Lewin was so pleased with the results of the set for Dorian Gray's house that he wrote Louis B. Mayer of his pleasure (memo, 25 March 1944, USC): "Not only is it perfectly suited to my dramatic action but it is one of the most beautiful sets I have ever seen." On Perkins Harnly, and Lewin's ongoing patronage of him, see: Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, "The Vigorous Nostalgia of Perkins Harnly," in Perkins Harnley, from the Index of American Design (Washington, D.C., 1981), pp. 4-11.

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Hollywood drama, which prefers more oblique camera angles and seemingly haphazard compositions that effect a sense of naturalistic verisimilitude.

While in general this plethora of art functions as an extension of Dorian and his exquisiteness,[34] on occasion, as in the David symbolism already mentioned, the art works serve as more than indices of Dorian's taste and its historical context. In particular, Lewin's predilection for Oriental (Egyptian, Near- and Far-Eastern) works of art reflects a significant embellishment, or alteration, of Wilde's story. While Wilde's Dorian is a connoisseur and collector of mainly Western cultural oddities (i.e. religions, music, gems and textiles), Lewin's Dorian involves himself with Eastern art and literature, as well (as does the character of Basil). Some of Lewin's most conspicuous additions to Wilde's plot, in fact, have an orientalizing flavor.

One involves the role played by an Egyptian cat figurine, which appears next to Dorian in his portrait, whose magic is implicated in the painting's metamorphosis, and toward which the camera seems to magnetically gravitate

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[34]Lewin described the production of The Picture of Dorian Gray as follows: "...I got involved with making the picture exquisite. I really went to town on every set-up. When you have two thousand set-ups in a picture, it can take rather long. I was even careful about the table linen and the cutlery and whatever was on the wall. All the upholstery was built for me. I decided that everything was going to be black and white because of the good and evil symbolism." Rosenberg and Silverstin, pp. 118-19.

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at portentous moments of revelation.[35] In a critical scene not taken from the novel, Sibyl visits Dorian's home after a performance (fig. 17, bottom). In the dim light she is suddenly startled: "It's that cat! I thought I saw its eyes move," she tells Dorian, who responds: "Perhaps you did. Lord Henry says it's one of the seventy-three great gods of Egypt." "Doesn't it frighten you?" she asks. "It does a bit," Dorian answers, then recites from a book:

> Dawn follows Dawn and Nights grow old and all
> the while this curious cat
> Lies crouching on the Chinese mat with eyes of satin
> rimmed with gold.
> Get hence, you loathsome mystery! Hideous
> animal, get hence!
> You wake in me each bestial sense, you make me
> what I would not be.
> You make my creed a barren sham, you wake foul
> dreams of sensual life.

Sibyl responds slowly: "What a strange poem. Who wrote it?" "A brilliant young Irishman out of Oxford," Dorian answers, "His name is Oscar Wilde."[36] In addition to disrupting the

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[35]The cat is a custom-made copy of one in the collection of the City Art Museum of St. Louis, according to Lewin's correspondance, during the Summer of 1943, with Charles Nagel, then the museum's Acting Director, and with Walter Simon, who cast the copy (USC). In his letter of 8 August to Walter Simon, thanking him, Lewin arranged to buy the copy: "It is thrillingly beautiful and...I do not want to part with the figure after we have used it for our picture. I have seen the Egyptian things in the Louvre and also in the big museum in Cairo, and I think this cat is one of the most beautiful of all."

[36]The lines are excerpted from two different parts of a very much longer poem by Wilde, called "The Sphinx," (the first four lines from near the beginning and the last six from near the end) which was indeed written at Oxford, although it was not published until much later. See Ellmann, Oscar Wilde, pp. 90, 376.

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viewer's suspension of disbelief by naming the author of the story, this poem points to Lewin's sensitivity to elements of Wilde's art that reinforce his own interest in what André Breton would call the "rare" art work "inspired by occult tradition or by religious mysticism."[37]

It is during this scene that Dorian commits his first evil act, by testing Sibyl's "virtue" and imploring her to stay. She desires him so much that she "fails" his test, and he writes her the next day to break off their engagement, adding insult to injury by enclosing money, and thus precipitating her suicide. The power with which this cat appears to be imbued underlines the extent to which art operates in the film as a function of the irrational and the imaginary.

And one of the film's most unusual scenes, the Bali-Javanese dance and gamelan performance at Dorian's house (fig. 20), was the second of two scenes over which Lewin lost strenuous editing battles. The original scene included the performance of a narrative dance about the Buddha in which he "sits in meditation under the Boddhi Tree, while the Courtesans, who came to beseech him to return to his princely life, sit on one side.... then come the dancing girls. Buddha replies and in dance and other symbolic gestures spurns them. Disappointed they all leave him, when

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[37]André Breton, "Genesis and Perspective of Surrealism" in Art of This Century (New York, 1942), p. 13. Lewin owned this catalogue and was increasingly interested in Surrealism at this time.

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he returns to his original posture of meditation under the Tree"[38]. As Lewin later described the cutting of the scene, "...it was quite a fine dance, all about the temptation of Buddha. But the preview audience laughed at one of those sideway head-turns as executed by lead dancer Devi Dja. I fought for the number, begged producer Pan Berman to take the film to a big first-run house in San Francisco.... It was one battle I didn't win. Most of the number was cut. I took a trip to Chicago to explain it to the dancers."[39]

It is probably not a coincidence that the dance thematizes female desire for a male object, echoing Gladys's desire for Dorian, about which the larger scene revolves. Immediately after the performance follows a private scene between Gladys and Dorian, in which she quite plainly lets him know of her desire, and studies a book illustrated by Aubrey Beardsley that is open on a table before a mirror, in which she keeps an eye on Dorian. The book is Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur, which Beardsley illustrated for an 1893 edition. It is open to the illustration of "How Sir Tristan drank of the love drink" (fig. 34).

The Tristan and Isault imagery here echoes that of Sibyl's print of Sir Tristan, with whom she had identified

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[38]Piedro, of the Devi Dja company, letter to Lewin, 16 January 1944, USC.

[39]Doug McClelland, The Unkindest Cuts: The Scissors and the Cinema (Cranbury, N.J., 1972), p. 189.

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Dorian. The equation of Dorian with the medieval knight is furthered by many details, including that of a toy figure of a mounted knight prominent in the schoolroom in which Dorian hides the portrait. It is knocked down when the portrait is installed, and Dorian only rectifies it, standing it upright again, when he repents at the film's conclusion (fig. 30), just before stabbing the portrait throught the heart, thus making plain the knight's symbolic relationship to the condition of his soul--to the state of grace he has lost.

This symbolic relationship is reiterated by the organization of children's alphabet blocks on the floor in this scene. A large "D" block is surmounted by a somewhat smaller "8" and it by a small pyramid consisting of the letters L, H and W, the initials of Lord Henry Wotten. On the floor around the "D" which signals Dorian, are several groupings of small blocks (J-S-V; A-C; B-H; S-T) that spell the initials of Dorian's victims: James and Sibyl Vane, Alan Campbell, Basil Hallward, and the "good" part of Dorian's soul (his alter ego?), Sir Tristan.[40]

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[40]In Wilde's novel, Sibyl describes Dorian as Prince Charming, a name from fairy tales, rather than Arthurian legend. In addition to its intrinsic relationship to the narrative, Lewin's alteration recalls his intense commitment to bringing the Knights of the Round Table to the screen in the late 1930s, as well as referring reflexively to one of the themes that was most prevalent among the Decadents.

James Bueselink identified some of the symbolism of this scene, including the initials of Dorian, Sybil and Sir Tristan in the alphabet blocks, and concluded that the figure "8" stands for the portrait (because the word portrait has eight letters in it), a somewhat shaky conclusion. I think it is fair to say, however, that the blocks which surmount the large "D" stand for pernicious

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Lewin's equation of Dorian with Sir Tristan, however, cannot be limited to the cliché of knightly virtue, although that may be the fallacy under which Sibyl and Gladys suffer. The story of Tristan and Isault, as was well known to Lewin,[41] is neither simply about passionate love and desire, nor about chivalry. As Eugène Vinaver describes it, it "is a tale of tragic love, enacted as it were above the level of the characters' consciousness: a tale of a disaster caused by the clash of irreconcilable forces, human and supernatural. The magic of the love potion is no less powerful than the sense of feudal and moral allegiance binding the lovers to the world...a world from which there is no final escape but death."[42]

The conflict between supernatural and societal forces, between the mythic or sacred and the civic or profane, is one that is explored in many ways in Lewin's work, often in the context of characters whose actions seem curiously

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influences on Dorian, while those scattered on the floor around it represent quite transparently his victims.

[41]He read and loved the Old French version of Beroul in graduate school (see Chapter 1, p. 45).

[42]From Vinaver's foreword to Norman B. Spector's translation from the Old French of the so-called *version commune* (upon which the Beroul poem was based) of The Romance of Tristan and Isolt (Evanston, IL 1973), p. xv.

Vinaver, as it happens, was an associate of Lewin's great friends Barbara and Hugh Gray, the latter of whom with Vinaver had founded an Arthurian Society at Oxford. It was when Lewin was planning a research trip to England for Knights of the Round Table that Robert Flaherty gave him an introduction to the Grays, with whom he and his wife Millie toured Arthurian locations (see Appendix A).

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overdetermined--or predetermined--and divorced from psychological causality. Thus, the analogy of Dorian and Tristan, even as articulated by the highly cultural and contextualized Beardsley image, in a manner more circuitous than the use of the Egyptian cat, refers also to the ineffable, magical forces of mysticism and the occult to which André Breton referred and which in the world of Dorian Gray are subtly interwoven with the themes as they derive from Wilde.

While the Egyptian cat's influence is patently ineffable and mystical, then, Beardsley's picture on its face betokens a more culturally determined influence. And although the Tristan and Isault picture in the scene with Gladys metanymically suggests her attitude toward Dorian, Sibyl Vane had already overtly associated Dorian with Tristan, who is pictured in the pseudo-pre-Raphaelite style print (a lower-class version of the same icon) beside her dressing table, revealing her to be as vulnerable to the persuasion of mass-produced images of beauty-as-truth as her upper-class counterpart, Gladys, later will be to a more elevated notion of the same value. These images then function on two levels: the idealistic, romantic level at which the female protagonists project them onto Dorian, and, more subtly, by reference to a story in which desire is the result of magic and the cause of tragedy--a parallel to the narcissitic desire to which Dorian falls prey and to which he is magically beholden.

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The environment in which Sibyl's fantasies of chivalrous knights are fostered is another of Lewin's inventions. While Wilde's Sibyl Vane is a Shakespearean actress in an East End theater, Lewin's Sibyl is a vaudeville singer. Parker Tyler's objections to this substitution overlook the stunning opportunities the environment of the "low" pub gives Lewin to amplify his theme of visual hypertrophy. The scene in which Dorian first visits "The Two Turtles," the pub at which Sibyl performs, contains the film's most clinical dissection of artificial visual plenitude. As Dorian, wanders the strange streets of London's "half world," a figure wearing a sandwich board enters the frame and as Dorian contemplates entering "The Two Turtles," the figure crosses the scene (fig. 15).

Having entered the pub, Dorian closes the door, in which a window distinctly reveals the center of the sandwich-board advertisement--an enormous, disembodied eye with the words "Dr. Look" beneath it. Around the window, printed upon the door, appears the enjoinder, "eat, drink and be merry." Looming above the doorway is a gruesome gargoyle that fiercely gazes out toward the camera. The sandwich board appears later in the scene, without its bearer, propped against the wall, its awful eye focused uncannily upon Sibyl Vane (or Dorian or the viewers) amidst the host of embodied eyes of the audience. The disembodied eye is one of the most ubiquitous elements of Surrealist

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iconography,[43] and its placement here at The Two Turtles, which is full of details worthy of a Surrealist (the dead bird on Sibyl's head, the nutcracker-squirrel, the libidinous puppets, the menacing gargoyle), confirms that Lewin's familiarity with Surrealist imagery must have played some role in the staging of the scene.[44]

Inside the pub, a bizarre vaudeville act is underway, but the manager of "The Two Turtles" interrupts it upon Dorian's entrance, announcing to the entire establishment that they are "honored by the visit of a gentleman," whereupon everyone turns to stare gravely at Dorian, who

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[43]Works in which the disembodied or displaced eye figure include: Giorgio de Chirico's proto-surrealist The Jewish Angel, 1916; Man Ray, Indestructible Object, 1923; Max Ernst's frottage, The Wheel of Light, 1925; René Magritte, The False Mirror, 1928; Claude Cahun, Object (La Marseillaise...), 1936; Victor Brauner, The Last Journey, 1937 and Gemini, 1938; Man Ray, Le Témoin, 1941; Guillermo Meza, Eyes-Paranoia, c. 1941. Two photographs that I know of focus on the uncanny aspect of the not uncommon use of the disembodied eye for optometric advertisements, as the Dr. Look board does. They are: Mañuel Alvarez Bravo's Optical Parabola, 1931 and Clarence John Laughlin's The Eye that Never Sleeps, 1946. Although neither was, strictly speaking, a Surrealist, these photographs register the same *unheimlichkeit* that Lewin's image does. Coincidentally, another important Hollywood film released in 1945 features more explicitly Surrealistic disembodied eyes--that is Alfred Hitchcock's Spellbound, for which Salvador Dali designed the dream sequence that includes curtains covered with bodiless eyes. That film in turn, especially when a scissor cuts through the curtain/eye, recalls Dali and Buñuel's 1929 Surrealist classic, Un Chien Andalou, in which a woman's (actually a cow's) eye is sliced by a razor.

[44]Man Ray, one of the Surrealists fondest of disembodying the eye, had been close to Lewin for about four years by the time the film was shot and had encouraged Lewin to collect Surrealist art. See Man Ray's Self-Portrait (London, 1963), p. 350.

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blandly smiles and condescendingly takes a seat. The performance resumes. Mr. and Mrs. Ezekiel are a xylophone/puppet act who display their own heads above limp puppet bodies that hang in front of a black screen (fig. 16). The puppets' feet contain the otherwise hidden batons, so that when these are manipulated from behind the screen, the puppet bodies appear to dance upon the xylophone. The performance ends quite hysterically, or orgasmically, with the female puppet opening and closing her legs frantically as the music hits a fevered pitch. Not a curtain, but a screen, falls and the next act, Sibyl Vane, is announced. The flat, sharp movement of the screen as it falls and rises distinctly recalls its famous "silver" counterpart, as well as the cinematic technique of the "wipe," in which one shot supersedes another, although this is normally a lateral movement. As the screen lifts to reveal Sibyl, posed amidst phony snow, an abrupt cut to above the stage reveals a theater employee casually dropping handfuls of white confetti onto the stage. Sibyl's performance of a sentimental song, "Little Yellow Bird," is briefly but dramatically interrupted by her stunned silence upon meeting Dorian's gaze, as she moves out and about the audience (fig. 17, top).[45] As she nears the end of the song and moves

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[45]The song's lyrics reinforce the class difference between Sibyl and Dorian: "The spoiled and petted yellow bird could scarce believe it true/ that a common sparrow should refuse a bird with blood so blue/ He told her the advantages of riches and of gold/ She answered that her liberty for gold could not be sold/ She said, I must be

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toward the stage door, she passes, atop a table, the very statuette of Venus that had been in Basil's studio. Its presence in this environment is dissonant, yet it appears again in the Two Turtles, in a different location, when Dorian returns with Lord Henry and Basil.

The visually overloaded atmosphere of the pub, which is as packed with props, placards, tchotchkes and other lower-class icons and artifice as Dorian's home is with high art, is the site of unabashed spectacle. Dorian's function as spectator is undermined by the emblematic and clinical gaze of Dr. Look, by the stares his entrance inspires, and by the sexually charged, desirous gaze of Sibyl. He sees, but even more--he is seen. The artificiality of the spectacle, the omnipresent Dr. Look whose disembodied eye recalls the "evil eye" of the Middle East, as well as Surrealism's psycho-sexual use of the same image, the explicitly sexual performance of Mrs. Ezekiel, and the inexplicably transposed Venus with her phallic support--all inundate the film's spectator with uncomfortable reflections of his or her own specular situation.

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going/ But he cried, no, no, it's snowing/ And the wintry winds still blow/ Stay with me my little dearie, for without you I would be dreary/ But she only sighed out so/ Goodbye, little yellow bird/ I'd gladly mate with you/ I love you little yellow bird/ But I love my freedom, too/ Goodbye, little yellow bird/ I'd rather brave the cold/ on a leafless tree than a prisoner be/ in a cage of gold." In one of the film's stranger details, for this performance Sibyl is wearing a hat atop which lies a dead bird.

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The reflexive visual scrutiny of Dr. Look is mirrored in two other details in subsequent scenes. After informing Dorian of Sibyl Vane's suicide, Lord Henry picks up a stereopticon which he plays with while Dorian reacts in horror (albeit temporary). "You must learn to see it in its proper perspective," Henry says, peering into its viewfinder.[46] In a later scene, after he has murdered Basil Hallward (and thoroughly disposed of his remains), Dorian visits Scotland Yard with Gladys to discuss Basil's disappearance with a detective. While reporting to them, Sir Robert examines what must be forensic slides in front of a light box. These optical apparatuses underscore the spectator's already heightened consciousness of the cinematic apparatus itself. At the conclusion of the Scotland Yard scene, we learn that Sir Robert has apparently been investigating evidence related to the suicide of Alan Campbell, the acquaintance whom Dorian had blackmailed into disposing of Basil's body.

Thus both scenes link suicides in which Dorian is implicated to "looking machines." The obscure equation of death and vision reiterates the mortality of sight, an inevitable theme of The Picture of Dorian Gray.[47] It

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[46]This is the scene over which Lewin had the confrontation with Pandro Berman described earlier.

[47]"Mortal Sight" is the theme of a chapter on David's Oath of the Horatii in Norman Bryson's Tradition and Desire (Cambridge, England, 1984), pp. 63-84. Bryson's psychology of vision is borrowed from Lacan.

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should be noted, here, that Dorian's private reveries before the portrait, set in the schoolroom in which it is hidden from the world, are discreetly inflected by a sentence in Latin that is written on a chalkboard there: *non ignoravi mortalem esse* (I am not unaware that I am mortal).[48] Trapped in a narcissistic purgatory, as he obsessively compares his unmarked face in the mirror to the monstrosity that visage has become in the painting, Dorian denies the inevitable implications of the indices around him of his bygone innocence and of his certain death.

The hyperbolic visuality of The Picture of Dorian Gray--its obsessive and exquisite compositions and montages, which are punctuated with discomfiting mirrors, literal and figural, held up to the viewer's spectacular vulnerability and its insistent correlation of sexuality with visuality--is brought into focus around the central image of the picture of Dorian Gray itself. The use of portraiture in films, as I shall discuss in the next section, represents a potential disturbance to the fluid suturing of the viewer to the narrative. The self-conscious presentation of the

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[48]"I put on the blackboard a bit of Latin, which it is impossible to read, but it didn't matter, because I was able to compose a picture in relation to it.... It says, non ignoravi mortalem esse--I'm not unaware that I'm mortal--which is what Cicero is supposed to have said to the assassins when they came to kill him." Albert Lewin, audiotape recorded on the occasion of the Gallery of Modern Art's retrospective in 1966.

It is not "impossible" to read the words, but it is difficult, as they appear on a few occasions only fleetingly. The Cicero quotation appears again in Lewin's novel, The Unaltered Cat (New York, 1966), p. 172.

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portrait's subject threatens the illusory absence of the viewer. The Picture of Dorian Gray doubly assaults the viewer's impunity, first by confronting him/her with the solicitation of the portrait, then by returning with the repressed--the horrible apparition of the transformed portrait. Not seen until the second half of the film, the metamorphosed portrait is revealed to its creator, Basil, and to the audience in a shocking Technicolor insert.[49] In the painting, by Ivan Albright (fig. 35), Dorian has become a hideous, writhing mass of lurid, worm-like excrescences.[50] Wilde's notion, that the portrait is of

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[49]Technicolor, which had refused Lewin permission to use the process for The Moon and Sixpence, again was reluctant to produce an insert for Dorian Gray and tried to persuade M-G-M to give up the idea (Letter from George A. Cave, of Technicolor, 23 March 1944, USC), but this time, Lewin prevailed.

[50]Undoubtedly, viewers familiar with Albright's work suffer less from the sudden revelation of the portrait (although it would probably behoove us to recall our first encounter). But from those not acquainted with his singular oeuvre (including a friend with whom I viewed the film recently and my mother, who distinctly remembers the painting although she remembers not much else from the film, which she saw when it first was released), I understand that the apparition is simply horrible. Indeed, as is evident from the title of Tyler's essay, there is a sense in which The Picture of Dorian Gray qualifies as a horror film. I am indebted to Peter Chametzky for his provocative speculation that the horror inspired by the portrait's brief and sudden debut might be in some sense an attempt to restore to the modern art object "the shock of the new" that it (ideally) once possessed--to garner for it such unmediated abuse and disgust as was said to have welcomed Manet's Salon paintings of 1863 and as was consciously solicited by many Dada events and other Modernist exercises. Unfortunately, questions relating to the horror genre in Hollywood cinema, though obviously of some significance, are too involved to pursue herein. It should be noted, however, that the Albright not only contributed to the success of the film, but that he

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Dorian's soul, bodes darkly, in the film, for Dorian's fate; an uglier portrait is inconceivable. In its presence, Dorian is overcome with hatred for the innocent creator of the picture, and kills Basil (fig. 23).

But Dorian Gray's assault on the artist is not, of course, the end of his attack on art.[51] The film ends with him assaulting the picture itself, driving a knife through its subject's heart, thus, inevitably, through his own. He keels over dead and the painting metamorphoses back to its original, seemingly banal and benign state,[52] while Dorian's corpse recovers the horrible characteristics of the

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benefited from it, as well, in terms of exposure as well as financially. "Ivan Albright wires from Warrenville, Illinois," wrote Hedda Hopper in her column, "that the Chicago Art Institute is having a heck of a time handling the crowds flocking to see his painting of Dorian Gray on exhibition there..." "Looking at Hollywood," Los Angeles Times, November 23, 1945 (clippings, USC).

[51]An assault on a painting figures in two other of Lewin's films: in The Moon and Sixpence, as discussed, Ata, on previous instructions from Strickland, torches his masterpiece at the film's conclusion; in Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, Pandora in anger defaces the image of herself (or her prior incarnation as the Dutchman's wife).

[52]That is the "original" version painted by Henrique Medina. Ivan and Malvin (a.k.a. Zsissly) Albright had been commissioned to execute all versions of the portrait and there is photographic evidence that they did so (fig. 9). I have uncovered no conclusive evidence as to why Medina was brought in, but I speculate that Lewin was disatisfied with the Albrights' version, which he may have felt was not "pretty" enough. Later, he rejected a commissioned picture, by his friend, Man Ray, for Pandora, finding it too suggestive and, ironically, not Surrealist enough, and had a substitute painted by an English artist and art director, Ferdinand Bellan.

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picture (figs. 31-32).[53] As the structural *raison d'etre* of the narrative, the picture of Dorian Gray is the defining image of the film. While in Wilde's novel, the concept of such a phenomenon necessarily takes precedence over its function as a visual sign, in the film the picture must predominate. Thus, Albright's fastidiously disgusting Technicolor image casts a shadow across the cultivated visual exquisiteness of Lewin's black-and-white scenario. The idealistic Western notion that Beauty is Truth, the implicit credo of this aestheticised sphere--of Basil, Henry, Gladys and Sibyl, and of Dorian himself--is revealed as fallacy. In fact, the truth is uglier than can be imagined.

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[53]The corpse is "played" by the dummy that the Albright brothers had made as a model for Ivan's transformed version of the portrait (see figs. 9, 32).

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> All art is at once surface and symbol. Those who go beneath the surface do so at their peril. Those who read the symbols do so at their peril. It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors.
>
> Oscar Wilde[54]

The fate of Dorian Gray reminds us that the duplicity of visuality threatens our very subjectivity. Oscar Wilde reminds us that ugliness, as well as beauty, is in the eye (or mind) of the beholder. But Albert Lewin's Picture of Dorian Gray will not allow us to forget entirely that beauty is seductive and that it is a construction--that it is a fiction of wholeness and plenitude propagated by mirrors, paintings, movies and by ideologies. It may be in the eye of the beholder, but the beholder does not fully possess the sight with which the eye sees. Sight yields to culture, to the imperatives of a symbolic order. By disrupting the narrative fluidity of the story with reflexive signs, Lewin's film pushes the anxiety of spectatorship to the fore and confronts it with the disturbing mysteries of art, representation and vision itself. By contrasting the bloody colors of the Albright portrait to the artificial harmonies of the black-and-white mise-en-scene, and by employing objects from cultures in which art's powers are not differentiated from the spiritual, the film hints at a sight that is separate from vision--a sight that bypasses the eye and refers to the mind, to the psyche, to the spirit. This seeing may not finally render truth visible, but it denies

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[54]Wilde, Preface, The Picture of Dorian Gray, p. 3.

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the primacy of vision, implicates the symbolic function of beauty and taste, and challenges the lure of illusion.

> Like Christopher Columbus who, on the verge of discovering the Antilles, believed he was on the road to India, so in the twentieth century the painter found himself confronted by a new world before it occurred to him that he could depart from the old. This old world was the reproduction of nature in accordance with visual perception, influenced more or less by the emotions. With some rare exceptions, most of them inspired by occult tradition or by religious mysticism, the artist remained the prisoner of external perception and envisaged no means of escape.... The eye and its satellite, the mirror, [were] soon to be accused of <u>despotism</u>....
>
> André Breton[55]

> How deeply this corruption of taste had eaten into the German mind was shown in the material submitted for hanging by artists in the <u>House of German Art</u>. There were pictures with green skies and purple seas. There were paintings which could be explained only by abnormal eyesight or wilful fraud on the part of the painter. If they really paint in this manner because they see things that way, then these unhappy persons should be dealt with in the department of the Ministry of the Interior where sterilization of the insane is dealt with, to prevent them from passing on their unfortunate inheritance. If they do not see things like that and still persist in painting in this manner, then these artists should be dealt with by the criminal courts.
>
> Adolph Hitler[56]

It must not be forgotten to what ends classical male beauty and classical cinematic narrative were being put in 1944. The Surrealist's skepticism toward visual pleasure was to become historically justified by the heinous

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[55]Breton, "Genesis and Perspective of Surrealism" in <u>Art of This Century</u> (New York, 1942), p. 13.

[56]Adolf Hitler, in a speech of July 18th, 1937 in Munich; as quoted in <u>Art of This Century</u>, p. 7.

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misrepresentations of the Third Reich's cultural program. Taste in Nazi Germany had not a little in common with the *fin-de-siècle* neo-classicism of Dorian Gray's milieu. The conflict between Hitler and Breton reflects ideologically and culturally loaded questions about representation and visuality, which I consider to be a part of the background of the production of The Picture of Dorian Gray.

Visual culture was undeniably a battlefield leading up to and during the war years, in Europe and America, a field in which images, traditional and newly conceived, were mobilized on behalf of ideology. The hostility of Breton toward the despotic eye is matched by the faith of Hitler in a kind of pure and righteous vision; and Hitler was undoubtedly in a better position to proselytize. With the fine arts, the cinema and every level of visual kitsch employed in propaganda, visual signs upended, beauty redefined and reinterpreted, and evil and sickness imputed to artistic practice by Hitler's Reich, Breton's accusation had to be taken to heart. Thus, the possible reading of Dorian as an allegory for a civilization won over by the thrall of youth, of beauty and a promise of immortality cannot be overlooked. The horrible picture of his soul in such an allegory then seems a prescient sign of the evil yet to be revealed.

In any event, allegory or not, Albert Lewin's The Picture of Dorian Gray seems to me to perform exactly the kind of tightrope act in which its maker imagined he was

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engaged. It is a thrilling horror story, full of perhaps the most carefully organized imagery and symbolism that Hollywood has known--elegant and graceful, lurid and risque, beautiful and horrible at once.[57] It did very well at the box office and would have made a considerable profit, had Lewin not spent a considerable fortune making it look just right. At the same time, it is, if not a subversion, at least a rather disturbing contemplation, paradoxically, of the very forces that ensured its success--the seductiveness of beauty and the thrill of spectacle, and the perils that accompany succumbing to these.

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[57]Lewin's friend, the poet Charles Reznikoff, gave him an account of the film's appearance at the Capitol theater in New York in a letter, 5 May 1945 (USC): "I came at the end of the picture. The audience was what the Bible might call a "mixed multitude"--many Egyptians among the Israelites. They had come, I supposed, to see Lena Horne and Robert Walker as well as the picture and to hear the band. A very young fellow, obviously an intellectual, seemed lost in thought as the last of the picture faded out, and then murmured, "Excellent!" I am not as good a judge of an audience's reactions as Mr. Le Baron, for example, but its interest, I thought, was definitely held: they laughed at the right places, were properly silent, and gasped and shrieked at the colored picture and the dummy on the floor. A woman behind me--after the murder of the painter--kept saying, "Uh, uh!", at each twist in the plot. After a while, I became part of the audience myself and followed the picture with interest. I still think it very good. When I left there was a riot to get into the theatre."

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Chapter 3. THE MOVING PICTURE GALLERY

> You die, and yet your doubles captured in the fragility of the celluloid survive you and continue to carry out your ephemeral actions.
>
> Robert Desnos[1]

We cannot remain unaware of this aspect of moving pictures. The flesh of Audrey Hepburn has gone to earth, yet her beautiful trace haunts our movie screens and flies as a signal out into the universe.

This death-defying magic wrought by moving pictures is not strictly a function of technology. It is representation itself that can raise the dead, as was observed long before photography by Alberti: "Painting has a divine power," he wrote in della Pittura, "being not only able to make the absent seem present, as friendship is said to do, but even to make the dead seem almost alive after many centuries."[2]

Portraits, the very sort of painting that Alberti was invoking when he wrote of the reanimation of the dead, appear in certain Hollywood films of the 1940s to have poignant and sometimes magical properties. If Albright's portrait of Dorian Gray is unquestionably the most horribly and magically effective of these portraits, it is not, however, the only one. It and the others function as analogical representations of the power of movies

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[1]Quoted in Linda Williams, Figures of Desire: A Theory and Analysis of Surrealist Film (Urbana, Illinois, 1981), p. 23.

[2]Leon Battista Alberti, excerpts from "On Painting" (Della pittura), in A Documentary History of Art, Volume I, Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed. (Garden City, NY, 1957), p. 211.

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themselves, and register a degree of sensitivity to the mortality that is inherent to both forms, as a function of the mimetic representation of "real" corporeal bodies. That they are able to do so, given the much theorized propensity of so-called "classical" Hollywood cinema to construct its narratives in a manner that disavows death, would appear to be a paradox worth exploring.

In Camera Lucida, Roland Barthes notes the inscription of death in every photograph as "a catastrophe which has already occurred. Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe."[3] Barthes' insistence that the "this-has-been" bottom line of photography does not depend on a human subject as referent only serves to underscore the emphasis that he places throughout his contemplation on the photographic portrait. Not accidentally, the two other modes of representation that Barthes invokes in contrast to photography are cinema and painting.[4]

The painted portrait, the photographic portrait and the narrative cinema are each constituted by the two-dimensional traces of "real" corporeal bodies. When Alberti wrote of

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[3]Roland Barthes. Camera Lucida, Richard Howard, trans. (New York, 1981), p. 96.

[4]Specifically the painted portrait; see Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida, e.g. pp. 11, 30-32, 79, 89-90. On the relationship between film and photography, see also: Raymond Bellour, "L'Interruption, l'instant," L'Entre-image (Paris, 1990), pp. 109-131; and Christian Metz, "Photography and the Fetish," October 34 (Fall 1985), pp. 81-90.

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painting's ability to "make the dead seem almost alive" he was focussing on mimetic portraiture. For other genres and modes of painting, be they landscape, still life, history painting, icons, or non-representational works, do not require, even if they imply, a specific, singular subject who has been.

The painted portrait may, as Michael Fried has indicated, more than any other representational practice, depend upon a subject's presentation of self.[5] But it depends equally on an artist's re-presentation of the portrayed--thus involving implicitly a tension, or ambiguity, between the portrayed as subject and as object, between self-presentation and re-presentation. In the cinema, we are confronted with an ambiguity comparable to that of the painted portrait. Here, we register a tension between actor and role. This tension registered by the beholder of a portrait or a movie, which seizes the body of the portrayed as both subject and object, in Lacanian terms, is another echo of the mortality inscribed in mimesis, since it invokes the basic revelation of the mirror stage--of the reflexive otherness of self beheld as image, which is the initiation of the subject into a universe of gendered sexuality and death.[6]

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[5]Michael Fried, Absorption and Theatricality: Painting & Beholder in the Age of Diderot (Berkeley, CA, 1980), p. 109.

[6] Jacques Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 1981).

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But part of the force of narrative cinema as generally theorized is precisely its poignant disavowal of the mortality inscribed in representation through its attempted repression of and compensation for "the actual discontinuities between representation and the world, and between the self and the image."[7] This repression of discontinuity and concomitant disavowal of death is supposed to be an inherent function of the enthralling flow of moving pictures and particularly of narrative cinema at its most seductive: the classical Hollywood Cinema of the 1930s and 1940s. And the painted portrait engages far fewer techniques of disavowal; in fact, in as much as we understand it as intended not only to enhance the status of its living subject, but also to remain as a commemoration of the ancestral and honored dead, the portrait cannot be understood to deny death's hand in it nearly so stridently as the motion picture.

The paradoxically heightened appearance of portraits in Hollywood films, then, testifies to a far from totalized disavowal. In the films with which I am here concerned, produced between 1940 and 1950, and in others no doubt, portraits do not simply appear, but indeed act--they move. And the narratives in which they move are more or less explicitly involved with the morbidity and uneasiness predicted by the theoretical issues I have identified. I

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[7] Peter Brunette and David Wills, Screen/Play: Derrida and Film Theory (Princeton, NJ, 1989), p. 117.

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believe that these films are exceptional only in degree and that while Hollywood cinema, like most classical and academically constrained forms, may have aspired to create a seamless, satisfying universe of narrative and imagistic perfection, it was no more likely to succeed, in the face of inherent structural and psychic challenges to its ideal, than most other practices to have shared in this endeavor.

Portraits in Alfred Hitchcock's Rebecca (1940) and Suspicion (1941) play small but significant roles that anticipate their more heightened appearances in later films. In Rebecca (fig. 36), a portrait of a de Winter ancestress, Lady Caroline, provides the unnamed protagonist's (Joan Fontaine) only visual point of identification with the dead and inexorably absent Rebecca, whose very absence defines the film's narrative. This has has been well described by Tania Modleski, who relates the second Mrs. de Winter's over-identification with the absent Rebecca to a girl's Oedipal relationship to the mother. "The horror of the moment of the masquerade ball," Modleski writes of the scene in which the second Mrs. de Winter unwittingly costumes herself as the first, based on the portrait of Lady Caroline, "derives from the fact that though the woman substitutes her body for her mother's she must believe... 'she is herself.' Neither hero nor heroine (not to mention spectator) must become aware that in presenting herself the woman does nothing but re-present another woman, the mother. The film, however, not only announces the submergence of the

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heroine's identity into that of the 'mother's," Modleski notes, "but twice equates her predicament with death."[8] Thus the portrait of Caroline de Winter functions as a screen onto which is projected what Modleski calls "...one of [Hitchcock's] 'proper' subjects--the potential terror and loss of self involved in identification...."[9]

Oedipal anxieties can also account thematically for the charged portrait of the father in Hitchcock's 1941 Suspicion. In three scenes, the absence and, later, death of General MacLaidlaw, is belied when the characters of Lina (Joan Fontaine) and Johnnie (Cary Grant) actually speak to, almost interacting with, his portrait. In the first such scene, Johnnie's remonstrations with the portrait induce it to jump, or fall, quite literally from the wall, as if alarmed at Johnnie's proposition (fig. 37). These scenes employ the portrait as a kind of externalized emblem of the internalized father, as Stephen Heath has noted in his analysis of the last scene in which the portrait plays a part: "The scene finds its center in a painting: the massive portrait of Lina's father which bears with all its Oedipal weight on the whole action of the film--this woman held

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[8]Tania Modleski, The Women Who Knew Too Much: Hitchcock and Feminist Theory (New York, 1988), p. 49.

[9]Modleski, p. 55.

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under the eye of the father (the name as crushing as the image: General MacLaidlaw)..."[10]

The dynamic by which these portraits embody the Oedipal identifications and mis-identifications of the characters in Hitchcock's films, and move them, or engage them in psychic process, suggests the effect of the narrative cinema on its viewers that has been theorized as "suture," that is its propensity to secure the imaginary identification of the viewer with and in its narrative. But by virtue of mirroring that very process, the portraits threaten to disturb the smooth working of the narrative. The portraits, too inert and non-narrative to inspire such identification realistically within a realist scenario, threaten the viewer with awareness of the magic of the mimetic and narrative devices employed by the film itself to engage him or her. In the films I shall now consider, the portrait assumes a more explicit role in narratives whose realism is strained by, if not abandoned to, psychological or supernatural treatment of mortal desire.

In Otto Preminger's Laura and Fritz Lang's The Woman in the Window, both from 1944, the male protagonists fall in love with portraits of beautiful women. In Laura (fig. 38), it is ambiguous, at first, when Detective McPherson (Dana Andrews) falls asleep beneath the portrait of Laura (Gene

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[10]Stephen Heath, "Narrative Space," in Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology, ed. Philip Rosen (New York, 1986), p. 378.

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Tierney), his desire for which has been established, and then awakens to the "real" Laura, presumed dead, whether or not he is dreaming. This ambiguity is a function, as Reynold Humphries has indicated, of the uncanny: "The irruption of Laura the woman into the privileged space of Laura the portrait is not just a question of a return from the dead but rather of a return of the repressed."[11] Humphries correctly relates this to the even more explicit scenario of The Woman in the Window (fig. 39), in which the entire narrative, stemming from Professor Wanley's fascination with the portrait is revealed, only finally, as a dream--a dream in which mortal terror and death are conceived as the inevitable outcome of his desire. As Slavoj Zizek points out:

> Contrary to superficial impressions, the final reversal is not a compromise designed to accommodate the narrative to the ideological conventions of Hollywood. The 'message' of the film is not 'Thank God, it was only a dream; I am not really a murderer, just a normal man like everybody else!' Rather, it is that *in our unconscious, in the Real of our desire, we are all murderers*. Paraphrasing the Lacanian reading of Freud's account of the father whose dead son appears in a dream, reproaching him with the cry, 'Father, can't you see I'm burning?', we might say that the professor wakes *in order to be able to continue his dream* (of being a normal man like everyone else), to escape the psychic reality of his desire.[12]

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[11]Reynold Humphries, Fritz Lang: Genre and Representation in His American Films (Baltimore, 1989), p. 116.

[12]Slavoj Žižek, "The Undergrowth of Enjoyment: How Popular Culture Can Serve as an Introduction to Lacan," New Formations 9 (Winter 1989), p. 14.

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Film noir's peculiar amalgam of sexual angst, morbidity and the portrait may well find its apogee in another Fritz Lang film, Scarlet Street (1945; fig. 40), in the painfully ironic scene in which the defeated and dispossessed portraitist (Edward G. Robinson) witnesses the sale of what might be called his "self-portrait as femme fatale," that is, the portrait Chris had painted of Kitty (Joan Bennett) that was exhibited as her self-portrait. The cadaverous image of the woman who stole his meager self-respect, along with the authorship of the painting, and whom he murdered in a fit of sexual jealousy, is borne, corpse-like, out of the gallery and past the painter, as he shuffles past in a schizophrenic oblivion. The pathological possibilities of mimesis and its subject-object confusions reach so fevered a pitch in Scarlet Street that it's hard to imagine a sicker scenario. But as we shall see, sicker the portraitist will become in a related genre from the 1940s, that of the "paranoid" woman's film.

Mary Ann Doane has discussed a number of films of this genre, including Hitchcock's Rebecca, George Cukor's Gaslight (1944), and Peter Godfrey's The Two Mrs. Carrolls (1945, released 1947), in all three of which the female protagonists (Joan Fontaine, Ingrid Bergman, and Barbara Stanwyck, respectively) tend to fuse somewhat with the dead female subjects of portraits. According to Doane, these films establish "the portrait and disturbances in the mimetic process as the dominant and structuring figure of

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[their] narrative[s]. What is at stake is the play of identity and difference, the breakdown of that dialectic, and the resultant fusion, which is presented as specifically feminine."[13] While this would appear to be so, Doane might be overlooking a parallel disturbance in the constitution of the male protagonist and his implicated beholder.

In both Gaslight and The Two Mrs. Carrolls, the husbands who persecute their wives (Charles Boyer and Humphrey Bogart) are quite mad. The Two Mrs. Carrolls is a particularly interesting film in this context, because Mr. Carroll is the portraitist. Doane's analysis of the role of the portraits in this film is misleading. She argues that "Humphrey Bogart plays an artist whose psychosis is signified by a tendency toward an abstraction that can only be understood, within the confines of the classical Hollywood text, as misrepresentation."[14] In fact,

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[13]Mary Ann Doane, The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s (Bloomington, 1987), p. 143. While fusion may be "presented as specifically feminine" in the woman's films which concern Doane, male fusion is not missing from films of the 1940s. Masculine identity is very much disrupted by portraits of women in several, including Lang's Scarlet Street, and perhaps most dramatically so in George Cukor's A Double Life (1947), in which Ronald Colman plays an actor who tends so extremely to identify with his roles that he becomes murderously jealous while preparing to play Othello. The etiology of his identity crisis is unambiguously located by the tyrannical presence of a portrait of the actor's deceased mother, who had been the most admired Shakespearean actress of her day. For further consideration of the role of paintings in relation to Oedipal crises and marriage in the cinema, see Marc Vernet, "Le Portrait psychopompe," in his Figures de l'Absence (Paris, 1988).

[14]Doane, p. 123.

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abstraction is clearly not a characteristic of Mr. Carroll's portraits of his wives. A very recognizable likeness of Barbara Stanwyck is distorted not by abstraction, but by corruption of the movie star's youth and beauty (fig. 41).[15] This was the strategy used by Wilde, and then Lewin, in The Picture of Dorian Gray.

The portraits that the crazed Mr. Carroll paints of his wives are portraits of their mortality. The portrait is not abstracted, but registers, in a hypertrophic way, as Mr. Carroll works on it secretly over time, the very passage of time itself, embodied in the degradation of his wife's body. Mr. Carroll's denial that he himself is implicated in this process can be construed from his pattern of ridding himself of the "real" body and searching out a new, and younger, wife. In this sense, while it does reinforce the to-be-looked-at-ness of the feminine, The Two Mrs. Carrolls also implicates the possessor of the gaze, whose pathology stems from the fact that possessing it does not protect him from the mortal implications of the portrait.

In a sense, The Two Mrs. Carrolls is engaging the same trope as had Edgar Allan Poe in his story, "The Oval Portrait," in which a painter portraying his young bride:

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[15]Really abstract portraits are featured, however, to comedic effect in at least two films of the forties. In both Ernst Lubitsch's That Uncertain Feeling (1941) and John Farrow's The Big Clock (1948) surrealistically abstract portraits intentionally confound. In these instances, misrepresentation and misrecognition are concertedly the point.

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"would not see that the tints which he spread upon the canvas were drawn from the cheeks of her who sat beside him..." Upon applying the last perfect stroke, the portraitist turns from the image to its subject and finds her dead.[16] The effectiveness of the story, as Françoise Meltzer has described, relies in large part on inducing "an uncanny sentiment in the reader by playing on the lingering belief in a prohibition against overly mimetic art."[17] As in Poe's story, Mr. Carroll's mimetic accomplishment is constructed as murder, but in The Two Mrs. Carrolls it is construed as the result of psychopathological, not ineffable supernatural forces. Not so in The Picture of Dorian Gray. Lewin's film version of Oscar Wilde's novel in fact enhances the supernatural aspect of the force which converts Dorian's wish that contrary to fate, he should remain ever young, while the portrait should grow old instead. In the scene in

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[16]Edgar Allan Poe, "The Oval Portrait," Tales of Mystery, The World's Story Tellers, ed. Arthur Ransome (London, n.d.), pp. 26-30. As previously mentioned, this was a story to which Lewin referred as early as 1925 in his own story, Botticelli in Hollywood.

[17]Françoise Meltzer, Salome and the Dance of Writing: Portraits of Mimesis in Literature (Chicago, 1987), p. 106. In the story, Meltzer continues, "death and life are exchanged, and this through the power of art. This parallels Hawthorne's formulation, 'Others, frightened at the art which could raise phantoms at will, and keep the form of the dead among the living...' (p. 109)." Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Prophetic Pictures" and Poe's "Oval Portrait," thus, according to Meltzer derive their thrilling discomfort from a Mosaic taboo against image-making: "The taboo itself is a mark of the power of art: for despite its frame, art cannot be contained; but it is the attempt to contain it which generates the taboo (pp. 110-11)."

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which the wish is uttered, Dorian, as I have described, stands enthralled before the completed portrait as if before a mirror. Embodied in this one scene are the infantile "omnipotence of thoughts, instantaneous wish-fulfilments, secret power to do harm and the return of the dead," which Freud connected to the uncanny,[18] as well as Lacan's mirror stage, when the child first identifies itself as a subject through an illusion of corporeal coherence.

The supernaturalism which is a device of some weight in The Picture of Dorian Gray is at the very heart of several ghost films from the 1940s which feature portraits of the restless dead. The Uninvited, directed in 1944 by Lewis Allen, is an elegant little ghost story about the battle between two female ghosts over a young woman (Gail Russell) who is the daughter of one of them, but mistakenly believes her mother is the other, malevolent ghost, two enormous portraits of whom, painted by her artist-husband, dominate several scenes. The Uninvited can be interpreted rather easily in the psychoanalytic terms of object-relations theory as an allegory of a girl's perilous sexual maturation as she struggles with conflicting imagoes of a "good" mother and a "bad" mother. Her "cure" is finally effected by confronting these ghosts, or imagoes, abandoning an ego ideal based on a mis-apprehension of the bad mother's perfection, freeing herself for marriage (to Ray Milland).

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[18]Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny (1919)," Studies in Parapsychology, ed. Philip Rieff (New York, 1963).

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As in Rebecca the portrait functions as a screen onto which the female protagonist's identifications and misapprehensions are projected.

The Time of Their Lives, an Abbott and Costello comedy directed by Charles Barton (1946), features what is undoubtedly one of the screen's most aerodynamic "moving pictures." A ghost (Marjorie Reynolds) makes her presence known by carrying her portrait about. René Clair's I Married a Witch (1942) complicates the exchange between the living and dead. The very presence of Veronica Lake, as a witch bent on revenge, induces a portrait of Frederic March's "dead" ancestor, who was responsible for her trial and burning, to slip from the wall, as if alarmed (rather similarly to the portrait of the Father in Hitchcock's Suspicion). In Preston Sturges's Sullivan's Travels (1941), too, a deceased patriarch's portrait is animated by affronts from the living. In these films death is not denied, but rather robbed of its horror and ineffability by the relative facility with which the living and the dead interact. The portrait functions almost as a hinge between the two realms, which tends to confirm my view of portraiture as memento mori.

These and other ghastly stories relate to other products of the horror genre, which Dana Polan has described as undergoing during the 1940s "a secularization in which figures of menace lose their ties to forms of irrationality and become accessible to an all-too-earthly discipline and

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control: horror narrative becomes the successful narration of a successful cure."[19] But contrary to Polan, I do not see this secularization as comprehensive. In his analysis of the function of supernaturalism in such films of the '40s as It's a Wonderful Life!, Luck of the Irish, and Miracle on 34th Street, as well as two other films that concern me here, The Ghost and Mrs. Muir and Portrait of Jennie, Polan suggests that rather than employing a sense of the "marvelous" which moves "toward the fantastic or toward horror," these films subordinate the supernatural "to a new faith in the psychological self. The marvelous becomes an aid that mediates the sacred and the de-sacralized--an aid by which humans can fulfill human ends and tasks..."[20] Although this is more or less characteristic of some of the films I have discussed, and perhaps most of Polan's other examples, Joseph Mankiewicz's 1947 The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (fig. 42) and William Dieterle's 1948 Portrait of Jennie (fig. 43), along with all of Albert Lewin's films, rely, it seems to me, very much on a sense of the marvelous. These two supernatural love stories embrace the morbidity and desire occasioned by their portraits and are perhaps the most poignant indices of the marriage of portraiture and cinema in the 1940s.

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[19]Dana Polan, Power and Paranoia: History, Narrative, and the American Cinema, 1940-1950 (New York, 1986), p. 20.

[20]Polan, pp. 188-89.

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In Dieterle's Portrait of Jennie, Joseph Cotton plays a struggling artist who meets and falls in love with Jennie (Jennifer Jones), a young girl who, it evolves, has returned from the dead to find the lover to whom she was fated. The supernatural romance is enhanced by the elusiveness of Jennie's comings and goings; each time she reenters Joseph Cotton's world, she has aged disproportionately to the "real" time which has passed. When she reaches viable adulthood, she is reclaimed by death, before the romance can be consummated, although not too soon for a portrait to be completed. The film's third reel, with its monochromatic tinting of black and white footage, enhances the sense that its events are occurring in another, other-worldly register. The final Technicolor insert of the (really rather prosaic) portrait being admired by romantic schoolgirls in the Metropolitan Museum of Art recalls the use of color insert in The Picture of Dorian Gray. The naturalism of these black and white films is gravely undermined by the sudden shock of Technicolor which enhances the supernatural properties of the portraits.

Joseph Mankiewicz's The Ghost and Mrs. Muir is an even more fascinating supernatural love story, since we must suffer the sad images of the long, loveless and relentlessly mortal existence that Mrs. Muir (played by Gene Tierney) must endure after the ghost of her desired sea captain (Rex Harrison) has abandoned her. As in Portrait of Jennie, the supernatural romance results, if not in physical love, at

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least in art. Mrs. Muir publishes a novel based on the life and adventures of a sea captain. In a most interesting twist here, the portrait, of a man, and the inspiration it provides a woman, reverses the usual formula of artist and muse. The manner in which the portrait and a whole complex of representational issues is integrated into a bittersweet story of love and death is more subtle than in Portrait of Jennie, but also more moving. In a beautiful cinematic movement, the painting of Captain Gregg initiates the relationship: while inspecting the haunted house, Mrs. Muir glances into the darkened parlor, sees what appears to be a living, moving man--the Captain, does a double take, then sees she had mistaken a painting for a person. The last scene of the film, in which a spectral image of the young Mrs. Muir emerges from her own dead and elderly body to disappear into eternity with her ghostly lover does not disavow the explicit morbidity of the entire scenario. This moving picture is as disturbing as it is beautiful, and its disturbances arise from its distinct comprehension of the basic hand that death has in art as well as in love.

The prevalence and occasional intensity with which portraits are wedded to thematics of death in the Hollywood cinema of this era is underscored by a film that shares with The Ghost and Mrs. Muir the figure of a ghastly sea captain: Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951), which can be seen as Albert Lewin's last film of the forties or his first of the fifties (he worked on it from 1948 until 1950). In this

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amalgam of several myths in which Pandora Reynolds (Ava Gardner) sacrifices her life out of love for a dead man, Henrick van der Zee (James Mason). Two portraits--one a Dutch miniature (actually represented in the film by a small color photograph of Ava Gardner supplied by Lewin's friend, Man Ray; see fig. 70), the other a quasi-surrealist painting (see fig. 62) in the style of Paul Delvaux (whom Lewin had included in the Bel Ami competition and whom he collected[21])--are used to conflate disparate times and identities in a mystical present. When Pandora first meets Henrick, curiosity having impelled her to swim out to his anchored yacht, the Dutchman is painting a portrait of her. We later learn that she is a doppelgänger of the young wife he murdered centuries before, as can be seen in the (Man Ray) portrait of that wife he keeps in his cabin. Surrealistically inspired scenes merge past and present, desire and death, to the climax, in which Pandora and Henrick are "redeemed" by drowning together at sea. A pretentious, morbid, yet beautiful film, Pandora (which will be discussed at much greater length in the chapter devoted to it) is not very typical of Hollywood films of the early fifties, but not so radically remote either. During this next decade portraits continue to emerge en abyme in particularly self-conscious films (Nicholas Ray's Born to Be Bad, 1950, and Alfred Hitchcock's Vertigo, 1958, come to

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[21]See the section on The Private Affairs of Bel Ami that follows and the Art appendix.

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mind), though not, I think, with the regularity they had in the previous decade.

Morbidity is very much at issue in all of the films I have considered herein, be it as an explicit theme or as an implicit subtext. In these films portraiture plays a distinct role in imbuing the characters' identity, anxiety, longing, and desire with a morbid sensibility. But these are qualities generated by alternative devices in many other (Gothic[22], Noir, etc.) films of the period which defy the traditions and techniques held by many theorists to be standard for the industry. It should not be forgotten that, whatever we now think of the classical Hollywood film industry, there were always individuals involved in it who thought--not that they were cogs of an apparatus--but that they were involved in making art. The portrait, then, hangs as an index of Art, as well as Death, on the walls of the Moving Picture Gallery and its movement there should remind us that this Gallery is anything but static.[23]

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[22]At least two films I have neglected herein employ portraits in morbid melodramas of almost Gothic proportions: In Curtis Bernhardt's A Stolen Life and John Brahm's The Locket (both 1946), male portraitists (Dane Clark and Robert Mitchum, respectively) produce images that symptomatize the deceits of their female subjects (Bette Davis's character's substitution of herself for her dead twin is evidenced by the mimetic record of the portrait; Laraine Day's character's pathological lying and its roots in a trauma of innocence are echoed in the portraits of her as Cassandra).

[23]This chapter is based on a paper that I first wrote during the Winter of 1990-91 and that I delivered at the 1991 College Art Association meeting (February 21, Washington, D.C.) in a session, "Critical Theory, Film, and the Other Visual Arts," chaired by Peter Brunette. I

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delivered a revised version of the paper to the symposium, "Painting and Photography in the Light of Cinema," organized by Dudley Andrew and James Lastra for the Institute of Cinema and Culture at the University of Iowa (April 6).

On the same day that I spoke in Iowa, the Musée du Louvre in Paris was holding a conference devoted to the theme of my essay. The organizers of the "Le Portrait peint au cinéma," Dominique Païni and Marc Vernet, generously added my essay to the proceedings of their conference, which were published finally in April of 1993 in the Franco-American film journal, Iris: Revue de théorie de l'image et du son/A Journal of Theory on Image and Sound, No. 14-15 (Autumn 1992). Many of the Louvre papers, to which, with one exception, I had no access prior to finalizing this and the previous chapters, touch or dwell on themes and particular films discussed herein. My basic argument, that the appearance of the painted portrait in film works as an index of both art and death, is an assumption of many of the authors collected in the Iris volume. I should like to note those authors whose contributions most directly pertain to my essay (which has not been altered in light of them). They are: René Démoris ("L'Héritage de la peinture: le portrait impossible," pp. 11-23); Marc Vernet ("Dictatures du pignoché," pp. 45-54); Thomas Elsaesser ("Mirror, Muse, Medusa: *Experiment Perilous*," pp. 147-159); and, especially, Réda Bensmaïa, whose "La Figure d'inconnu ou l'inconscient épinglé," I did read and have discussed above, thanks to Professor Bensmaïa's generosity in giving me a copy of the typescript from his original talk.

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Chapter 4. A CAFÉ CALLED *DÉSIR*: THE PRIVATE AFFAIRS OF BEL AMI (1947)

> I know that Dorian Gray has been excessively admired and detested, which makes me suspect that there may be a strange beauty in it. But it seems far away and long ago, and I am a little vague about it. In a few years I may have the curiosity to look at it again. Now I am involved in "Bel Ami", which, since I am hopelessly entangled, seems very thorny. Every morning I take a deep breath and leap into my briar bush. I bleed from a thousand scratches and am aghast at my own fortitude.
>
> Albert Lewin, 16 November 1945[1]

If one has seen The Moon and Sixpence and The Picture of Dorian Gray, one experiences a sense of *déjà vu* upon viewing The Private Affairs of Bel Ami. Once again, one is in Europe at the end of the last century. Here again is George Sanders, playing a scandalous dandy. There are Angela Lansbury, Richard Fraser and Albert Bassermann. Here again are refined, patterned, black-and-white interiors, designed by Gordon Wiles. Here, too, a painting explodes from the screen in color, this time a painting by Max Ernst. There is a painting in Maupassant's Bel-Ami: "by the Hungarian artist, Karl Marcowitch,... representing Christ walking on the water. The art critics, enthusiastically declared this canvas the most magnificent masterpiece of the century."[2]

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[1]Letter to Pegeen Sullivan, USC.

[2]"*Le critiques d'art, enthousiasmés, déclaraient cette toile le plus magnifique chef-d'oeuvre du siècle.*" Guy de Maupassant, Bel-Ami (Paris, 1968), p. 238. Gérard Delaisement, the editor of this annotated edition of the novel, notes (pp. 304-305) that Marcowitch is based upon the Hungarian academic painter, Munkacsy "*dont la célébrité fut grande à l'époque,*" whose paintings of Milton Dictating Paradise Lost to his Daughters (now in the New York Public Library) and Christ Before Pilate were the unlikely toasts

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It is probably safe to say that a painting praised by Parisian art critics in the 1880s would have had little in common with Max Ernst's 1945 The Temptation of Saint Anthony (fig. 47), a lurid, apocalyptic vision of torment, the brutal colors and frenzied forms of which explode into the rarified black-and-white *mise-en-scène* of The Private Affairs of Bel Ami with an effect bordering on violence. The Ernst painting was, in fact, hardly more digestible than it would have been sixty years earlier in 1947, when The Private Affairs of Bel Ami was reviewed by Bosley Crowther for The New York Times:

> Blame the whole mess on Albert Lewin, who not only directed but wrote the screenplay--and who presumably was responsible for sticking into the film a close-up in color of a painting which is downright nauseous. It is called "The Temptation of St. Anthony," but it looks like a bad boiled lobster. Could this, maybe, be symbolic of "The Private Affairs of Bel Ami"?[3]

The purpose of this painting's appearance in this Lewin film is rather more obscure than the use of the equally hideous Ivan Albright portrait in The Picture of Dorian Gray, where it realized the soul's corruption more graphically than Oscar Wilde ever could have dreamed. In Maupassant's Bel-Ami, the painting plays a relatively insignificant role: Madame Walter, the wife of the publishing magnate who has bought the painting, obsesses

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of Paris in the early 1880s, the latter even inspiring a private exhibition similar to M. Walter's in the novel.

[3]Quoted in Irving Hoffman, "'Affairs of Bel Ami' Draws Both Praise and Censure," The Hollywood Reporter, June 18, 1947, p. 8.

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over the resemblance of Christ to her "bel-ami," Georges, the novel's protagonist. In Lewin's film, the theme of the painting was changed by necessity and therefore its relation to the narrative was altered as well:

> In de Maupassant's book the subject of the painting was "Christ Walking on the Waters." But the Code Authority...advised me that this subject was unacceptable. Censorship does not permit the physical portrayal of Christ on the screen. Moreover, de Maupassant used the image of Christ in an ironical way, making the face of Jesus resemble that of "Bel Ami," a very bad man. So cynical an implication was out of the question in my movie.
>
> I was not disheartened by these difficulties. I had already conceived the idea of inviting an outstanding contemporary painter to do the canvas for my picture, and I knew that the subject of "Christ Walking on the Waters" had never been especially tempting to painters. The only great painting of this theme that I could easily recall was the beautiful one of Tintoretto. It occurred to me that for the purpose of my story, which is a dramatization of the struggle between good and evil (particularly as applied to the character of Madame Walter, who had a strong religious conviction), the theme of *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* was more fitting as well as altogether acceptable to the censors. I was also aware that, in choosing this subject, I was taking a theme which has never failed to fascinate the greatest of painters since medieval times.[4]

The anachronism of inserting a contemporary painting into a period piece is more startling in Bel Ami than it was in Dorian Gray, where the plot justified its strangeness. And Lewin's handling of the Maupassant tale up to the point at which the painting is introduced does absolutely nothing to prepare the audience for the "eruption" of the shocking

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[4]Albert Lewin, "Fine Art and the Films," The Temptation of St. Anthony: Bel Ami International Competition and Exhibition of New Paintings by Eleven American and European Artists (Washington, D.C., 1946), p. 5.

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image, unlike his treatment of the Wilde story, which begins with the execution of the portrait and necessarily refers to it throughout, effectively withholding revelation of its metamorphosis for long enough to ensure a moment of gratifying, anticipated horror. In Dorian Gray, the contrast between the portrait and the also elegant and rarified setting was exactly the point. In Bel Ami the function of the painting is either more subtle or more arbitrary.

The latter possibility is suggested by the curious fact that neither Lewin, nor anyone directly involved with the production of Bel Ami chose the Ernst painting to appear in the film. It appeared therein as part of the prize in a juried art competition conceived by Lewin,[5] but judged by Alfred Barr, Marcel Duchamp and Sidney Janis (figs. 44-46). Lewin chose the field of competitors himself. They were, in addition to Ernst: Ivan Albright, Eugene Berman, Leonora Carrington, Salvador Dali, Paul Delvaux, Leonor Fini, Louis Guglielmi, Horace Pippin, Abraham Rattner, Stanley Spencer and Dorothea Tanning. All of them, except Fini, submitted their paintings on time and were entered in the competition.

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[5]According to Harriet Janis, the "idea for this competition was worked out at an enthusiastic conference between Albert Lewin and myself in Hollywood." Harriet Janis, "Artists in Competition: Eleven Distinguished Artists Compete in a Struggle with the Temptation of St. Anthony," California Arts and Architecture (April 1946), p. 32.

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Max Ernst's submission won, in what the jurors described as a very close competition.[6]

Undoubtedly, the idea of the competition was in large part motivated by publicity concerns. The Albright picture in Dorian Gray had been quite a hit, as has been mentioned, and garnered extraordinary exposure for both artist and film. Here, the "gimmick," was even more ambitious: all the submissions to the contest were to be featured in a special exhibition that would under the auspices of the American Federation of Arts tour the U.S. and Europe for a couple of years.[7]

An unexpected boost to the publicity campaign was provided by Mayor James M. Curley of Boston, who "Arguing that the paintings were offensive on a religious-moral basis...banned their exhibition" at the Copley Society, where the show travelled from New York. Loew-Lewin responded to Mayor Curley's censoriousness with a $200,000 law suit; the Stuart galleries in Boston took on the Mayor by agreeing to display the Bel Ami paintings; Mayor Curley referred the matter to the police, who declined to act on his wishes, and ultimately, the whole matter was dropped.[8]

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[6]Statements from each of the jurors are included in the Bel Ami catalogue, p. 3.

[7]All entrants were awarded $500, agreed to allow their work to be included in the travelling exhibition, and retained ownership of their paintings.

[8]Virginia Wright, drama column, The Daily News, December 2, 1946 (USC).

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The eclectic group of contemporary artists chosen for the competition--men and women from Europe and the U.S., of various ethnic and racial backgrounds, working in a range of styles from Surrealist, Magic Realist, Expressionist to Naive--reflects Lewin's relative openness to the sort of image that would be featured in the film--his readiness to have his film "disrupted" by an image the particular form and content of which was not calculated to "fit in." In fact, none of the artists included in the competition, with two possible exceptions, although all worked in representational modes, employed stylistic means similar to those Lewin and Wiles used in composing their film.

The film's *mise-en-scène* relies heavily on very artificially composed, graphic rendering of architectonic layers in depth (e.g. fig. 50, 52). Surfaces are patterned. The physical movements of the characters are charted and paced according to musical, dialogic and scenic constraints. Their psychological or interior states (as played by the cast with a restraint remarkable in Hollywood films), rather than playing out dramatically, dynamically, with affect, are suggested by their relationships to one another within spatial registers. Often, as in Lewin's two previous films, characters are deployed like chess pieces on checkered

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floors (figs. 50, 53-55),[9] but are also in Bel Ami more psychologically, that is less existentially, manipulated.

Georges (Sanders) and Madeleine (Ann Dvorak), for instance, are often shown in separate but adjoining spaces, with a vertical division between them (e.g. figs. 52, 55), effecting a kind of psychological tension or alienation, similar to that Edgar Degas achieved in his portrait of the Bellelli family. In other instances, as in the chilling scene beside Charles Forestier's (John Carradine) death bed, the two move in and out of shadows, which draw black marks across their faces and figures, or leave them entirely obscure. Characters' subjective states are sometimes, as well, revealed by their relation to props that have inherently or assume metonymically psychologically symbolic import (mirrors, for instance, or the objects they handle: Madeleine's nervous wedding ring, cigarettes, scissors (fig. 54); Georges' Punch & Judy dolls (fig. 49), his cup and ball, playing cards, his razor; Madame Walter's knitting, etc.). "The result," remarks Douglas McVay of such technique, "is a kind of Brechtian cinema, in which the formalized, detached yet contemplative images furnish a

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[9]Douglas McVay, "The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947)," Movietone News, Nos. 66-67 (March 13, 1981), p. 64, comments on the film's chess-like compositions and movements and, quite accurately relates this to the Guignol references, to which I shall return, and the metaphorical use of "the marionette at the mercy of its master," which he sees as "connected to the spiritual condition of Man in a godless society."

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visual equivalent of Maupassant's sardonically unsparing yet humanely understanding verbal analysis."[10]

The images of Saint Anthony submitted to the Bel Ami Competition, on the other hand, are with few exceptions much more affecting, immediate and direct. Ernst's winning picture and the submissions from Albright, Berman, Carrington, Dali, Spencer and Tanning each figure torment, desire, madness and temptation in more or less literalized terms. Hallucinatory vividness and dynamic color, composition, and facture are characteristic of most of these. Delvaux, Guglielmi, Pippin and Rattner rendered the theme with somewhat more restraint, but of these, only Delvaux's and Guglielmi's entries shares any pictorial characteristics with Lewin's film, both relying on deep, graphic, architectonic compositions.

If the style of Max Ernst's winning painting appears anachronistic in Bel Ami, its theme appears somewhat less so. The Temptation of Saint Anthony, was, of course, the title and theme of the work that Gustave Flaubert called *"l'oeuvre de toute ma vie,"* and which after over a quarter of a century of work, constituting three versions, he published in 1874.[11] Before this, the prevalence of this theme had ebbed for a few hundred years, although Cézanne's

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[10]McVay, p. 62.

[11]Kitty Mrosovsky, Introduction to her translation of Flaubert's The Temptation of Saint Antony (Ithaca, New York, 1981).

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painted version (1867-69) predates the publication, although not the conception, of Flaubert's by five years. After Flaubert, the theme flourished, although more so among Symbolist and decadent painters (i.e. Moreau, Redon, Khnopff, and Ensor), than among the rather more academic type, to which one presumes that Maupassant's Karl Marcowitch belonged.

* * * * *

Messieurs les démons,
Laissez-moi donc!
Messieurs les démons,
Laissez-moi donc![12]

There is little doubt that both Lewin and Ernst had Flaubert's Anthony somewhere in mind in electing and executing, respectively, this theme as they did. Lewin was a fan of Flaubert's, and was very well-read in French

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[12]"Mr. Demons, leave me alone!..." These were the lines that Gustave Flaubert set down at the beginning of his first manuscript version of his La Tentation de Saint Antoine, "which he insisted he must finish before setting off to Egypt with his friend Maxime Du Camp" in 1849. "This deferential pleading with tormenting familiars plainly echoes the saint's popular trials. Years after his childhood, Flaubert enjoyed bringing George Sand to see the marionette theatre run by Père Legrain at the fair of Saint-Romain at Rouen. A fifteen-minute Saint Antoine would end with the saint's legendary pig taking flight with its tail on fire." Mrosovsky, p. 5.

Lewin's Bel Ami refers many times to popular puppet shows such as Flaubert enjoyed, particularly to Punch and Judy. The closing shot of the film, after Georges has lost his duel in the rain and died in the carriage bearing him away, pans across the lonely park and stops on a sign for Le Petit Guignol that shows Punch beating another character with his stick, while a voice that sounds like that of the film's virtuous Norbert de Varenne, a fan of the Petit Guignol, whispers, "we are all no more than puppets unless we believe."

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literature.[13] It is clear, too, that Lewin diligently researched his period films, reading (and looking) widely and carefully in and around the particular period and milieu represented. The visual traces of his researches are recorded not only in the (albeit highly mannered) accuracy of period detail, but in citations of contemporaneous art works within Bel Ami's scenes, as in the film's most obvious quotation, that of Manet's Bar at Folies-Bergère in a scene set at that establishment, or in the strangely disjointed, puppet-like dance steps that Georges and Clotilde (Angela Lansbury) perform when they go slumming at a rather *louche* nightclub, La Reine Blanche, which resemble the movements captured in certain images by Toulouse-Lautrec.[14]

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[13]A long, angry, unsent letter to James Agee (USC), in response to Agee's negative review of The Picture of Dorian Gray, composed when Lewin was already deeply engaged in adapting Bel-Ami, begins and ends with quotations from Flaubert. A number of Lewin's unrealized film projects were adaptations of French sources, including Manon Lescaut, Mademoiselle de Maupin and Un Roi Nu. See the filmography, Appendix B.

[14]"Lewin's consistently superb collaboration throughout the film with cinematographer Russell Metty and art director Gordon Wiles rises to especial heights in this sequence: the mastery of crowds, camera movement and cutting, the virtuoso counterpoint of plastic composition and music, remind us of Minnelli--or more nearly, of Renoir in French Cancan. One moment is unforgettable: a chanteuse raising her tipsy face from a tabletop, then weaving slowly through the waltzing pairs whilst she warbles the languorous 'Bel-Ami' ditty," writes Douglas McVay of this scene (p. 62).

McVay's comparisons to the work of other directors, particularly Renoir, who was Lewin's very close friend, are apt, although French Cancan is a rather later film (1955) and the Minnelli musicals he alludes to are in general much more colorful and joyous than this somewhat ambivalent scene. For an art historian, anyway, comparisons to Auguste Renoir's paintings of dancing couples, and especially Degas'

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More importantly, Lewin was, in aesthetic and philosophical terms, a kindred spirit to (if lesser artist than) Flaubert. "Nineteenth-century decadence, masochistic and morbid, is the context in which Mario Praz placed Saint Antony, suggesting that it influenced D'Annunzio and Swinburne and that Oscar Wilde skimmed from it some rare rhyme-words for The Sphinx," Kitty Mrosovsky relates in the introduction to her translation of Flaubert's Temptation.[15] One cannot but be reminded by this observation of Lewin's The Picture of Dorian Gray, that compendium of decadence, with its references and allusions not only to Wilde's Sphinx, but also to Baudelaire, Huysmans, Beardsley, the Buddha, The Rubáiyát, and many other literary and figurative touchstones of the *fin-de-siècle*. Even more kindred are the two spirits, however, when it comes to the strange "shifting tableaux" which alternate, or layer, lyricism with irony, sensuality with austerity, deeply moral inquiry with indurate cynicism, and which characterizes Lewin's work as much as Flaubert's.[16]

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and Lautrec's rather more acid views of Paris nightlife, are more appropriate.

McVay omits one rather interesting detail of this scene. On the table at which the chanteuse droops over a glass of liquor (absinthe?) before being prodded into performing, a black cat nurses a litter of kittens, an image that no doubt means to express something of the profligacy and promiscuity of her environs.

[15]Mrosovsky, p. 22.

[16]"His pantheism, his epilepsy, Alfred's death, and also literary and philosophical influences, all contributed to persuade him to adopt shifting tableaux and a passive

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Ernst must, too, must have known this most surreal of Flaubert's works, this "genealogy of desire" that its author described as a "metaphysical howl,"[17] and I think that it must be a source for the powerful, metamorphic torment of Ernst's picture, along with the obvious precedents in Northern Medieval and Renaissance painting (Grünewald's, of course, Jacques Callot's, and others, including a version in Genoa, which may have inspired Flaubert's work, and which in his day was attributed to Pieter Brueghel the Younger[18]). The wondrous monsters of Ernst's version have as ancestors not only Grünewald's "dream-monsters of surpassing obscenity, grotesque, repulsive,...the cthonic image of evil,"[19] but also the marvelous menage of Flaubert's book: the Chimera, Astomi, Nisnas, Blemmyes, Pygmies, Sciapodes, Cynocephales, Sadhuzag, Martichoras, Catoblepas, Basilisk, Griffin, Unicorn, the Beasts of the Sea, and more:

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protagonist to dramatise insistent questions about good and evil, illusion and reality, spirit and matter," writes Kitty Mrosovsky of Flaubert's Temptation, p. 10.

For more on these shifting tableaux and what, according to Mrosovsky (p. 27), Michel Foucault has called "erudite onirism," see chapters 5 and 6, "The Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene," and "*Le Belle Dame Sans Merci*."

[17]Ernst's friend Leonora Carrington certainly did, as her entry includes iconography that could in all likelihood only have derived from Flaubert, including the Queen of Sheba.

See Mrosovsky, citing Michel Butor ("genealogy of desire"), p. 30 and Flaubert ("metaphysical howl"), p. 11.

[18]Now thought to be by Jan Mandyn. See Mrosovsky, p. 7.

[19]Linda Nochlin, Mathis at Colmar: A Visual Confrontation (New York, 1963), p. 31.

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> A thousand voices answer him. The forest trembles.
>
> And all sorts of frightful beasts spring out: the Tragelaphus, half stag and half ox; the Myrmecoleo, lion in front, ant at the rear, and whose genitals are back to front; the python Aksar, sixty cubits long, which dismayed Moses; the great weasel Pastinaca, which kills trees by its smell; the Presteros, whose contact induces imbecility; the Mirag, a horned hare which inhabits the isles of the sea. Phalmant the leopard splits its stomach by dint of howling; the Senad, a triple-headed bear, tears up its little ones with its tongue; Cepus the dog splashes the rocks with blue milk from its udders. Mosquitoes start to drone, toads to leap, snakes to hiss. Lightning flashes. Hail falls.
>
> There come squalls, full of wonderful anatomies. There are alligators' heads on roe-deers' feet, owls with snakes' tails, swine with tigers' snouts, goats with donkeys' rumps, frogs as furry as bears, chameleons as big as hippopotamuses, calves with two heads, one of which weeps while the other bellows, quadruple foetuses linked by the navel and waltzing like tops, winged stomachs hovering like gnats.
>
> They rain from the sky, they spring from the ground, they flow from the rocks. Eyeballs are everywhere flaming, and mouths roaring; there are bulging breasts, elongated claws, gnashing teeth, the smack of flesh on flesh. Some give birth, others copulate, or in a single mouthful eat each other up.
>
> Stifled by their numbers, multiplying on contact, they crawl over one another--and they all heave around Antony with a regular movement, as if the ground were a ship's deck. Across his calves he feels the trail of snails, on his hands the chill of vipers; and spiders spinning their webs enclose him in their mesh.[20]

And Ernst's painting is as dense and feverish as Flaubert's prose, evoking in visual terms the writer's synesthetic sense of mind-boggling noise and palpable agony. The writhing, red-clad figure of Saint Anthony arches out toward the viewer in the lower foreground, pinned down and surrounded by the leers and laughter, the gaping, screaming maws, beaks, tongues, the sharp horns, fangs, teeth, claws, and the dilated, bulging eyes of myriad feathered, furry,

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[20]Flaubert, pp. 224-230.

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scaly, webbed, gooey, prickly hybrids, who probe his eyes, nose and mouth with their talons, caress his throat with bony paws, nibble his fingers, tickle his side, and nuzzle his genitals with spiny tentacles. Painted with hallucinatory clarity, this foreground scene is set off from the background by a stagnant lake of acrid green, beyond which a throbbing, decalcomaniacal, mirage-like landscape seems in the process of metamorphosing the snake-like limbs of a tree into a voluptuous nude, while another nude, with her head covered, has sprung up on a pillar in the sand.[21]

All this passes before the viewers of The Private Affairs of Bel Ami in a moment. One moment we are watching the stately movements of Parisian society at a *fin-de-siècle* evening party and in the next the screen is silent with the harrowing Technicolor din of this unlikely image--this

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[21]Ernst's accompanying statement in the Bel Ami catalogue (p. 9) reads: "Shrieking for help and light across the stagnant water of his dark sick soul, St. Anthony receives as an answer the echo of his fear: the laughter of the monsters created by his visions."

Harriet and Sidney Janis, in their contribution to the catalogue (p. 8), interpret the nudes as a "presentation of the theme of sacred and profane love--in the lush center the figure of an earthly temptress; to the right, high on a pedestal, the figure of woman exalted."

I suspect the nudes are illustrations of the act of repression as described by Freud in Delusion and Dream (Boston, 1956), p. 56: "A well-known etching by Félicien Rops illustrates this fact...through the model case of repression in the lives of saints and penitents. An ascetic monk has sought refuge, most likely from the temptations of the world, near the image of the crucified Savior. Then, phantom-like, the cross sinks and in its stead, there rises shining the image of a voluptuous unclad woman, in the same position as the crucifixion." Rops's "ascetic monk" is, in fact, Saint Anthony.

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return of the repressed. After its appearance, young Suzanne Walter (Susan Douglas) tells Georges (her Bel-Ami, too) how ironic she finds it that her mother (Katherine Emery), dull, virtuous, devout matron that she is, has become so obsessively enthralled with the painting, even claiming that no one understands his temptation as she does. Georges, who has seduced and spurned Madame, knows perfectly well whence her guilty obsession derives (fig. 56). Even he, callous bounder that he is, is manifestly struck by the picture when he lays eyes on it. One even wonders whether the horrific image might be a projection of Georges' unconscious--a subjective distortion undertaken by unacknowledged guilt. But within moments he is plotting his next moves, the betrayal of his wife, Madeleine, a divorce, the acquisitions of a noble title and of Suzanne, heiress to forty million francs.

Georges' demons are greed and ambition--not lust, not desire. These latter are inconvenient impulses, liable to cloud his clear vision of his future. Sex and desirability are his means to his venal ends. He suppresses his occasional pang of conscience, touts an ethos of pitiless, anaesthetic self-interest, holds others in utter contempt, blithely uses and abuses the women who desire him. In The Private Affairs of Bel Ami it is women who desire, and they all, inexplicably, desire Georges Duroy (in the novel this makes more sense: Georges, recently discharged from the Sixth Hussars, is young and dashing, tall, well-built, fair,

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has bright blue eyes, a curled moustache, and curly, blond, rather reddish hair parted in the middle. According to Maupassant, he resembles the heroes of popular romances[22]--rather unlike George Sanders, who looks no younger than his forty years here, and is quite leaden; David Niven would have been more to type). But there is an existential insight in the inexplicable lure of this cold, awkward, leaden Lothario for the team of passionate women and girls who flock to him.

By divorcing the passion, the desire from its object--or rather, by directing it toward an "inappropriate" object--Bel Ami focus on what Flaubert called the object of Saint Anthony's contemplation: "the larva of desire."[23] Georges is, in this sense, rather a red herring--a screen onto which something inevitable and ultimately objectless is projected. His contempt for the women who love him, his indifference, only helps, as Claude Arnaud has observed: "'Your cruelty is dearer to me than the love of others,' says Clotilde to Bel-Ami incessantly (her masochism is illustrated in a poster for the film, fig. 48). This is the credo of all Lewin's characters who love indifference because it allows them to love, above all, their loving."[24] The image of desirous

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[22]Maupassant (Paris, 1968), p. 4.

[23]Mrosovsky, p. 28.

[24]"*'Ta cruauté m'est plus chère que l'amour des autres,' dit sans cesse Clotilde à Bel-Ami. C'est là credo de tous les personnages de Lewin qui aiment l'indifférence, parce qu'elle leur permet d'aimer par-dessus tout leur amour.*"

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women, frustrated and diminished by a milieu in which they are destined for propriety (Clotilde, the young widow), devotion (Virginie Walter, the matron), restriction (Suzanne, the daughter) and abuse (Rachel, the "dancer") is multiplied and telescoped.

There are two women only in Bel Ami who do not fall victim to this plague of masochistic desire in which the object of desire seems chosen precisely in order to punish the desire itself. One is the virtuous Marie de Varenne (Frances Dee) who loves her husband (fig. 53; see "The Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene"); the other is Madeleine, Georges' wife, the widow of his friend, Charles Forestier, who does not love her husband(s). Madeleine is a feminist. When, at her husband's death bed, Georges proposes marriage, Madeleine responds, "it is necessary that you should understand what sort of woman I am. Marriage for me is not a charm but a partnership. I must be free--perfectly free--as to my ways, my acts, my comings and goings. I must be an equal, an ally, not an inferior or an obediently submissive wife." Madeleine, it turns out, is a journalist and politician, but one who is forced to take cover behind--to

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Claude Arnaud, "Les statues meurent aussi," Cinématographe, No. 74 (January 1982), p. 60. To compare Lewin's film to Maupassant's novel, Arnaud remarks, *"on croirait Maupassant américain et Lewin le fruit anémié de la vieille Europe."* (one might believe Maupassant the American and Lewin the anemic fruit of old Europe.), pp. 59-60.

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act through--her men.[25] The sort of woman Madeleine is is figured in the film not only by her sublime composure, but also by her frequent fidgeting with her wedding ring and, once, when Georges' vanity and venality have come to the fore, her removal and placement of it between the blades of an open scissor.[26] So literal a figure of the castrating female has been rarely devised.

Madeleine and Georges are equals, who use one another, and who use their sex, for equally rapacious ends. When shortly after their marriage, Georges enters his wife's salon one afternoon, Madeleine watches with calm amusement as Mesdames Walter and Marelle shoot passionate, painful glances his way, which the camera catches with quick, searing close-ups. When Clotilde then asks Madeleine whether she "will allow me to call him bel-ami, still?," Madeleine, who knows of the previous attachment, responds with swift, dispassionate composure, "I will allow whatever you please."

The witty yet hateful misogyny that Sanders displays in Bel Ami, as he had in The Moon and Sixpence and The Picture

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[25]Madeleine's authorship of both Forestier's and Duroy's articles is suggested by Laroche-Mattieu's needling of Georges by "accidentally" calling him by his dead friend's name and remarking upon the uncanny similarity in their writing styles, a needling that Georges responds to with rather violent sensitivity, bringing into the offices of La Vie Française a mannequin that resembles Laroche-Mattieu and shooting it through the head and heart with his pistol.

[26]She removes the band permanently, into her husband's mug of beer, after having been entrapped by him into an affair with Laroche-Mattieu, which she thought politic but he wished to use to obtain a divorce with impunity.

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of Dorian Gray (and in many of his other roles, as well; he seems to have been well-suited to the task), is then double edged. Without naming him, film critic Cecilia Ager was certainly describing her friend Albert Lewin when she brought up in a popular magazine about movie producers' appeals, and lack thereof, to the female part of their audiences:

> ...the case of a certain independent movie producer who tries to straddle the issue.
>
> He happens to be a henpecked fellow in his private life, so the movies he makes always show the man triumphant, picking his way through a clutter of supine female bodies with outstretched arms and submissive eyes. But he also happens to be a knowledgeable little chap who understands why he does what he does. "To stave off my own compulsion," he confesses, "and snatch what women for my audience I can, I make it a practice always to include a singularly articulate character who denounces women unmercifully. Curious, but this always seems to fetch them."[27]

But Lewin's attitudes about the sexes, were certainly more complicated than this. First, he believed, according to basically Aristotelian principles, that audiences took a cathartic and constructive pleasure in representations of hateful, evil and lurid deeds. Lewin stated this position most bluntly (albeit with his tongue often in the vicinity of his cheek) in a letter to the columnist Lowell E. Redelings:

> ...we seek in entertainment a vicarious outlet for our smothered frustrations. In his preface to the Comedie Humaine, Honore de Balzac...takes it as a

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[27]Cecilia Ager, "Women Only" Mademoiselle, April 1947, p. 234.

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matter of course that villains are more entertaining than virtuous characters....

I must confess that I agree with him thoroughly. And yet, I have to admit, not without a sense of shame, that I myself am a hopelessly virtuous man. I am innocent of murder, arson, theft, mayhem--and I even commit conventional hypocrisies, lies, intrigues, gluttonies, briberies and common treacheries with a reluctance which often makes me feel that I am headed for a pauper's grave.

Nevertheless, I am always prepared to read a book about a scoundrel, or see a movie about one; and a story of infidelity attracts me much more than one of deathless love. My literary ear and my movie eye are cocked for scandal and sin.

Is this because I am by nature a bad man, in spite of my notoriously virtuous character? I am sure this is exactly the case. I am full of original sin, which I have repressed all my life out of sheer cowardice--fear of discovery--fear of punishment--fear of ridicule--fear. Consequently, I am saturated with an inhibited sinfulness incapable of direct expression, and longing for vicarious release. When I see wickedness therefore in art, literature, the theater and the movies, I am happy. I am entertained. My soul enjoys a much needed purge--a psychic catharsis, which makes it possible for me to continue my prudent and exemplary existence less painfully.

I long ago gave up the notion that there is something unique about this combination of evil desires and irreproachable performance in my life. I am satisfied that it is the normal state of men and women....[28]

Lewin's hackles were always raised by the implication that films had a particular moral or pedagogical burden. This was evident again in his response to the question "Do you think that the films have a pedagogical mission for the masses? If so, has Hollywood production over the last decade lived up to it?" posed to a variety of people involved with the film industry by Klaus Mann's short-lived journal, Decision. Lewin's tongue was in his cheek here again:

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[28]Letter to Lowell E. Redelings, "The Hollywood Scene," Hollywood Citizen-News, May 3, 1946, p. 4.

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> Since the idea of discipline in education has been for some time a dead cat and the fashionable criterion of epistemology is now exclusively eudaimonistic, one can be only momentarily shocked by the suggestion that the movies have a pedagogical mission. With the schools becoming centers of entertainment, it is perhaps not too much to expect the movie-houses to be places of instruction. One can even imagine a time when the public will be compelled to attend the movies a minimum number of hours, but will have to buy tickets of admission to an entertainment classroom.
>
> No doubt this is a long view. For the moment, one wonders why a question is asked of the movies which is not asked of the other arts....If Shakespeare wrote 'Hamlet' for a course in Danish history or 'Macbeth,' in Scottish; if Sophocles wrote 'Oedipus Tyrannos' for a text; if Dostoievsky designed 'Crime and Punishment' as a lesson in psychopathology, then the movies should have a pedagogical mission. It is more likely that their mission will be to entertain the 'masses'...[29]

Lewin's ire at the implication that art should offer up role models or in any other reductive way cater to a morally prescriptive view of the world (like Gustave Flaubert's and Oscar Wilde's before him) tends to obscure the fact that his

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[29]Decision, Vol. I, no. 3 (March 1941), p. 64. Respondents besides Lewin were Paul Muni, Walter Wanger, George Cukor, Sylvia Sidney, Howard Dietz, Iris Barry, Howard Clurman, Harry Brand, Richard Plant. Lewin's implicit umbrage at the notion of the "masses," from which he distances himself with the quotation marks, was explicitly echoed by Iris Barry, of the Museum of Modern Art's film department, in her response, which began: "The use of that expression, "the masses," seems to me an unfortunate one since it usually implies the moral or social inferiority of *either* the higher or the lower income groups" (p. 65).

Albert Lewin's disdain for a pedagogical view of the uses of art is provocative from a biographical point of view. His rather virulent assaults on the idea represent a direct challenge to the values and activities of his older brother, Will, who devoted much of his career as an educator to exploring, exposing and developing precisely the pedagogical use value of popular media, beginning with his doctoral thesis, "Photoplay Appreciation in American High Schools" in 1933 (see Appendix A--Chronology). Despite their differences on the matter, the brothers were always in touch and often assisted each other.

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view of sexual relations was essentially a moral and principled one. It is true that he gave Sanders' characters rather free reign with their vicious tongues, but it is equally true, amusing as these characters could be, that their views were treated by the films as folly--as very grave folly indeed. Of the three, only Lord Henry Wooten lives to regret the results of his heedless epigrammatic philosophy. Charles Strickland and Georges Duroy see the light only shortly before the moment of death. These are strong, often amusing, but unsympathetic characters. Sympathy is reserved in all three films, not for indisputably "good" characters (the few such that are featured are rather flat[30]), but for those who struggle with good and evil and with their consciences (in The Moon and Sixpence, Dirk and Blanche Stroeve; Dorian himself in The Picture of Dorian Gray, as well as Basil Hallward, both Sibyl and James Vane, Adrian Singleton, and, in Bel Ami, Madame Walter and Clotilde de Marelle).

It is particularly those women characters who suffer for a desire that is forbidden and seemingly beyond their control who are treated most sympathetically; Blanche,

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[30]In an interview with Joseph Wechsberg published during the publicity campaign for Bel Ami, Lewin discussed his problems with the Madame Curie project from which he had been removed after ten days of shooting. "Only years later would Lewin tell his friends the reason," Wechsberg wrote. "'I couldn't stand it any longer. I just can't get interested in virtuous people. That woman was so damned noble!'," Lewin is quoted as stating. Joseph Wechsberg, "Sins That Pay Their Way," 47, the Magazine of the Year, Vol. I, no. 1 (March 1947), p. 150.

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Sibyl, Clotilde and Madame Walter are abused by their lovers and are all more or less tormented by conflict and guilt that is linked specifically to their sexuality. This is not altogether uncommon in Hollywood films, I should add, although women who commit adultery are usually not allowed to go as unpunished as, for instance, Clotilde, who suffers for Georges and loses him, but who is not driven mad with guilt (like Madame Walter) or to suicide (as Blanche and Sibyl were for their "sins").

What is most unusual about Lewin's treatment of the sexes in his films is, however, not in a moral view of sexual relations, but an unlikely psycho-social, one. It is the multiplication of and concentration on desiring women disposed around one (rather empty) male object of desire (Blanche and Ata around Strickland; Sibyl and Gladys around Dorian; and Rachel, Clotilde, Mme. Walter, her daughter Suzanne, and, marginally, Madeleine, around Georges Duroy) that essentially reverses the formula of the films (*noir*) with which these have the most in common--that is the trope of men drawn to a *femme fatale* as moths to a flame. Paradoxically, or impossibly, it is the male object of feminine desire that is fetishistically[31] figured at the

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[31]One female character, whom I have not yet mentioned, literalizes Georges' stature as fetish. This is Lourine, Clotilde's young (approximately six-year-old) daughter, who, like her mother, adores "bel-ami," and who is not seen without her toy soldier--a rigid, approximately eight inch long doll that wears the costume of Georges' regiment, a coincidence that he remarks reflects her good taste. After Lourine's first encounter with Georges, the doll appears

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center of each of the three films, most prominently in The Private Affairs of Bel Ami, which begins at a café called *Désir*,[32] where Rachel (Marie Wilson), the dancer from the Folies-Bergère, develops a sudden passion for Georges, whom she glances as a song seller passes selling the music to a popular song, "Bel Ami" (fig. 49).

From the point of view of the most influential feminist analyses of representations of sexual difference in the Hollywood cinema and of the identificatory possibilities afforded by these,[33] Bel Ami is a problem. The male protagonist and characters of the film offer viewers, male or male-identified (through masochistic or masqueradesque moves), little with which to identify. Georges Duroy is a mechanistic, puppet-like vacuum, whose attractiveness and

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with the words "Bel Ami" embroidered on its costume, and Lourine clings to it as she sleeps.

If, in strictly psychoanalytic terms, there is no such phenomenon as female fetishism, since the etiology of the "perversion" connects to male denial of female lack, I think it is fair to suggest that phallic substitutes, such as Lourine's doll (Lewin's invention) or Madeleine's cigarettes, here figure a displacement that is comparable and deserving of the term.

[32]The name is Lewin's innovation. The café on Georges DuRoy's mind at the beginning of Guy de Maupassant's novel is the Café Américaine (p. 7).

[33]I mean Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Screen, Vol. 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975), which is reprinted in several anthologies, including Women and the Cinema, A Critical Anthology, Karyn Kay and Gerald Peary, eds. (New York, 1977), pp. 412-428; as well many writings by Mary Ann Doane, including, most famously, "Film and the Masquerade--Theorizing the Female Spectator," Screen, Vol. 23, Nos. 3-4 (September-October 1982), pp. 74-88, and an entire tradition of analyses stemming from and depending upon the tenets of these.

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wittiness are more touted than sensible and whose sadistic and hateful actions are too repulsive, automatic and enigmatic for a viewer to be inclined to empathize with them.[34] As to the others, Charles Forestier is a consumptive cuckold; Laroche-Mattieu (Warren William, posed in the scene in which he is introduced rather like M. Bertin in Ingres' 1832 portrait) is a pompous boor; and Monsieur Walter (Hugo Haas) is, as his wife puts it, "not a man. He's a cash box." The other male characters are minor, and of these, the most compelling, Norbert de Varenne (David Bond), composer, organist and music critic for La Vie Française, is blind--Lewin's innovation and, given his focus here and elsewhere on "the gaze," not an arbitrary one.

It is in Lewin's Bel Ami the female characters who are more fully realized and whose complex feelings and focused gazes offer more to grasp for a viewer's (female or female identified?!) identificatory impulses. As in Dorian Gray (in that case, the figuration of homoeroticism and male narcissism, as well as female desire), then, Lewin effects what was so taboo in Hollywood film as to lead theorists to

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[34]Georges is frequently identified with (and, indeed, himself identifies with) Punch, a puppet, on the basis of his rather mechanistic view of the world--and perhaps of sexuality. It is established during the dinner scene at the Forestiers early in the film that Georges appreciates Punch for his "amorous inclination," a comment that Douglas McVay (p. 64) correctly, I think, interprets: "with Punch's big stick invested with phallic connotations." Jacques Rival (Albert Bassermann), caricaturist for La Vie Française, promptly draws a cartoon of Georges as Punch, which reappears periodically to signify Georges' folly.

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describe it as impossible. Perhaps it was only very difficult. Lewin achieved it through complex, condensed, symbolic, literary and pictorial means, such as the perverse dissolve involving the butterfly described in "Dr. Look". Here, in The Private Affairs of Bel Ami, another desire that dare not speak its name is figured variously.

The guilty, morbid "larva of desire" explodes from a netherworld that has been rigorously kept at bay in the figure of Max Ernst's painting. In it, Anthony is stroked, stimulated and explored by gestures that on their own suggest a certain tenderness, or erotic playfulness (tickling, nibbling, nuzzling, caressing), but which are delivered by a host of horrible, mutant demons. More transparently, in a scene that it is hard to believe cleared the censor's vetting, the unrepresentable erotic life of women is figured in a dream. In the scene in which Virginie Walter, who has succumbed to Georges' opportunistic seduction, meets him for luncheon in a private room at a restaurant, she is scorned, rebuffed and humiliated by him. But she endures it and indeed, seems almost to relish it. As he eats his dessert, she sits on the floor beside him and, discreetly winding a hair from her head around his coat button (a gesture taken from the novel), she says:

> I shall tell you about a dream I had of you last night. I was travelling on a train at night through a mysterious forest. It was a very long train, but I seemed to be the only passenger. We stopped at a deserted station surrounded by dark trees. I hurried to close my suitcase and stepped down to the platform

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> looking about for you because I knew that you would be there to meet me...

At this point, Madame Walter is interrupted by Georges, who, irate about a piece of political intrigue of which she has informed him, leaps up in anger, yanking from his lover's head the hair she had been winding around his button. The camera focuses in a prolonged close-up on her blissful expression of pain. The pinched, middle-aged face of Madame Walter with its expression of ecstatic agony dissolves into the young, sensual, open visage of Clotilde, who in the next scene duplicates her elder's posture; sitting on the floor next to Georges who is comfortably seated in an armchair, Clotilde, too, relates a dream:

> I dreamed that we were taking a journey together across the desert. We were riding on two camels and we'd taken some sandwiches wrapped in paper and some wine in a bottle. But it annoyed me, because we were too far off from each other on our separate camels and I wanted to get down.

Georges remarks, "I want to get down, too," with a somewhat leering smile, before Clotilde discovers, to her immense chagrin, the hairs wound so fastidiously around Georges' buttons.

While Clotilde's dream derives from Maupassant's novel,[35] Madame Walter's is yet another of Lewin's inventions. And while Clotilde's sensual journey has distinct erotic overtones, it is Madame Walter's that in the most elementary of Freudian terms, represents sexual

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[35]Maupassant, p. 285.

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intercourse, with its very long train (the penis) travelling through (penetrating) a mysterious forest (the vagina), to a deep, deserted station (the obscure interior of the female genital), its protagonist hurrying to shut her suitcase (such cases always in dreams symbolize, according to Freud, the female genital--thus this suggests the closure of orgasm) while rushing to meet her lover.[36]

Thus, through means poetic and, if not exactly subtle, indirect enough to elude the Hays Office, The Private Affairs of Bel Ami endows its female characters with a range of subjective desires (including Madeleine's intellectual and political aims, as well as Clotilde's and Virginie's erotic ones) and substance which makes them, however much they may suffer, the agents of his story. They, after all, take away the name of Georges Duroy and substitute for it another, "pretty friend," which objectifies him, as women are so often objectified and diminished. They are all disappointed, betrayed or humiliated, but these women survive Georges, who dies in a duel (fig. 57) of Lewin's devising (in accordance with Hays Office imperative).[37]

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[36]See especially the chapter on "Representation by Symbols" in Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, transl. James Strachey. (New York, 1965), p. 385 ff.

[37]This duel, rather than with the tacked-on quality that so many other scenes devised to please the censors have, is rendered with atmospheric and ironic aplomb. It takes place in pouring rain, and Georges retains his umbrella throughout. He hits his antagonist, Philippe de Contel (Richard Fraser), a member of the fallen nobility fighting for his family name, who though severely wounded is afforded two minutes to retaliate, while Duroy must stay put

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When after Georges' demise, the lonely camera happens across a sign for La Petit Guignol and a disembodied voice (the film has had no narrator; the voice sounds like that of David Bond, the actor who played Norbert de Varenne) tells us that "We are all nothing but puppets unless we believe," one can only wonder in what we might believe. Madame Walter's vindictiveness (it was she that informed Philippe de Contel that Georges had "stolen" his title) discredits her Christian piety. Madeleine's ambitions have been foiled, along with Laroche-Mattieu's. Clotilde, perhaps, has been salvaged by her ability to love. This last possibility is favored by the short but eloquent scene, set at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, in which Marie de Varenne quietly gives voice to a love of transcendent proportions. In it and other scenes from Lewin's films, irony gives way to a sort of experimental sincerity, as I next discuss.

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on the field. These two minutes, at the very end of which Duroy is fatally shot, are rendered in real time--an almost unheard of conceit at this time. Igmar Bergman's similar use of real time in The Hour of the Wolf, more than twenty years later was considered radical.

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Chapter 5. THE MYSTERY AND MELANCHOLY OF A SCENE

There is a scene, near the end of The Picture of Dorian Gray in which the intensity of Dorian's sins and the inevitable degradation of his hidden life are given form in a way they had not been previously. The scene follows the one in which Dorian, having accompanied Gladys to Scotland Yard for her meeting with Sir Robert (who has been investigating her uncle Basil's disappearance and who informs Dorian of the suicide of Alan Campbell, whom Dorian had blackmailed into disposing of Basil's body), escorts her home. As he wishes her good-night at her door, the morbidity of the coming scene is prefigured by a sculpture based on those of Michelangelo's Giuliano de' Medici tomb that is visible in Basil's parlor through the open door. As Gladys shuts the door, the voice-over narrator explicates Dorian's dark thoughts, as he wonders whether Alan's blood, too, will spring forth from the portrait. The narrator explains that for Dorian "there were other paths to forgetfulness beside the one Alan Campbell had chosen," as Dorian instructs his cabby to take him to Blue Gate Field.

The scene at Blue Gate Field begins with what I call a "prelude" (it begins without music and ends when the Chopin "Prelude" is stopped) and then progresses to a full "movement" (which corresponds to the duration of the "Moonlight Sonata"). James Vane, who has been listening to

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the fire and brimstone of a street preacher,[1] is lured into the den of iniquity at Blue Gate Field that has been established already as a site of Dorian's infamy, by the strains of the same Chopin Prelude that he had heard "Sir Tristan" play for his sister Sibyl eighteen years before, shortly before he set sail on a merchant ship.[2] The "prelude's" semi-aerial view of the wretched, solitary house, in the dark and still of night, with Vane's running silhouette and its shadow, is one of the only outdoor scenes

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[1]The idea of the preacher and some of his lines are taken from a dialogue between Harry and Dorian in Wilde's novel, that, interestingly, occurs after Harry has asked Dorian to play Chopin for him (the relevant lines are underlined):

> "By the way, Dorian," he said after a pause, "'<u>what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose</u>--how does the quotation run?--<u>his own soul</u>'?"
>
> The music jarred and Dorian Gray started, and stared at his friend. "Why do you ask me that, Harry?"
>
> "My dear fellow," said Lord Henry, elevating his eyebrows in surprise, "I asked you because I thought you might be able to give me an answer. That is all. I was going through the Park last Sunday, and close by the Marble Arch there stood a little crowd of shabby-looking people listening to some vulgar street preacher. As I passed by, I heard the man yelling out that question to his audience. It struck me as being rather dramatic....I thought of telling the prophet that Art had a soul, but that man had not. I am afraid, however, he would not have understood me."
>
> "Don't, Harry. <u>The soul is a terrible reality. It can be bought and sold, and bartered away. It can be poisoned, or made perfect</u>. There is a soul in each one of us. I know it."

Oscar Wilde, <u>The Picture of Dorian Gray</u>, p. 185.

[2]James Beuselink, "Albert Lewin's Dorian Gray," <u>Films in Review</u>, Vol. 37, no. 2 (February 1986), p. 101, wrongly identifies the Prelude as number 22, in "G" Minor, Opus 28. A memo from Earl McEvoy (21 January 1944, USC), an assistant director on the film, includes Chopin's 24th Prelude, which was indeed the Prelude used, in a list of music for the film.

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of the film (although probably not "shot" out of doors) and recalls the expressionism of the moodiest of *noir* films and, more directly, the uncanny vistas of such Chirico paintings as The Mystery and Melancholy of a Street (1914). Lewin was a great admirer of Chirico, whose sensibility very much informs Lewin's visual field in general, with its manifold symbolism (clocks and phallic forms, for instance), classical allusions, deep perspectives, graphic shadows and often static, puppet-like treatment of figural tableaus. Most of all, it is the atmosphere of Chirico's work (the paintings of 1913 and 1914)--uncanny, mysterious, nostalgic--that Lewin aspired to reproduce. The Chirico connection will be further elaborated in my discussion of Lewin's next film, Pandora and the Flying Dutchman.

The "movement," played to the melancholic strains of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" and characterized by a heavy atmosphere of sexual and moral turpitude, stands out from the balance of the film by virtue of its almost lyrically integrated music, staging, dialogue and imagery. The complex, extra-diagetic narrative, music and detail that layers the rest of the film has generally operated on the principle of counterpoint, in which dense and sophisticated dialogue is "interpreted" by symbolically manifold imagery, with an almost Brechtian distance, wherein the exquisite artificiality of the treatment at once mimics and critiques the "mask-like" aestheticism of Dorian's ethos.

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The inelegant and more "realist" Blue Gate Field scene has as its major leitmotif a hangman's noose, which was prefigured by the coachman's whip that framed Dorian's head like a noose when he left Gladys: Vane fingers a bit of rope tied into a noose throughout the scene. Adrian Singleton, bitter and dissolute, and one of the many implied victims of Dorian's seductive evil, twice draws a gallows and noose (fig. 26), and he also recites three lines from a quatrain describing the hanging of a prisoner from Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Gaol."[3] The grim, almost narcotic tempo of the scene, especially in contrast to the sparkling banter of the social gatherings featured elsewhere in the film, and its pervasive sense of moral ennui manage to effect the spirit of Wilde's "opium dens, where one could buy oblivion, dens of horror where the memory of old sins could be destroyed by the madness of sins that were new,"[4] that the Production Code forbade representing so explicitly. Lewin's changes to Wilde's scenario, in which it was a "fallen" woman who betrayed Dorian to Vane by referring to him as "Prince Charming," allow Adrian (played very effectively by Morton Lowry), a talented and literate, now ruined young

---

[3] "But grim to see is the gallows-tree,
[With its adder-bitten root,]*
And, green or dry, a man must die
Before it bears its fruit!
*not recited by Adrian; Oscar Wilde, lines from "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," The Works of Oscar Wilde (Leicester, England, 1987), p. 825.

[4] Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, p. 159.

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gentleman, to add reflexively Wilde's own (later) morbid verse to the pathos of the scene.

There is another scene, in The Private Affairs of Bel Ami, that similarly, although much more sparingly, conducts its action to a diagetically motivated musical piece to which the actors' movements and lines are carefully and meaningfully choreographed and uttered. In it, Georges Duroy, the title character, comes up against the only woman among many in the film who is unmoved and unmovable by his charms, and who in the course of their dialogue, expresses the film's sharpest reproof of him. This scene takes place outside the Cathedral of Notre-Dame (fig. 53), where Georges has gone to complete an illicit tryst with the devoutly Roman Catholic and married Virginie Walter, and, unable to find her, has escaped the misty and oppressive atmosphere of the faithful (among whom stands an inexplicably frozen white figure in a cruciform posture), into the portal, where he encounters the intransigently "good" Marie de Varenne.

I explicate the two scenes here in detail, because they are not easily embraced by my general discussions of The Picture of Dorian Gray and The Private Affairs of Bel Ami. Articulation of them sheds light, however, on many visual and thematic traits of Lewin's films, traits that sometimes seem overwhelmed by the general tone of distance and erudition that Lewin's films adopt. [Note: in the following transcription, an asterisk (*) stands for an editorial cut]

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THE BLUE GATE FIELD SCENE:
(DORIAN GRAY)

long shot of a group around a preacher on a dark, sordid London street; the preacher's back is to camera; there is a screen-like opening in a wall behind the group

Preacher: One day we shall be awakened with suffering and dismay to the realization that the soul is not a superstition--

Dorian's carriage enters "screen" left; Dorian steps down, carriage begins off

That the spirit of man has a curious substance that can be viewed under a microscope. The eternal words are as true today as when He uttered them:

carriage gone; Dorian moving "screen" right

"Shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world

* *med-long shot of Dorian*

and lose his soul?" The soul is not an illusion. It is a terrible reality. It can be bought and sold and bartered away. It can be poisoned or made perfect.

close-up of Dorian

long shot of group, with gradual zoom to Vane, standing fiddling with his bit of rope

That man, rich or poor, who has the light of faith and charity within himself, even though he were plunged into the very pit of darkness,

music begins; full close-up of Vane

would still enjoy the clear light of day. But the wretched creature whose soul is filled with dark thoughts and foul deeds must dwell in darkness, even though he walk under the noonday sun, he must carry his own vile dungeon around with him...

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*dissolve to a dark wall with an arch, the inside of which is lit brilliantly, and through which Vane's shadow emerges, followed a few seconds later by his silhouetted figure; as he comes through the arcade arch, the strains of the Chopin prelude can be heard. Vane walks directly toward the camera, and as he nears it, recognition of the melody begins to dawn on his face. As his expression changes from perplexed to full recognition, he begins to run toward the music--the camera briefly tracks him toward it and another lit arch, then into the arcade; * a long, high-angled shot of the house and square before it with Vane's silhouetted figure and shadow running across the square on a diagonal; * a close-up of Vane standing still and looking focussed; he then rushes out of the frame; * interior of the opium den with close-up of a lamp and a bottle on a table and, out of focus in background, the table at which Adrian and Kate are seated, with the entrance door behind them. As the door opens and Vane enters, the focus quickly shifts from the still life objects to the background; Vane walks purposefully in toward camera, picks up lamp from table and steps with it to the piano; * medium close-up of pianist and his distinct shadow, with Vane's hand and lamp held toward him screen left; pianist looks up at Vane; * Vane scrutinizing pianist's elderly face and his dawning disappointment; * longer shot from behind piano as the French woman walks up to and stands beside Vane*

Vane: What's that you're playing? — * *close-up of pianist*

It has a name, hasn't it?

Pianist: A kind of name... it's called "Prelude." — * *medium shot of the three from behind the piano; Vane puts some money down emphatically*

Vane: Play something else — *the pianist immediately begins playing "Moonlight Sonata" and the French woman takes Vane's arm and turns him toward the tables; camera tracks slightly toward screen left with them as she guides him to a table and seats him, back-to-screen, then walks around table to sit. *Cut 90 degrees clockwise to her seating herself opposite him, asking as she does:*

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Woman: Why you do not like that music?

a hunchback "waiter" approaches; Vane is knotting his rope

Vane: I heard someone play that piece before

hunchback puts down bottle, glasses, staring eerily at both parties, Vane puts a coin on table for him and he picks it up as Vane continues

Eighteen years ago

Woman opens bottle and pours

Woman: A woman?

Vane shakes his head

Vane: Every time I get back to London I look for him. Sir Tristan, my sister called him, because he was like a knight. If he was in Rangoon or Valparaiso I'd find him, but in London it's like looking for a needle in a haystack. I don't know his real name. I don't even know what he looks like

Woman: And when you find him, what will you do?

** close-up of Vane and his hands; he slowly pulls noose tight; * previous shot, as door from upstairs opens and Dorian enters*

Woman: Maybe he's dead already. Did you think of that?

*Dorian slowly looks around; * over-her-shoulder shot of Vane, who downs his drink*

Vane: I'll keep on looking

*Vane looks at the woman closely for the first time; * over-his-shoulder shot of French woman*

Vane: You're not English

Woman smiles knowingly

Woman: What is English? There are men... and there are women

She pours two more drinks

** med-long shot of Dorian facing Adrian and Kate*

Adrian: This is Sir Tristan, Kate, darling

** close-up of Dorian*

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Dorian: I've asked you not to call me that, Adrian

** medium close-up of Adrian, drawing in chalk on the table, and Kate, smiling somewhat shamelessly at Dorian*

Adrian: I heard Lord Henry call you Sir Tristan. At the time I thought it fit

** back to close-up of Dorian*

Dorian: Why do we never see you?

** close-up of Adrian*

Adrian: I have all I need here... drink, drugs, and no friends

Adrian looks up bitterly at Dorian

I had too many friends

** close-up of Dorian*

Kate: Oh, he's drawing a picture of you, Sir! Have a look

** medium-long shot of group*

Dorian moves around table toward Adrian, with camera tracking slightly left and forward with him

Adrian: What would you like? Song? Poem? Painting?

** close-up of Adrian as Dorian has reached his shoulder*

I do all three surpassingly well

** high angle medium shot with Dorian screen left and an upside-down view of Adrian's drawing*

Seems to me there's something lacking...

** close-up of Adrian, turning his head to look back up at Dorian, rolling it back against wall with a miserable expression on his face; * close-up of Dorian; * high angle shot of group with drawing*

I have it!

Adrian leans forward and begins drawing what appears to be a frame around the head

But grim to see is the gallows tree

he turns the frame into a gallows by swiftly drawing

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*a noose around the neck; * close-up of Dorian*

Dorian: Goodbye, Adrian

** medium shot of group with camera facing the entrance, toward which Dorian turns to exit*

Adrian: And green or dry, a man must die, before it bears its fruit!

Dorian is in the doorway, about to close the door

Goodbye, Sir Tristan!

** close-up of Vane, looking up sharply; * long shot of Dorian shutting the door behind him with Vane rising from his seat in the foreground; Vane strides over to Adrian, camera tracking slightly left and forward with him, stopping at a medium-long shot of the three*

Vane: What did you call him?

Adrian: Sit down. I'll draw your picture for the price of three drinks

the French woman crosses screen L>R and stops back to camera

... four drinks.

Vane: Sir Tristan, you said

Adrian: And Sir Tristan rode forth into the forest, seeking his only love...

*Vane charges out door; * close-up of French woman*

Woman: He is going to kill your friend

** medium long shot of group*

Adrian: Justice has come to England!

Adrian downs his drink, rises, stumbles out after Vane, muttering an inaudible line; the women move to follow him. Adrian, accompanied by the two women, follows Vane outdoors (where the piano is no longer audible), and finds that Vane has already allowed Dorian to escape, not having imagined that a face could remain so youthful for twenty years. When Vane explains this to Adrian, Adrian informs him that "Dorian Gray has looked twenty-two for the last twenty

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years." Vane asks Adrian to repeat the name and Adrian, who has been drawing another gallows (as extra-diagetic music swells dramatically), writes Dorian's name and estate next to it on the wall. The gesture of his sweeping underlining of his "text" dissolves into the next scene, in which a rushing train takes Dorian, Lord Henry and Vane to Selby.

THE SCENE AT NOTRE-DAME (BEL AMI):

This scene takes place at the cathedral of Notre-Dame, where Georges Duroy (Bel Ami) has gone to meet Madame Walter, the devout wife of the publisher of La Vie Française, the paper for which Georges writes. He has persuaded her to meet secretly, but she has insisted on the Cathedral for their first tête-à-tête.

The first part of the scene (its "prelude") takes place inside the cathedral and has no dialogue. The first shot is a high-angle one of Norbert de Varenne, blind composer and music critic of La Vie Française, seated at the church organ high up in the organ loft; the first five or six chords he plays are a motif from the film's score, but he then begins what sounds like a modern variation on a baroque religious theme.

The second shot is a long view of what appears to be a side or transept chapel in the Cathedral. In the back of the shot can be seen the organ loft, just below a rose window, through which misty white light flows. In the middle ground is a large pier (screen left) and after a space which serves as an aisle, the back rows of the five or six row deep rows of chairs that are lined up to the foreground, where the very top of a railing suggests the presence of an altar (where the camera is placed). There are two silhouetted, seated figures in the back row and amidst the chairs, enigmatically, is an absolutely static figure standing arms outstretched in a kind of crucified supplication. The figure is very white, but is not only strangely placed for a church sculpture, but appears to have the outlines of a man in modern dress (in other words, it looks like a George Segal sculpture!).

*Georges enters the shot from behind the pier, screen left, and stops at the back of the aisle; * a medium shot of him next to a table of votive candles, looking around for Madame Walter, who is nowhere to be seen. * Back to long view as he walks several paces down the aisle, stopping next to the large pier. A silhouetted man enters the foreground, screen right, and kneels before the rail, crossing himself; * close-up of Georges, who looking around once more, turns his back to the camera and walks away from it toward the organ and rose window; * 180 degree shift to a high-angle shot of Georges walking quickly toward camera, then suddenly stopping and lifting his head in curiosity toward the organ loft; * a view from behind of Varenne at the organ and then to a frontal view; * back to the high-angle close-up of*

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*Georges; * the long shot from the altar, as Georges resumes his departure, disappearing behind the pier.*

*The body of the scene takes place in a portal to the Cathedral, just below the rose window seen inside. The portal's floor is checkered. The first shot of this part of the scene, from an oblique point of view from the inner doors of the portal toward the outside, shows a pier and opened iron gate (screen left), a large pier (evidently a trumeau) toward the right, while the extreme right foreground is cut off by the edge of a wall or pier. In the background there is a street or sidewalk, beyond it a low stone wall, and behind it can be seen rooftops and trees. Although the scene appears to be shot in bright daylight (there are long shadows, and Georges' appointment with Madame Walter was for half past three), it must have been shot in a studio and the roofs and trees must be a backdrop; the rose window, which would appear dark against marble walls in daylight, in fact appears bright and illumined from within in this scene. Georges enters this shot from the extreme right foreground and walks on a diagonal toward the left background, where he suddenly stops, having observed something outside of the frame to the right; * a medium shot of him standing at the edge of the portal near the gate, watching someone walking into the other side of the portal, evidently; cut back to long shot as Georges watches Madame de Varenne, whose long shadow precedes her, enter the scene, carrying her violin case.*

Georges: Madame de Varenne!

She stops

You are surprised to see me here, but do not be alarmed. I am not a reformed character

Georges takes several steps toward her

** low-angle close-up of Marie above whose left shoulder (screen right) is the rose window, which glows inexplicably white on the dark wall*

Marie: I am quite sure of that

*she begins to turn away; * medium shot of the two, as she, having turned begins to walk toward the camera*

Georges: May I ask you something?

she turns when he addresses her

I've been puzzled about you ever since I first saw you

as he speaks, Georges walks in a half circle around her stopping with his back to

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with your husband. You are somehow not like other women

*the rose window; * close-up of him, with the rose window above his right shoulder (screen left); * close-up of her*

Marie: What are other women like, Monsieur?

** back to same close-up of Georges*

Georges: Usually women strike me as being incredibly stupid. They can be caught by a look, a smile, a compliment--anything that touches their vanity. It is impossible not to despise them.

*Georges steps out of the frame; * medium shot of two as he walks another half-circle around her*

But you're different. I understood at once that you are not to be taken in by such devices

** close-up of Marie with rose window*

Marie: Why should you wish to take me in at all? I could not help you to gain money or position

Georges: You do me an injustice

*Marie smiles and turns to go; * a medium shot of the two with the gate behind him*

Wait!

She turns back toward him

Why do you smile?

** close-up of her*

Marie: Because you're ridiculous

** medium close-up of him*

Georges: Is it ridiculous to wonder why a woman like you should marry a man who cannot even see that she is beautiful?

** longer shot of portal*

I confess, it seems unnatural to me. What made you waste your beauty on a man who is blind?

*Georges again walks a half-circle around Marie; * close-up of her*

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Marie: How is one to explain such a thing to a man like you?

** back to close-up of him*

Georges: Try

** extreme close-up of Marie*

Marie: I admire his mind and I love his soul. There's a quality in him you could never comprehend

*As she speaks, slowly, she looks up toward the source of the music; * a medium shot of both as she moves around him toward the music and he takes a few steps after her*

Georges: What is that quality?

** close-up of Marie*

Marie: A kind of... grace... that comes from being gentle and good. And faith that endures in spite of manner of experience

** medium shot of the two with the pier (trumeau) between them*

Georges: If he should die, surely you'd find someone else to adore

she turns to go

One moment more

she stops, but doesn't turn toward him

What do you think of me, really?

now she turns

Marie: I think you're contemptible

** full frontal close-up of him*

Georges: Shall I tell you what I think of you?

Marie: It has no interest for me

Georges: I think you're probably the only really good woman I've ever known

** close-up of her*

Marie: I'm sorry for you, Monsieur. There are millions of us

** a longer shot of the two Marie turns and begins climbing a staircase at extreme screen right, as Georges stands quite still and watches her leave*

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Both of these scenes are rather short, especially the one from Bel Ami, but both have a complex mise-en-scène and feature a distinctly uneconomical use of shots.[5] Neither scene is taken from the novel from which the film is adapted; each is therefore scripted entirely by Lewin. Standing out, as they do, from the more ironic and reflexive contexts in which they are set, I take these scenes to be Albert Lewin's experiments with solving what he took to be the major problem of talking cinema, that is its tendency, by virtue of its focus on synchronized speech (and its correlative tendency to render speech visible through predictable, frontal, fairly close shots--and dialogue by simple cross-cutting), to relegate staging, music and visual complexity to lesser roles. "Action and dialogue should be co-ordinated with the original musical score," Lewin stated to an interviewer in 1947. "The actors would say their lines and make their movements corresponding with the rhythm of music."[6] Both technical and expressive aspects of these

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[5]The scene from Bel Ami, for instance, is 3 minutes and 24 seconds long and features 34 shots (thus averaging one shot every six seconds). I compared this to a randomly selected passage in a contemporary film of the same genre and "class," Madame Bovary, directed by Vincente Minnelli (not renowned for filmic economy), which featured 19 shots in the same period of time.

[6]Joseph Wechsberg, "Sins That Pay Their Way," 47, the Magazine of the Year, Vol. I, no. 1 (March 1947), p. 149.
Lewin elaborated on this in the last year of his life in an interview with John Russell Taylor, who described Lewin's sense "that to show people talking on screen while you hear what they are saying is nearly always enfeebling." "I really only caught on to the implication of what I'd been

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scenes can be seen in many passages elsewhere in these two films,[7] as well as in the Lewin films that follow in fifties. But few of these have the sense of completeness that the circumscription of these two scenes by uninterrupted and diagetically strong musical scores (by Beethoven and Milhaud) allows.

It is my feeling that these "experiments"--which might appear, ironically, in part because of their lyricism, less overtly "radical" than are the films overall in which they appear can be seen as self-contained set pieces. They are films within the films--not in a reflexive sense--but rather in the sense of appearing to construct less critically mediated, more artistically "sincere" passages which undertake the challenge of cinematically expressing deeply moving affect by means quite other than the sentimental and predictable conventions usually adopted by Hollywood films.

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doing at the end of my career, when it was too late," he is then quoted as saying. "But I think I now have the answer....Nowadays so much filming is post-synchronised: the film and the sound are separately conceived and artificially combined afterwards. But these separate creations are done in the wrong order. The thing to do is to record a perfect track first, and then get the actors to perform to a playback for the cameras....the difference this makes to the sharpness and rhythm of the playing is fantastic. I've done it in bits and pieces in all my films....I would have liked so much to try it throughout in just one film..." Arkadin, "Film Clips," Sight and Sound, Vol. 37, no. 1 (Winter 1967/68), pp. 47-48.

[7]Often in scenes that rely heavily on music, for instance: the scenes earlier in Dorian Gray, in which Dorian plays the Chopin piece for Sibyl; and, in Bel Ami, the scene at Forestier's death bed, which is very atmospherically constructed, with deep focus and dramatic, slashing shadows that fragment Georges' and Madeleine's faces and figures.

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It is not the characters who are moved; nor is it they who are moving. These scenes are moving as a whole due to the effect of their coherent fusion of musical, poetic, balletic and compositional parts. They are rather self-sufficient, miniature *Gesamtkunstwerke*.

In each of the two scenes, music imbues the scenario with a lamentful and moral tone that suggests the almost tragic insufficiency of the characters, as though a force behind the music were compelling their senseless movements. This sense of characters moved about as puppets or as chessmen on a board occurs often in Lewin's films, and is rendered often with less affect than it is in these scenes. Not coincidentally, puppets, dolls and marionettes are constant leitmotifs in Dorian Gray and Bel Ami, and not only do chess boards appear in several of Lewin's films, but all three of his black-and-white films are characterized by prolific use of checkerboard-like floors upon which his characters move (or are moved) deliberately about.[8]

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[8]The invocation of the game of chess clearly suggests an existential view of the narrative events, but also must be seen in the light of the Surrealist fascination with the game. Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp, both of whom were friendly with Lewin, were two of the avant-garde's most ardent chess lovers and Lewin, of course, used one of Man Ray's chess sets in Pandora. Hans Richter later collaborated with Lewin's friends Duchamp, Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, among others, in bringing the chess board to life in his Surrealist anthology film, 8 x 8 (1957).

Lewin's awareness of the Surrealist's engagement with chess is reflected in a line from his later novel, The Unaltered Cat: "Suddenly these vociferous nonconformists are in undeviating agreement on the literary and philosophical significance of the Marquis de Sade, on the sublimity of "Maldoror" by Lautréamont, and on the unparalleled virtues

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Interestingly, both scenes are introduced by the mystery and melancholy of Christian faith: the scene in Blue Gate Field by the street preacher's gloomy admonitions; the scene in Bel Ami by Georges Duroy's uneasy stroll through the Cathedral of Notre-Dame. The moral intensity of the scenes, however, belies a strictly Christian interpretation. The scenes are morbid and claustrophobic and offer no sense of possible redemption for the vengeful James Vane, the utterly sinful Dorian, or the ambitious, adulterous Duroy.

Both scenes, too, exploit their melancholic methods to the evocation of a pitched sexual tension. Although the Blue Gate Field scene is not "about" an encounter between a man and a woman, as the Bel Ami scene at Notre Dame is, it has at its center the rather enigmatic encounter between the sultry French woman and James Vane, in which their conversation is diverted momentarily from the topic of revenge to that of sex, when Vane observes that she is not English and she responds, "What is English? There are men... and there are women." This line, which in no manner advances the manifest content of the scene, draws sexual difference into the web of tensions drawn around the scene.

In the scene from Bel Ami, sexual difference is the scaffolding upon which the drama is hung. George Sanders as Duroy, while expressing the contempt for women that he brandishes in all three of his Lewin roles, circles around

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of the game of chess." (New York, 1967), p. 102.

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Marie de Varenne like a predator. She, meanwhile, articulates a "feminine" view of love--of grace--that is less about desire than about faith. It is the film's only hint that its world is not bound entirely by ambition, greed, vanity, pride, hypocrisy and lust. Spoken rhythmically to the music, these incomprehending dialogues between men and women acquire a lyrical sadness.

It is the tension that I have remarked already, between what I call, for want of better terms, Lewin's academic (or critical) and artistic penchants, that might allow such lyrical passages to become lost in the overall sense of density and irony of his films. This is a palpable problem for such ambivalent fans as Jean-Pierre Coursodon and Bertrand Tavernier, who describe Lewin as having been:

> a rare and precious auteur, but he remained always a dilettante, who played with cinema as with a marvelous toy and whose talent always took refuge behind irony. It is even permissible to ask if this attitude does not correspond to an avowal of impotence on the part of an artist incapable of realizing the plenitude of his gifts.[9]

Coursodon and Tavernier seem to sense the potential of Lewin's films to effect a rather unusual, lyrical and elegiac synthesis of filmic elements in passages such as those I have discussed, and they take it to be a loss for

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[9]"*Albert Lewin était un auteur rare et précieux, mais il resta tourjours un dilettante, qui jouait avec le cinéma comme avec un jouet merveilleux et dont le talent se retranchait tourjours derrière l'ironie. Il est même permis de se demander si cette attitude ne correspondait pas à un aveu d'impuissance de la part d'un artiste incapable d'assumer la plénitude de ses dons.*" Trente ans de cinéma américaine (Paris, 1970).

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cinema that Lewin lacked the will (virility?!) to devote his gifts to films that were wholly sincere in this manner. I think these critics fail to appreciate, however, how rich (and in a sense before their time) Lewin's films were in terms of their multi-layered countenances.

Each one is like an archaeological site, in which the well preserved remains of a slightly strange outpost of a recognizable civilization (the Classical Hollywood Cinema) stands upon the residue of many others (Modern literature, Classical art, Asian philosophy, Medieval legend, Ancient mythology, etc.). And thus beneath the diegesis, with its obvious and enduring narrative appeals (i.e. sexual allure, glamorous wealth, shameless ambition, moral corruption, unforseen horror), can be glimpsed a wealth of symbols, metaphors, and allusions, while more or less sensible beneath the rubble of these (depending upon the knowledge, curiosity and determination of the archaeologist), the site is supported by the buried walls of disparate cities of knowledge and erudition, buttressed by irony, perversity and play.

If this sounds altogether too grandiose, I should add that a lot of art works this way. If the commercial cinema more often than other art forms relied on formulae, which is undoubtedly debatable, it was certainly not the case that it

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had to. Such "archaeological"[10] works (so often tinged with irony) have a varied history in the modern period, particularly in literature, from Flaubert's Salammbo and Temptation of Saint Anthony, to Joyce's Ulysses to Rushdie's The Satanic Verses, but also in visual art and cinema, from Manet's Dejeuner sur l'herbe to Duchamp's Large Glass, to Godard's Contempt. If Lewin does not seem of the "magnitude" of these artists, that does not alter the fact that his work shares many features with their's--particularly in the domain of pastiche. And unlike Coursodon and Tavernier, I am loathe to dismiss work on the basis of the humor or irony of pastiche, which I take to have very important places in the history of the arts and, especially, in the modern period, when, for the first time, these elements were successfully introduced into the "higher" forms of visual art.

Since archaeology might seem an arbitrary metaphor for the eclectic, ironic, historical sensibility I have been describing, I should like to take this opportunity to reinforce it with some excerpts from Albert Lewin's correspondence, in which he displays an irresistible range of erudition, insight and pure silliness in his irreverent musings on antiquity. The letters from which I quote were

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[10]In adopting this metaphor I am influenced, undoubtedly, by both Freud's adoption of archaeology as a metaphor for psychoanalysis and by Foucault's use of it as a model epistemology in his Archaeology of Knowledge, A.M. Sheridan Smith, trans. (New York, 1972), but am neither engaging either theory directly, nor proposing one of such magnitude.

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written during the Second World War, about which Lewin had rather strong feelings, as did his correspondent, Ernestine Evans, in the months preceding the attack on Pearl Harbor (the very same period during which Lewin's last film as a producer, So Ends Our Night--based upon Flotsam, an anti-Nazi novel by Erich Maria Remarque--was being investigated by Congress for propagandizing for U.S. entry into the War). In the first of these Lewin responds to Evans' metaphoric invocation of the Minotaur as an image of fascist might:

> The bull of Minos is, of course, reputed to have met his end on a Greek dagger--an unbearable disgrace, no doubt, for the effete Cretans, who must have regarded the Greeks as boors and clowns.

Lewin proceeds, with great efficiency and cleverness, to recast the myths of Theseus, Ariadne (whom he "threw... aside like a used glove on the island of Naxos, now occupied by Mussolini"), and the hero's father, Aegeus ("whom he regarded, perhaps, as an old poop") in language riddled with contemporary vernacular, anachronistic references and psychoanalytic presumption, concluding:

> Ariadne, having spun a long thread, could do no better than give her name to a spider; while the old man at least gave his name as well as his life to the sea. I wonder how many millennia will have to pass before that charnel-house, the Mediterranean, is stuffed to its shores with the bones of men and ships. Those of Aegeus do not lack company. But if by bringing up the Minotaur you seek an analogy for Hitler, I don't know where you will find your white knight with a Greek dagger. Churchill doesn't resemble him much.[11]

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[11]Albert Lewin, letter to Ernestine Evans, 22 July 1941, USC.

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Evans's response to this tale evidently included the observation that the story of Theseus seemed ideal material for a Mozart opera, for Lewin's next letter to her maintains:

> Of course Mozart could do very well with Theseus and Ariadne and I am prepared to work with him if you resurrect him. He might do equally well with another Greek tale that always seemed to me an ideal libretto, Io.

He then narrates the story of Zeus's dalliance with a young shepherdess as if it were a drawing-room movie comedy and tells of the ecstatic couple's unwelcome interruption by Juno, whose jealousy moves Zeus to transform the girl into a cow. "Juno was not deceived," he notes, "but proceeded to admire the beast inordinately, stroking its shanks and buttocks and tickling its teats. I'm afraid Io was too normal a young lady to have gotten any pleasure out of these caresses." In order that Zeus not have the opportunity to change Io back into a more suitable object, according to Lewin, Juno assigns the hundred-eyed Argus, who cannot sleep so long as one eye is open, to guard the cow. Meanwhile, Io's brother and father, who have been searching for the missing girl, actually happen upon her, but do not recognize her in her bovine manifestation. Then "Zeus persuaded Apollo, the Bing Crosby of Olympus, to see what he could do with Argus. Phoebus...at last wore the watchman down. He stabbed him to the heart, and Jupiter quickly translated Io, I believe, to Egypt, where cows, I am told, were in better repute."

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Lewin's version of events reflects, in addition to his command of mythic narrative, that facility for knowing a good story when he saw one, for which he was dubbed during his many years at M-G-M, Irving Thalberg's "story brain."[12] In fact, the Io tale as told to Ernestine Evans, Lewin claims somewhat disingenuously at the conclusion of the letter, had been run through the M-G-M story department many years before:

> Anita Loos and I once developed this fable into a scenario but nobody was interested. We even had a wonderful melodramatic chase finish. Io was sent, with a large herd, to the Chicago stockyards. Ahead of her the fatal knife fell with inexorable rhythm. Soon it would be her turn. She was saved, however, you will be glad to know, at the last moment, in a most ingenious way.[13]

The learned irreverance Lewin brings to his reading of Classical texts allows him to treat them as object lessons in the vicissitudes of human psychology, politics, history, sexuality and entertainment.[14] But his musings reveal

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[12]Not only was he head of the M-G-M story department from 1927 until he was moved to Thalberg's right hand, but his reputation as Thalberg's "resident intellectual" is constantly reiterated in accounts of M-G-M's golden years.

[13]Albert Lewin, letter to Ernestine Evans, 1 August 1941, USC.

[14]Lewin was no more reverant of religious texts: "Incidentally I am struck anew by the appalling sordidness of these early Jewish heroes, who do nothing but cheat and betray each other....It is astounding that such stories should be taught to children as exemplary. Probably all primitive tales, however, are full of such betrayal. I was struck by the same thing in reading the Arthurian material. In fact, I came to the conclusion that chivalry could be defined as the technique of adultery." Letter to Charles Reznikoff, 7 August 1941, USC.

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equally an intense regard for, almost an identification with the most ancient of characters. His archaeological sensibility is not just "academic." It suggests an imagination that is wont to roam across barriers of time and space and history. Lewin's lively and playful sense of classical literature combined with his love of cinema to allow him to imagine some rather unlikely movies, such as one he fantasizes about (albeit rather ironically) in a third letter from that autumn of 1941 to Ernestine Evans.

> I've always wanted to photograph [Andromache] standing on the battlements with her child in her arms, while Achilles dragged the corpse of her husband around the walls. It is a great movie story and there is always the possibility that it will be done by Cecil B. de Mille, though I imagine he would prefer to bear down on Paris and Venus and Helen. "Sunt quos curriculi pulverum Olympicum."

Nor did Lewin adopt the usual gravity toward modern classics, such as Kafka's Castle, which, when he read it in 1941, he thought "would be a wonderful story for Groucho Marx." Letter to John Davenport, 8 October 1941 USC.

Lewin's proposed casting is rather shocking on the face of it, but has a definite logic. Philip Roth had the same idea some years later when he was working on Portnoy's Complaint: "I was teaching a good deal of Kafka in a course I gave... when I look back now upon the reading I assigned that year I realize that the course might have been called 'Studies in Guilt and Persecution.'....My students probably thought I was being deliberately blasphemous or simply entertaining them when I began to describe the movie that could be made of The Castle, with Groucho Marx as K. and Chico and Harpo as the two "assistants." But I meant it." George Plimpton, "Philip Roth's Exact Intent" (an interview), in The Perverse Imagination: Sexuality and Literary Culture, Irving Buchen, ed. (New York, 1970), pp. 185-186.

Is it just a coincidence that Lewin's brother, William Lewin, was the head of the English Department at Weequahic High School in Newark when Roth attended it?

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Despite all the tongue-in-cheek, even rather sophomoric impulses displayed in these revisionist mythologies, Lewin's tales betray a genuine and spirited artfulness. Although he goes on to deride the manner of Hollywood's typical treatment of antique themes, his image of Andromache upon the Trojan walls is a sincere and evocative one. He concludes this third letter with a confession of desire that I take to be an avowal of inspiration:

> The Athenians...were only savages when Andromache said good-bye to her husband on the walls of Troy, and Athens itself was surely nor more than a rude village. In Athens today (or yesterday) one can see, under glass, the ornaments that were worn by the women of the Greeks who did fight at Troy. Beautiful and sophisticated gold ornaments from the boudoirs of Mycenae, that fill me with a very lively desire.[15]

The archaeological layering of Lewin's films--their strange interweaving of complex literary and artistic allusions, symbols, imagery--would only become stronger in the 1950s, and, along with anthropology, archeaology is literally thematized in his films of that decade. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, the next film to be discussed, not only consists of Lewin's original and concertedly Surrealist conflation of ancient myth (Pandora), medieval legend (the Flying Dutchman), and even Renaissance tragedy (Othello), but is a compendium of the literary and aesthetic objects of Lewin's "very lively desire," in which an antique manuscript tells of the Dutchman's return from sea to his young wife,

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[15]Albert Lewin, letter to Ernestine Evans, 9 October 1941, USC.

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his "hands and pockets full of earrings and necklaces and circlets for her delicate arms--souvenirs of strange lands to beguile and delight her," in language reminiscent of the letters written to Ernestine Evans on the eve of Lewin's directorial career. And Pandora is narrated by an archaeologist and is set among ancient ruins on the Spanish coast of "that charnel-house, the Mediterranean,...stuffed to its shores with the bones of men and ships."

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PART II

REINCARNATION, VOODOO, LYCANTHROPY AND OTHER FEMININE DESTINIES

(in Technicolor, on location, and on paper)

ALBERT LEWIN'S FILMS OF THE FIFTIES

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Chapter 6. *LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI*: PANDORA AND THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (1951)

> If it weren't for my love of form, I might perhaps have been a great mystic. --Gustave Flaubert[1]
>
> What I hear is valueless; only what I see is living, and when I close my eyes my vision is even more powerful. --Giorgio de Chirico[2]
>
> ...it is nevertheless perhaps not useless to persuade ourselves that this idea of a unique love comes from a mystic attitude... --André Breton[3]
>
> The materialist says that only appearance is real. The mystic (or realist, in the medieval sense) says there is a reality beyond appearance. Appearance, in fact, may not only be not a clue to reality, but a barrier. How many senses do we need to perceive reality? None; since many more than five would still not suffice. The beginning of knowledge is blindness, deafness, the absence of taste, touch, smell. --Albert Lewin[4]

Although Albert Lewin had begun work on his original screenplay, Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, as early as 1946,[5] and had researched the legend of the Ghost Ship even earlier, his film was not produced until 1950, not released until 1951. And its appearance leads to the impression of what one might call a "sea change" in his work and in his

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[1]Mrosovsky, p. 23, quoting Flaubert, letter to Louise Colet, 1850s, from Corr Vol. II, p. 77.

[2]Giorgio de Chirico, "Mystery and Creation," London Bulletin, No. 6 (October 1938), p. 14, reprinted in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., Art in Theory, 1900-1990 (Cambridge, MA, 1993), p. 60.

[3]Mad Love *(L'Amour fou)*, trans. Mary Ann Caws (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1987), p. 7.

[4]Albert Lewin, letter to Helen (Freeman?), 30 May 1951, USC.

[5]There are rough notes for The Flying Dutchman dating from 1946 and 1947 among Lewin's papers at USC.

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world. As has been much noted, here and elsewhere, the three films that Lewin directed in the 1940s are bound together by a number of consistent visual, thematic and structural attributes. They clearly represent one body of work, the exploration of one nexus of concerns, constructed within the restraints of the studio system (although two of the three were "independently" produced). The fastidious black-and-white interiors crafted under Lewin's and Gordon Wiles' supervision, the European *fin-de-siècle* settings, the pathologically attractive male protagonists, the explosions of paintings in color, the crafty symbolism and dense ironies--such features need not be further enumerated to notice in Lewin's first film of the 1950s a radical shift in terms.

Pandora and the Flying Dutchman at first glance seems to invert each of the abiding sensibilities of the films of the forties. This film is set largely out of doors, on the Spanish Costa Brava, where it was filmed in luxurious Technicolor by Jack Cardiff.[6] The mythical, romantic story (in which irony is relegated to a different role) is set in this century--about 1930, a period that must have been

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[6]The interiors were shot in London's Shepperton studios; the speed record scene was shot in South Wales.

Cardiff is one of color cinematography's most accomplished craftsmen; he is particularly esteemed for the work he did in this period with Michael Powell on Black Narcissus (1947) and The Red Shoes (1948), with Alfred Hitchcock on Under Capricorn (1949), John Boulting on The Magic Box (1951) and John Huston on The African Queen (1951).

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chosen at least in large part because of its association with the height of Surrealism. And the central figure (and what a figure!, one is tempted to exclaim) of this film is not only a woman, but, as embodied by Ava Gardner, she is Woman. She is Pandora, the first woman; she is also Eve, Pandora's Judeo-Christian equivalent. She is Ava Prima Pandora[7]--a "gift" to men from the gods, a "deadly delight," a *"beau mal."* Her allure is fatal. Men will sacrifice anything to possess her, including their lives.[8] She is *la belle dame sans merci*,[9] an avatar of that mystic

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[7]Dora and Erwin Panofsky, in Pandora's Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol (New York 1956), p. 60 ff., discuss the vicissitudes of meaning behind the somewhat enigmatic painting, Eva Prima Pandora, by Jean Cousin, in the Louvre. They speculate that its origin was in the design of a personification, Roma Prima Pandora, an allegorical companion to a figure of Lutetia Nova Pandora, which personified Paris on a Triumphal arch built for Henry II in 1549. The Panofskys further speculate that, when the second personification was eliminated from the arch, that Cousin adapted the scheme to this painting, renaming the figure according to a new and favorite Renaissance equation of Pandora with Eve.

[8]In the first scene after Geoffrey Fielding's framing narration, one that has been edited out of all extant U.S. prints, Reggie Demarest (Marius Goring), a dissolute admirer of Pandora's, drinks poison and dies in front of her and a tavern full of their friends after having his proposal of marriage cursorily rejected by her.

[9]The Keats poem not only provides the title for this chapter, but was also a favorite theme of Lewin's. He was a lifelong poet, although he did not publish poetry after 1917, when two of his verses, "Feet of the Wind" and "Twilight," dating from his Harvard Poetry Society days, were included in The Poetry Journal (Boston), Vol. 6, No. 4 (February 1917), p. 146. Drafts of a poem titled after Keats's are among many dozens of others with Lewin's papers at USC. Also there are research files for Pandora indicating that the Keats poem along with Arnold's "Dover Beach," which is cited in the film, his "The Forsaken Merman," and

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femme fatale who emerged in the Romantic period and came to haunt a whole strain of late Romanticism, to which Lewin proved himself so attached, that included Flaubert and Gautier, Symbolists such as Moreau and Huysmans and, ultimately, (although they altered her form), the Surrealists in France, as well as Keats and then the Decadents, including Wilde, Swinburne and Beardsley in England.[10]

Against this original, fatal female, Lewin sets an eternal man: the Flying Dutchman (James Mason), the "eternal Jew of the sea,"[11] Ulysses of the North.[12] And he becomes

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Baudelaire's "The Harbour" were all background for the film.

[10]A most atmospheric illumination of this "tradition" is Mario Praz's The Romantic Agony, which includes a chapter, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," that enumerates the incarnations of the fatal woman in European art and literature from the late 18th to the early 20th century. Praz's book first appeared in English in 1933 and I have little doubt that Lewin would have known it, so closely does it track many of his literary tastes. The second, heavily revised edition, coincidentally, appeared in English, from Oxford University Press, the same year that Pandora was released--1951--and includes a few added references to the Surrealists.

[11]"...*den ewigen Juden des Ozeans*." Heinrich Heine, Aus den Memoiren des Herren von Schnabelewopski, Heines Werke, Vol. 2 (East Berlin, 1981), p. 310.

[12]"*En passant de ses brumes wagnériennes à la pleine lumière du midi, la légende nordique s'allie à la fable grecque, et le Hollandais, Ulysse du septentrion, me le pied sur la terre des dieux* (On the way from its Wagnerian mists to the plain light of day, the nordic legend is allied with Greek fable, and the Dutchman, septentrional Ulysses, sets foot in the land of the gods)." Jean-Paul Török, "Eva Prima Pandora," L'Avant-Scène du Cinéma, No. 245 (April 1980), p. 4.

In choosing the obscure *septentrion*, as opposed to *Nord* or *boréal*, Török is probably playing on the word's

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fatal for her, yet saves her from the deadly, anaesthetic indifference of her life--the curse of being loved but not able to love, while she redeems him from his: eternally to be "...blown back and forth between Death and Life, neither of the two willing to claim him; his sorrow as deep as the sea upon which he drifts, his ship without anchor and his heart without hope."[13] Thus, the two redeem one another from parallel purgatories, from hopelessly barren existences: life without love and life without death. Eros and Thanatos, in this scenario are inexorably linked--interlaced like the fingers of Pandora's and Henrick's

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morphological relation to *septennal* (septennial), which can refer to the duration of the Dutchman's endless terms at sea. Török's article is full of such arcane connections, including all the hermeneutic possibilities raised by the Cousin painting "Eva Prima Pandora," which illustrates it.

Lewin, a lover not only of Homeric epic, but also of James Joyce, would not have been unaware of the affinity between the odysseys of the Dutchman and Ulysses.

[13]"*...so werde der arme Holländer zwischen Tod und Leben hin und her geschleudert, keins von beiden wolle ihn behalten; sein Schmerz sei tief wie das Meer, worauf er herumschwimmt, sein Schiff sei ohne Anker und sein Herz ohne Hoffnung.*" Heine, p. 311.

Lewin's screenplay follows these aspects of Heine's version of the legend faithfully, and this line from Heine is repeated almost verbatim in the Dutchman's recitation (in a part of it that is excised from American prints). Although Lewin conflates with the sin of blasphemy--Heine's and Wagner's, as well as the traditional explanation of the source of the curse--those of jealousy and murder, the sentence and the Dutchman's potential redemption are the same as in Heine, where: "*Der Teufel, dumm wie er ist, glaubt nicht an Weibertreue und erlaubte daher dem verwünschten Kapitän alle sieben Jahr einmal ans Land zu steigen und zu heuraten und bei dieser Gelegenheit seine Erlösung zu betrieben*" (The devil, stupid as he is, doesn't believe in female fidelity and thus allowed the accursed Captain to go on land every seven years to marry and through this opportunity to gain his redemption), p. 310.

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hands, the only visible parts, when their bodies, entangled in and obscured by a fisherman's net, are brought in from the sea in the opening, framing scene of the film.

This mystical (re)union is played out in excessively material sensuality among scenes and spectacles that juxtapose antiquity and modernity (archaeological ruins, deep-sea fishing, flamenco dancing, bullfights, beach parties, car races), in a fishing village *cum* expatriate resort called Hope (Esperanza), where, according to the film's archaeologist-narrator, Geoffrey Fielding (Harold Warrender; fig. 58)[14], an ancient treasure lies on the bottom of the sea. The treasure can be construed, in mythical terms, as Hope itself, the one blessing that remained at the bottom of Pandora's box (or krater[15]) after it was incautiously opened. And it is hope that

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[14]It should be noted that an earlier Lewin narrator, in The Moon and Sixpence, was also named Geoffrey.

[15]According to the Panofskys, the Greek word for the vessel in the classical versions of the Pandora myth is *pithos* and the Latin, *dolium*. They find Erasmus responsible for the substitution of the word *pyxis* for *pithos*, for exegetical reasons not particularly relevant here. A *pithos* is "a large earthenware storage jar used for the preservation of wine, oil, and other provisions, and often large enough to serve as a receptacle for the dead..." p. 7 ff.

It's interesting to note that the object that Geoffrey is reconstructing in the framing scenes of the film, during which he speaks to the film's viewer and proposes to reconstruct the story of Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, is a Greek krater, a close relative of a *pithos*.

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Pandora and Henrick find in Esperanza when they find one another.

Hope is the companion of Love in Ferdinand Alquié's analysis of what he calls the "philosophy of surrealism."[16] And surrealism was, in fact, the starting point of Pandora, as described by Lewin himself.

> It was natural...that I should try to create a film with a deliberately surrealist intention. This desire took form in "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman". The surrealist practice of juxtaposing ancient and modern images, particularly evident in the work of de Chirico and of Paul Delvaux, especially moved me.... Among other surrealist incidents in the film I might call attention to the scene of the racing car on the beach--a modern machine being driven at great speed past the statue of a Greek goddess standing on the sands. As a matter of fact, it was this image which was the original thought that prompted me to develop the entire story and film of "Pandora".[17]

The relationship between Pandora and Surrealist conceptions of Woman (*femme-enfant*), of love (*L'amour fou*), of fate (*hazard objectif*), of space, of time, and of the "marvelous" accounts in large part for the wild discrepancies between the responses of the film's fervent advocates--who have been mostly French--and its otherwise almost ubiquitous detractors. An extravagant, fetishistic and oneiric visual sensibility, that derives in equal and

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[16]Ferdinand Alquié. The Philosophy of Surrealism, trans. Bernard Waldrop (Ann Arbor, MI, 1969), pp. 5-16.

[17]Letter to Yves Kovacs, 1 July 1964, USC. The substantive portions of this letter, written in response to a request for a statement for a special double number ("Surréalisme et Cinéma") of Études Cinématographiques, appeared in French translation in the journal's second volume on this subject, Nos. 40-42 (1965), pp. 167-169.

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often undiscernible parts from Surrealism and from Hollywood, is aurally coated in this strangest of Lewin's films with a top-heavy script, in which literary pastiche is interwoven with mythic melodrama and which on the soundtrack is uttered with minimal affect and with sometimes agonizing languor by the actors.

But to link what some have called a "masterpiece" and others a "supreme folly"[18] to its obviously mixed parentage of Surrealism and Hollywood is, although vital, still inadequate. It is near impossible to convey the oddness that the film achieves in its very sensual denaturings of some of nature's most sensuous beauty (e.g. the Costa Brava by synthetic moonlight and Ava Gardner in each scene clad in another gown whose colors, textures and contours are consistently eye-popping[19]), in its flat,

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[18]In the "masterpiece" camp, one finds: François Truffaut, et. al. (1953), Ado Kyrou (1957), Jean-Paul Török (1980), Vincent Amiel (1982), Raphaël Bassan (1982), Jacqueline Nacache (1982), and Tom Milne (1985), among others.

The harshest members of the opposing camp include: C.A. Lejeune (1951), Richard Winnington (1951), Russell Davies (1985) and John Coleman (1985), who deemed Pandora a "supreme folly."

[19]These highly mannered costumes, designed by Beatrice Dawson with great sensitivity to the virtues of Ava Gardner's at once classic and voluptuous beauty, are each of a different color. Among the most notable: the off-the-shoulder, aquamarine, spangled mermaid gown Pandora wears in the Taverna scene in which she re-encounters Juan Montalvo; the vivid yellow, silk evening dress with flowers bursting from its brassiere, the scarf of which she drapes around an ancient statue (an Adonis-like figure on tiptoes that appears to be based on Hellenistic types such as a dancing satyr from Pompeii) in the scene after the beach party during which she confesses her love to Henrick; the

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even automatic delivery of sometimes lyrically poetic, sometimes onerously pedantic, and other times cloyingly melodramatic lines, in its juxtapositions of lavish, dynamic spectacles and simple, static compositions. Despite the claims of some critics that Pandora must be loved or despised,[20] its ambiguities and contradictions elicit in me a profound ambivalence. The excesses of admiration and contempt that are found in the critical responses to the film, I am inclined to see as reactions to something essentially paradoxical in the film.

I have twice witnessed and experienced this ambivalence with audiences of the film: once among a "mature" audience

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malachite green, marbled dress and matching turban she dons for the bullfight; and an almost inexplicable black gown with cape that is bordered with serration at the collarbone, shoulders, and sleeves, which is the last dress Pandora wears before her fatal second swim to Henrick's yacht.

Together Dawson, Cardiff, Lewin, the daylight of the Mediterranean, the day-for-night phosphorescent moonlight, and Technicolor conspire to dissolve the difference between movie goddess and "authentic" deity. It should be noted that Ava Gardner had blurred this particular boundary three years before, in the comedy One Touch of Venus (d. William Seiter, 1948), in which she played the goddess herself, come to life (á la Galatea-a myth with which Lewin was fascinated), via a truly cheesy department store statue. With rather uncanny symmetry, she performed a reverse feat three years after Pandora, in The Barefoot Contessa (d. Joseph Mankiewicz, 1954), in which she played a Spanish dancer turned into a Hollywood star and finally, after her tragic death, into a statue.

Perhaps, though, this is not a coincidental trilogy. According to James Mason, Mankiewicz, who, like Lewin, was given to making very wordy, self-conscious films, was "deeply impressed" by Pandora. Mason was interviewed by Rui Nogueira in Focus on Film, No. 2 (March-April 1970), p. 25.

[20]Claude Arnaud, "Albert Lewin: Les statues meurent aussi," Cinématographe 74 (January 1982), p. 58.

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Surrealism I taught at Hampshire College.[21] The Film Forum audience was generally well-mannered, but was manifestly uneasy, fidgety and uncomfortable at times, and occasionally stifled laughter. The laughter broke open widely at one point only, and, strangely, that was in response to a close-up of Man Ray's photographic "painting" of Ava Gardner in

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[21]It should be noted that on both occasions we were viewing a radically diminished version of the film, as the only extent prints in the U.S. (including that at the Library of Congress) were made from one edited for television in the early 1960s. "In my agreement with Romulus Films' John Woolf, I controlled the original cut on Pandora only for the first release. So when the film was re-released and then leased to TV, it was cut further and greatly damaged. The worst cuts are in the early exposition and creation of atmosphere.... Marius Goring, the English star, did me a favor and took the small role of a fellow who commits suicide over Ava....His whole part has been cut. The Flamenco troupe I used in the beginning is gone, too, and so is a beautiful song Dorothy Parker wrote, 'How Am I to Know?', that is sung by Ava." Lewin, as quoted by Doug McClelland, p. 187.

Lewin neglected in this interview to mention other very grave cuts, of scenes that contribute much of the film's Surrealist content, including: the aftermath of Pandora's desecration of Henrick's painting of her likeness, which I describe below; a part of Henrick's recitation in which he describes awaking to find a knife by his side that he had dreamt of dropping; the entire performance of Marguerite d'Alvarez as Señora Montalvo in a scene (entirely in un-subtitled Spanish) in which she reads Tarot cards and her son desecrates a portrait of his father; and among the most surreal passages from the beach party scene.I have counted twelve cut passages or scenes (there may be other small cuts that I missed), several of them major, and many of them including some of Lewin's most cherished, surrealist-based content.

I have seen the uncut original of Pandora only once, in Europe (and dubbed into German), and rely for my analysis of cut portions on memory and on an occasionally flawed, but very detailed, shot-by-shot description and line-by-line French translation of the film and its dialogue published in l'Avant-Scène du Cinéma, Vol. 245 (1 April 1980), pp. 7-71. My quotations of dialogue from these passages are, then, by virtue of being translated back into English, inexact.

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the 16th-century Dutch costume she is supposed to have worn in her first incarnation as the Dutchman's young bride, whom he murdered in a fit of sexual jealousy (see fig. 70).

The college students were not so restrained. From the moment that the film's bearded, professorial archeologist-narrator first turned to the camera to address the audience with grave pedantry, they were given over to bursts of glee. They laughed especially whenever the camera zoomed towards Geoffrey's knitted brow; they laughed at the solemnity with which Stephen Cameron (Nigel Patrick) sacrificed his beloved race car ("Pandora") to win the love of Pandora[22]; they laughed at their first glimpse of Henrick van der Zee in his 16th-century Captain's garb in the lengthy "flashback" (fig. 69); they laughed at the massive egotism and machismo of the bullfighter, Juan Montalvo (Mario Cabré, really a star toreador[23]); they laughed at the murder of a lap dog; they even laughed at a simple shot of Pandora at the piano. My

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[22]"The car itself created enormous attention as it roared through the village with Ava Gardner strapped to the mechanic's seat, for it is a 'star' in the racing world.... it is the Napier Railton racer in which John Cobb broke many speed records, including the 500 miles in Brooklyn and the 24 hours in America. As the story is set in the thirties--in the same era as Cobb's great racing feats--Al Lewin feels it is something of a triumph to have obtained the most suitable car in existence..." reported Catherine O'Brien in The Cinema Studio, Vol. 5, No. 110 (May 1950), p. 19.

[23]Reports of Cabré's affair on location with Ava Gardner, and the resulting rescue mission mounted by Frank Sinatra, her current fiance, were together responsible for a good deal of pre-release publicity for Pandora. There are two press books filled largely with accounts of this sensation among the Lewin papers at USC.

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students did not, interestingly, laugh at Man Ray's miniature, perhaps because I had told them to look for it, as well as for one of his chess sets.

I myself could never have laughed so often, so long, so hard--I find the film too rapturously beautiful--but I recognize something of what impelled my students to do so. Pandora is, while one of the most visually stunning films I have ever seen, almost ridiculous. It goes, so to speak, over the top, or, as it were beyond the boundaries. When interrogated some time after their laughter had subsided, my students attempted to explain the reasons for it. Pandora's self-consciousness was the first reason cited, then its artificiality, its mannered, labored quality. When pressed on what is funny about these qualities--what induced their laughter, some students admitted to feeling a certain embarrassment and an uncertainty about what the film, so to speak, wanted from them. One student characterized this strangely comical aspect as "almost camp," insightfully registering the same suspicion of travesty that led one of Lewin's French admirers, Raphaël Bassan, in a review of the film to describe Pandora as "almost a distantiated documentary about the magnetism of stars, perhaps the first 'camp' film."[24]

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[24]"Pandora *est presqu'un documentaire distancié sur le magnétisme des stars, peut-être le premier des films 'camp.'*" La Revue du cinéma, Vol. 368 (January 1982), p. 64.
It should not be forgotten that Lewin was the director who was eager to cast Greta Garbo, a "woman *en travesti*" in the role of Dorian Gray.

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Few reviewers of Pandora and the Flying Dutchman have even admitted, never mind grappled with, the drama of the film's reception, which I find almost as fascinating and paradoxical as the film itself. Only Tom Milne, who by the end of his 1985 review had placed himself firmly in the "French" camp of unqualified admirers, has confronted the issue head on:

> Made a decade or two earlier, Lewin's marvellous fantasy might at least stood some chance of being annexed to the surrealist pantheon. Instead critics, surprisingly unanimously, dismissed it as an embarrassingly arty aberration, a comedy of manners that was all too unintentionally comic and much too mannered. Characters who quote as liberally as Lewin's do always seem to be a source of unease--witness reactions to Godard's early work--as though mere quotation were itself a pretension. Yet as Godard realised (and if you consider Le Mépris in relation to Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, there can be little doubt where his debt lies), allusion is a rich source of *texture*, adducing tenuous parallels, reverberating echoes and mysterious insights in support of perspectives whereby (to quote Novalis) "The world becomes a dream and the dream becomes a world".[25]

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[25]Milne reviewed the film when it was shown as part of the series, "Visual Cinema," at London's Institute of Contemporary Arts in August of 1985. Monthly Film Bulletin, Vol. 52, No. 619 (August 1985), pp. 261-262.

Another Englishman and Lewin fan, John Russell Taylor, agrees with Milne about the similarities between Lewin and Godard. Taylor writes of the latter's Le Petit Soldat (1960) that it "is something of a problem picture, the problem being: is it an acute, detached study of silly, pretentious people or a silly, pretentious film about people its author takes to be intelligent? Not since the heyday of Albert Lewin has there been a film quite so stuffed with culture." Cinema Eye, Cinema Ear (New York, 1964), p. 214.

A number of Lewin's French admirers also believe they detect Lewin's influence in Godard 's films, particularly that of Pandora on Le Mépris (Contempt, 1963).

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Milne, strangely, since he is an expert on the French New Wave,[26] must have been thinking only of Anglo-American critics; in fact, Pandora was quickly annexed to Surrealist and New Wave pantheons in France, where Ava Gardner as Pandora was described in deliriously Surrealist prose under "G" in the Cahiers du Cinéma's dictionary, "F comme femme," in its 1953 "La femme et le cinéma" special number.[27] Ado Kyrou, France's most prolific late Surrealist film critic, too, adored the film, characterizing Gardner's Pandora, "with Lya Lys (of L'Age d'or) the only fiercely surrealist woman in all cinema."[28]

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[26]He was translator and an editor of Godard on Godard (London and New York, 1972) and author of numerous articles and reviews about the films of Godard, Chabrol and Rivette for Sight and Sound in the 1960s.

[27]*"Ici, Aurélia a le regard marin et la chevelure salée des ondines.... le corps d'Ava Gardner est pourtant celui de Pandora la première femme, qui avec ses cheveux dénoue les liens de toutes les fatalités.... quand les yeux de l'aube s'ouvrent sur le sable humide d'une plage inviolée, quand enfin dans le miroir de la cabine, Pandora réapparait... mais pour ne plus repartir...le cinéma redevenu la lanterne magique de notre enfance nous a emportés très loin et très haut sur l'aile des songes..."*
(Here Aurelia has the marine look and the salty tresses of Undine.... Ava Gardner's body is yet that of Pandora, the first woman, who, along with her hair, undoes the ties of all fatalities.... when the eyes of dawn open on the wet sands of an untouched beach, finally, when in the cabin mirror, Pandora reappears ...now never to leave...cinema, once again the magic lantern of our childhood, has borne us very far and very high on the wings of dreams...). François Truffaut, et.al. "F comme femme." Cahiers du Cinéma, Vol. 5, No. 30 (Christmas 1953), p. 33.

[28]*"avec Lya Lys (de L'Age d'or) la seule femme farouchement surréaliste de tout le cinéma."* Amour-Érotisme et Cinéma (Paris, 1957), p. 406.

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Nor have Pandora's detractors all been unaware of the film's Surrealist affiliations; some simply did not consider this a reliable endorsement. Russell Davies, for instance, also reviewing it for its London reprise in 1985, described it has having been "received at the time with a barrage of maledictions ('utter poverty of imagination and taste' wrote C.A. Lejeune) but it appealed, so the re-releasers tell us, to the Surrealists.... it's the sort of mixture that commonly gets called 'high camp,' but it's much too inorganic and effortful to qualify. See it, by all means, in the company of a 1950s Surrealist, but remember--with rare exceptions, they were a notoriously po-faced lot."[29]

> Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived as contradictions.
> André Breton, Second Manifesto of Surrealism[30]

Pandora and the Flying Dutchman is set in Coastal Spain in the same period in which the Second Manifesto of Surrealism appeared, a period in which two Spaniards--Salvador Dali, who created many hallucinatory images of nearly the same stretch of coast, and Luis Buñuel, director of the first really ambitious Surrealist films--had emerged as major new presences among the Surrealists, particularly for André Breton, whose (above quoted) faith in the

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[29]In the London Observer, August 4, 1985.

[30]Manifestoes of Surrealism, Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane, trans. (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1972), p. 123.

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dissolution of contradictions could be considered a *raison d'etre* for Lewin's film. I would argue that it was not only Lewin's "natural" desire to "to create a film with a deliberately surrealist intention" that is exercised in Pandora, but his interest in negotiating, or dissolving, formally the perceived contradictions between the "high" of Surrealism and the "low" of Hollywood, thematically those between "life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable," and authorially those between the two aspects of himself as auteur that I have described as creating a tension within his entire oeuvre--the ironic, academic, distantiated critic and the sincere, intuitive, sensitive artist.

I shall return to the means by which this synthesis is attempted, but want to conclude here that the nature of the film's reception must be seen as a gauge of the success of this attempt. It would seem, based on most Anglo-American responses that the boundaries of the commercial cinema, at least in the Anglophone world, were indeed violated, causing Lewin's film to appear a virtual travesty to most critics (and, based on its revenues, audiences), while French boundaries, if they existed at all, were much more generously drawn, for Lewin's purposes, at least.

This disparity between the native critics and the French is not unique. Peter Ibbetson (directed by Henry Hathaway), for instance, had "a mixed reception in 1935, when some critics thought that the elaborate dream sequences

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failed completely, but a few years later it was discovered by the French surrealists and claimed by André Breton as 'a triumph of surrealist thought,' using the cinema to 'turn our way of feeling upside down.'"[31]

One source of the disagreement, no doubt, is language. Lewin himself described the problem quite well in his eulogy, "R.I.P.: Obituary for a Dead Art":

> ...it is probably true that since the invention of talking pictures not a single movie has been made which can be called a 'work of art' in the unique and definitive sense in which the silent Chaplin pictures, "Caligari," "The Last Laugh" and "Potemkin" were works of art....The only talking picture that approached being a work of art is 'Maedchen in Uniform,' and it may be that I think so only because I do not understand German. Foreign pictures often seem artistic to us because we do not understand the dialogue, and consequently are still regarding them as silent pictures.[32]

This is an arguable observation generally, but one with obvious relevance to Peter Ibbetson and Pandora, two of the Surrealist group's favorite Hollywood films. The often stiff, "unnatural" quality of the dialogue of these original and oneiric fantasies cannot embarrass a foreign audience as it might a native one. The Surrealists, and French fans after them, clearly responded to the visual concreteness of

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[31]Kingsley Canham, "Henry Hathaway," in World Film Directors, Vol. I, 1890-1945, John Wakeman, ed. (New York, 1987), pp. 442-43.

[32]Unpublished, unfinished, undated typescript, c. 1941, USC.

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the "dream-work" of both these films, and not to the somewhat "creaky" scripts.[33]

Lewin's films are indeed characterized by a paradoxical schism between their verbose soundtracks and their highly mannered visual fields, a function of the director's technique, which, as he himself and some of his more astute critics have noted, reflects his attachment to the aesthetics of the silent film. As Sylvie Trosa remarks, "If a very pictorial, surrealist mise-en-scène seems related to the silent cinema...and has been lost, for some complex reasons, with the talkies and their realism, Pandora constitutes a sort of historic counterpoint, where, in a so-called 'Hollywood' mise-en-scène, Lewin risks the visual audacities of a poetry and of an invention that the talkies seem to have made impossible or at least 'silenced.'"[34]

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[33]The New York Times "Television" section (often itself an education in arch transmission of received opinions--i.e. "sick, sick, sick, but fascinating," one I have never been able to forget, characterizing Joseph Mankiewicz's adaptation of Tennessee Williams's Suddenly, Last Summer) in its capsule review of Peter Ibbetson (May 2-8, 1993, p. 29) describes it as a "heavy, musty antique. It creaked even then."

[34]*"Si une mise en scène très picturale, surréaliste, semblait liée au cinéma muet (Epstein, L'Herbier, Delluc) et s'être perdue, pour des raisons complexes, avec le parlant et son réalisme, Pandora constitue une sorte de contrepoint historique, où, dans une mise en scène dite hollywoodienne, Lewin risque des audaces visuelles d'une poésie et d'une invention que le parlant semblait avoir rendues impossibles ou du moins 'aplaties.'"* Sylvie Trosa, "Pandora: Albert Lewin." Cinématographe, Vol. 73 (December 1981), p. 59.

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This paradox of a writer-director whose scripts are just about as "talky" as they come preferring and aspiring to the qualities of the silent cinema, is not as inscrutable as might at first seem. There is a sense in which the excess of talk, especially in the form of voice-over narration, separates itself from the picture, as Richard Combs has suggested in his--by far the best--analysis of Dorian Gray: "But to look for the seed of modernism in Lewin is to find it also in the most old-fashioned qualities of his cinema, in the strong trace of silent cinema where he (most loquacious of writer-directors) began after all."[35]

Pandora's allegiance to Surrealism, then, to return to the film's other aspirations, is more to the Surrealism of

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[35]Combs, p. 355. Combs proceeds to note residue of Caligari and D.W. Griffith in Dorian Gray, and "then the pile-up of dialogue itself begins to suggest another dimension, perhaps even to redefine the film altogether.... towards a formal puzzle of appearances and reality, form and essence, body and soul. These are figured, as it were, in the interplay of vision and sound--or not so much an interplay, more an inconclusive confrontation. What the ceaseless epigrammatic wit of the dialogue seeks to describe, the visuals frame (like the portrait of Dorian Gray) mysteriously, 'perfectly', impenetrably. Dorian Gray may be one of the few films that has actually weighed the value of a thousand words against that of a picture, and found the former infinitely distortable and the latter infinitely inscrutable. Starting from the plot premise of a man whose face reveals nothing of his true nature, the film spirals off into an extraordinary series of metaphors about what is involved (denying, controlling and deceiving, as well as declaring, portraying and revealing) in the act of picture-making....The 'picture' of Albert Lewin that emerges finally from Dorian Gray is not of a director who was a prisoner of his high-culture pretensions, but of one with a remarkable visual sensibility that has little to do with conventional notions of style." p. 356.

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the second manifesto, of L'Amour fou, and of Un Chien Andalou, when the revolution of the dream had triumphed, than to that of the first, when liberation was more dependent upon automatic and chance discoveries, and the recording of dreams as dreamt, rather than on the simulation of dreams as model productions of the unconscious. It is related, as well, to the proto-Surrealism of Giorgio de Chirico and, along with Lewin's subsequent films and his novel, The Unaltered Cat, to the Surrealism that had emerged, mainly in the Americas, during the movement's exile, a Surrealism whose newfound focus on primitivism, myth, mysticism and occultism was demonstrated in the group's first major post-war activity, the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme staged at the Galerie Maeght in the summer of 1947.

Lewin had become increasingly involved with Surrealism during its exile, through his friendships with Max Ernst and Marcel Duchamp, and, especially, with Man Ray, who lived in Hollywood from 1940 to 1951, years during which the two became very close, as they remained until Lewin's death. Indeed, with the possible exception of de Chirico, Man Ray is the most persistent influence on the imagery of Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, in ways both subtle and blatant. Moreover, there is a sense in which Pandora must be seen as a sort of tribute to its director's friendship and sense of kinship with an artist who, although he was intrinsically involved with the Surrealist movement from its inception,

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managed to retain a certain ironic and aesthetic distance from it. So similar do the two men appear to have been in some respects that Jane Livingston might have been describing Albert Lewin when she wrote of his friend:

> Never a dogmatic partisan or a fully credulous ideologue, Man Ray continually expressed a studied empathy with his peers, even while he diverged from them. He could be the most subtle and inventive of collaborators, the securely authoritative artist; also at times he veered inexplicably into some realm of doubt, becoming heavy-handed, aggressively banal. He was deeply clever and blithely naive,... perhaps too much the reflexive, dualistic, Western thinker, too much the pragmatist and too much the invested classicist, ever to capitulate totally to surrealism's cultural agnosticism."[36]

"Dear Man," wrote Albert Lewin to his friend in February of 1950, "I have just returned from a wonderful trip to the Costa Brava in Spain. It is just as if God read 'Pandora' and made Costa Brava for my decor."[37] Lewin goes on to relate in this letter some business regarding the

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[36]"Man Ray and Surrealist Photography," L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism (New York, 1985), p. 120.

I almost expected Livingston to conclude, "too much the Jew," to her list of the character traits that account for Man Ray's outsider aspect, no doubt because I see their Jewishness as an important factor in the similar paradoxes of Man Ray's and Albert Lewin's careers. Both separated themselves from the hermetic worlds of the immigrant Jewish communities into which they had been born. At age twenty-one Man Ray discovered Stieglitz's 291 Gallery; at the same age Lewin was completing his Master's degree at Harvard. At age thirty Man Ray moved to Paris; at the same age Lewin moved to Hollywood. Both men entirely rejected a sense of "identity" based on their Jewishness in favor of more independent, cosmopolitan and cynical personae. Although Lewin finally made his career in the very Jewish-dominated Hollywood, his private life was lived among a much more diverse, international and largely gentile crowd.

[37]Letter to Man Ray, 16 February 1950, USC.

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film, for which he had commissioned Man Ray to execute both photographic and painted portraits of Ava Gardner. The color photograph was to appear as a painted, 16th-century miniature portrait of the young bride of the Flying Dutchman in the film. The painted portrait was supposed to be the product of the "contemporary" (i.e. c. 1930) Dutchman's hand, and was to represent Ava Gardner, in quasi-Surrealist style, as the mythical Pandora, accompanied by the box which she bore to earth.

In the letter, Lewin expresses his satisfaction with the most recent version of the (photographic) miniature: "I think it is very beautiful and we shall make good use of it. I like it better than the others because of the expression on Ava's face. She looks quite sweet and innocent, whereas in the other poses she seems a little too sophisticated for the 16th century character, who was supposed to be a nice sweet faithful girl like Desdemona."[38] But Lewin goes on to express some concern about, in fact to reject, the painted portrait: "...it is all my fault--not yours. The result of the pose which I suggested is that Pandora's expression seems to be somewhat furtive and cunning.... that expression should be innocent--perhaps somewhat naive...if the dialogue is to ring true. This worries me a little bit

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[38]The reference to Desdemona confirms the suggestion of some reviewers (Amiel and Trosa) that Othello is a third layer in Lewin's sandwiching of Greek myth and medieval legend in Pandora.

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and it may be that for this reason I shall let someone here take a crack at doing a painting along these lines..."

Lewin's assumption of responsibility and his tact belie the fact that Man Ray's painting (fig. 61) was an appallingly bad, almost cheesy portrait, and lacked not only the proper "innocence" but any Surrealist atmosphere whatsoever. Painting was probably not his strongest suit, but one can only marvel at this unlikely image (which has been cropped out of most of the often-used reproductions of the photograph of Ava Gardner and the painter in his studio) and wonder what on earth Man Ray thought he was doing (perhaps he was star-struck and looked rather too closely at the model and not closely enough at his likeness of her; or perhaps, although this seems unlikely given his regard for and gratitude to Lewin, he thought this was the kind of effort appropriate to a commercial film).

The painting that was finally used in the film (fig. 62) was executed by Ferdinand (Ferdie) Bellan, a British art director and scenic designer who was also a painter.[39] Bellan's painting more closely achieves Lewin's intention; though hardly uncanny in effect, it is a tolerable homage to the Chirico-inspired strain of Surrealism, exemplified by the raked perspectives and strange juxtapositions of figural compositions by painters such as Paul Delvaux or Remedios Varo (both artists whose work Lewin collected). Although the

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[39]See Edward Carrick, Art and Design in the British Film (Arno reprint, 1972), pp. 35-36.

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painting and Pandora itself have on occasion been thought to be only fortuitously Surrealist ("...romantic sensation comes inadvertently near the vision of Delvaux and Ernst."[40]), they are more often understood to be more directly influenced ("the artificial accentuation of colors, violent and contrasting, banishes every trace of realism, and creates an oneiric world, such that the construction of shots evokes a succession of de Chirico paintings (the portrait of Pandora that Mason paints is an almost perfect pastiche)."[41]

That Chirico's work, along with Delvaux's, is the prototype behind the Bellan picture cannot be doubted, even without reference to Lewin's blunt avowal that the juxtapositions of ancient and modern images in the work of those two artists "especially moved" him and were a major source of inspiration behind the film. In the scene in which the painting is introduced, during the first encounter (correction--the first encounter in this Pandora's lifetime) between Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, after she, in anger and frustration, has literally defaced the portrait (see fig. 63), Henrick's response makes clear both the

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[40]David Thomson, A Biographical Dictionary of Film (New york, 1976), p. 322.

[41]"*L'accentuation artificielle des couleurs, violentes et contrastées, bannit toute trace de réalisme, et crée un monde onirique, tandis que la construction des plans évoque une succession de toiles de Chirico (le portrait de Pandora que paint Mason en est un pastiche presque parfait).*" Trosa, p. 58.

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philosophical and artistic explanation of the events (regrettably this part of the scene is one of the many that were cut for the television edit--the only version available in the U.S.):

> You haven't destroyed my painting; you've done me a favor (with a palette knife he scrapes at the canvas). I'll show you what I mean. A work of art is never complete until the element of chance has been introduced into it. The aspect of the unexpected, of surprise, is indispensable (he makes some quick brush strokes). Pandora was the first woman, the mythological Eve whose curiosity cost us earthly paradise. I was wrong to paint her with all the traits of a particular woman--even one so beautiful as you. Pandora ought to appear as an abstraction of Woman. Wife and mother. The original matrix, the primordial egg from which all humanity issued. By chance, you have contributed to giving to my painting that which it lacked. Behold the true Pandora! (An insert of the painting reveals that Pandora's head is now a smooth oval, resembling the mannequins of Chirico).[42]

It is indisputably de Chirico, and not Man Ray, whose style is evoked in this portrait, and even if Man Ray had executed a more successful painting, it would testify more to his ability to imitate the proto-Surrealist, dream-like style of Chirico, than to his own role as a force behind the film. Man Ray's color photograph of Ava Gardner (see fig. 70), which represents a Dutch miniature in the film, is hardly more characteristic of his work than the rejected painting. It is a straight photograph, meant, no doubt, to replicate the "photographic" verisimilitude of Northern Renaissance painters such as Holbein. Its appearance in the

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[42]I have translated this monologue back into English from the scenario published by L'Avant Scène; it is thus inexact, but adequate for illustrating the film's exposition of *hazard objectif* and the painting's iconography.

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film is, however, still anachronistic, in all likelihood, intentionally. Visual anachronisms (Goutman's disguised Botticellis in The Moon and Sixpence; and the contemporary paintings that so violently disturb Dorian Gray and Bel Ami) are a touchstone of all Lewin's films. Neither does the cameo appearance of one of his chess sets constitute significant evidence of Man Ray's real impact on Pandora and the Flying Dutchman; for that, one must look beyond his "collaboration" to his influence.

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Et si tu trouves sur cette terre une femme à l'amour sincère...

Man Ray's L'Etoile du Mer[43]

Of all the characteristics which separate Pandora from Lewin's earlier films--the vivid color, the great outdoors and its incumbent "natural supernaturalism,"[44] the more contemporary setting--the most significant is the film's focus on a woman. Ava Gardner herself is at the center of this newfound focus, as Pandora--a *femme-enfant-fatale*--but also as "herself" (not as a "real" person, but as icon of a kind of "animal" female sexuality, movie goddess, the ultimate desirable woman). If George Sanders embodied the rather perverse ego-ideal around which the films of the forties revolved, Ava Gardner became the specter that haunted all of Lewin's films of the 1950s. Although she was

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[43]"And if you find on this earth a woman who loves sincerely..." an inter-title from Man Ray's film, from a scenario based on poetry by Robert Desnos, L'Etoile de Mer (1928). See Inez Hedges, "Constellated Visions: Robert Desnos's and Man Ray's L'Etoile de Mer," Dada and Surrealist Film, Rudolf Kuenzli, ed. (New York, 1987), p. 103.

[44]I adopt this term from M.H. Abrams's title for his study of Romantic literature, in which he argues that "writers I call 'Romantic'...undertook...to save traditional concepts, schemes, and values which had been based on the relation of the Creator to his creature and creation, but to reformulate them within the prevailing two-term system of subject and object, ego and non-ego, the human mind and consciousness and its transactions with nature." Natural Supernaturalism (New York, 1971), p. 13.

I find the term very appropriate to Lewin's brand of rather esoteric and intellectual Surrealism, a movement which André Breton, it should be remembered, characterized as the "prehensile tail" of Romanticism (in his 1934 lecture, "What Is Surrealism," What is Surrealism?: Selected Writings, Franklin Rosemont, ed. New York, 1978, Book 2, p. 132).

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only in the one film, Lewin was clearly trying to recreate her in his other two films, and dearly wished to use her again in two of his most cherished and, sadly, unrealized projects of that decade.[45]

This shift from a masculine center of gravity to a feminine one is the nucleus of the transformation of Lewin's oeuvre from the forties to the fifties and it seems to correspond in large part to the figures of George Sanders and Ava Gardner.[46] While the masculine objects of desire

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[45]Rita Gam, beautiful, but rather lifeless and anaesthetic in the title role of Saadia (1954), is an obvious proxy for Gardner. Lewin was back on the M-G-M payroll for this production and "had been dished out with a fairly second team of MGM contract actors and actresses...," according to John Hawkesworth, the film's art director (letter to the author, 18 May 1991). Lewin had even less capital with which to cast his last film, The Living Idol (1957), the young female lead of which went to Liliane Montevecchi, in one of her earliest (and least successful) roles. Gardner was by then too old for this juvenile part, aside from being beyond the film's economic means, but she was plainly the "type" that Lewin was looking for.

Gardner did, of course, star in The Naked Maja, but Lewin, finally, had nothing to do with that production, which bought and then dispensed entirely with the Goya script he had spent so much time researching and writing with Ava Gardner very much in mind. Lewin's Diana at Midnight, an unrealized, original script, loosely based on Faust, was another project that, as far as Lewin was concerned, depended very much on having Gardner in the title role.

[46]This was the explanation of a close friend of Lewin's, Betty Silverstein, who, with her husband, Maurice Silverstein, M-G-M's man in Latin America during the production of The Living Idol (and later a major M-G-M producer), met Allie, as he was called, and his wife Millie during the production of that film in Mexico. Mr. Silverstein, when asked about the striking contrast between Lewin's films of the one decade and those of the next, confirmed that industrial factors (including the breakdown of the studio system following the Paramount decrees of 1948, the introduction of new color and widescreen

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around which the films of the forties revolved allowed for what I think are often radical representations of female subjectivity and desire, the female characters, and the actresses who played them, in those films were always secondary. In relocating the center, Lewin reorients not only the axes of gender, of desire, of subject and object, but undermines the essentially cultural and moral emphases of his previous films. Now, under the aegis of Woman, the moral dimension--which always inflected, although never didactically, the black-and-white films of the forties--is subsumed in a supramoral (or perhaps *surmorale*) scenario of love. Culture, too, the very armature of the earlier films, is transcended in Pandora, which revels in the natural in order to go "beyond nature."[47]

While the Surrealist details and allusions in the films of the forties testified to a familiarity and a fascination with the iconography of Surrealism, it is not until Pandora that Surrealism's full impact on Lewin is felt. The

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techniques, and the increased post-war possibilities for and advantages of location shooting) must have played some significant part in the shift. But Mrs. Silverstein added with great conviction and persuasion, that Allie's character was one that was wont to come powerfully under the thrall of certain personalities and that a passionate fascination with the persons of, first, George Sanders, and later, Ava Gardner, played no small role in his choice of subjects and his manner of filmmaking. Interview with Maurice and Betty Silverstein, New York, 6 November 1991.

[47]As Geoffrey becomes aware that he is in the presence of the author of a 16th-century manuscript, while Henrick finishes his recitation of his own manuscript in the fading evening light from memory, without reference to the text, the archaeologist exclaims, "it's beyond nature!"

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decadent, which always has a moral dimension, is supplanted by the marvelous, which is beyond not only nature, but reason and morality, too.

> ...surrealism offers us a hope of existing and projects existence in something beyond natural life; an immanent beyond, however--not posterior to life--a beyond seeming to reveal itself to the one who will seize the World under the aspect of the marvelous....[48]

The immanent beyond that Pandora aspires to make tangible is the experience of love--mystical, marvelous, convulsive--that is, mad love (*l'amour fou*). And this love is a possibility contained by the image of Woman. André Breton was the author of L'Amour fou, but Man Ray was its primary illustrator, not only in the photographs which accompanied that text, but beyond them in his vast body of work upon the female body, eroticism and sex. And it is from among Man Ray's many images of women, of eroticism, of love, as well as his illustrations for L'Amour fou, that several images in Pandora and the Flying Dutchman apparently derive.[49]

A number of these images are in scenes that were cut from the master print in the early 1960s (see note 21). The film's early scene of transition between Geoffrey's framing

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[48]Alquié, p. 6.

[49]During preproduction on Pandora, when the film was planned to be in black-and-white, and there was yet no proper shooting script, it should be noted, Man Ray had contributed shooting recommendations at Lewin's request. It's not clear how many of Man Ray's suggestions from his "Photographic Script," dated June 18, 1949 (USC) were finally integrated, but it is clear that any affinities between his photographic work and the film are not simply coincidental.

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narration, at the end of which he recalls being distracted and lured out one evening by an erotic and disquieting moon (possibly itself an allusion to Un Chien Andalou), and the story of Pandora and Henrick that he tells is radically cut, as is the entire beginning of that story itself, which begins at a taverna called Las Dos Tortugas (a reflexive reference to The Two Turtles, the scene of Dorian's encounter with Sibyl Vane in Lewin's The Picture of Dorian Gray), where a feverish flamenco performance is underway. The erotic violence of the flamenco dancer, La Pillina (fig. 59), is very possibly a citation of the Man Ray photograph of a dancer caught in convulsed and blurry motion, Fixed-explosive (fig. 60), that illustrates Breton's assertion in L'Amour fou that "Convulsive beauty will be veiled-erotic, fixed-explosive, magic-circumstantial, or it will not be."[50] Of course, the moving picture of the dancer, ironically, by achieving motion instead of stopping it, contradicts the meaning of its appearance in Breton's book, where it illustrates the beauty of the frozen explosion.[51]

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[50]"*La beauté convulsive sera érotique-voilée, explosante-fixe, magique-circonstancielle ou ne sera pas.*" Breton, L'Amour fou, p. 21 (the photograph is reproduced on p. 17); in Mary Ann Caws' translation the text and photograph are on pages 19 and 20, respectively.

[51]"The most famous gypsies in the world, those known in Spain as 'Flamencos,' were canvassed and scouted extensively for the musical and dancing talent which figures in 'Pandora and the Flying Dutchman.'

"'I've never seen any people with their zest for life,' remarked Lewin. 'We gave one party to which some of these artists were invited. They were not invited there to perform but they did it out of sheer enjoyment. They started at

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The surrealist concept of objective chance is demonstrated in Pandora not only by its rather pedantic exposition in the (cut) scene in which Henrick explains to Pandora how she has improved his painting by defacing it, but in another of the cut scenes, as well: that of Señora Montalvo (Marguerite d'Alvarez) reading tarot cards that foretell her son Juan's fate. A passage in L'Amour fou in which Breton describes interrogating cards is the text that supports another of Man Ray's photographs that seems to hover behind this filmic image, a picture of a black, sculpted hand laying cards around a raw rubber statuette.[52]

The most direct quotation of Man Ray's photographs for L'Amour fou, however, is seen in one of the film's most recurring props. The hourglass (see figs. 63, 70) that functions as a metonymic symbol of Henrick's endless existence, that, whenever seen until the film's end is seen in motion (its sands are never seen to stop), although it has only two compartments, is otherwise very like the (five-compartment) hourglass photographed by Man Ray (fig. 71) to illustrate Breton's articulation of eternity and desire:

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eight in the evening and at six in the morning singing and dancing were still going on, full blast....It's something that is so genuine and vital it carries you away with the spirit of the thing.'" Halsey Raines, "Hollywood: Ava Gardner, Bulls, Gypsies and a 'Dutchman' in Spain," The Compass, November 25, 1951, p. 27.

[52]Breton, L'Amour fou, pp. 20 (text) and 28 (photo); Caws translation, pp. 16 (text) and 17 (photo).

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"*Forever*, as on the white sand of time and through the grace of this instrument which is used to measure it, but only fascinates you and leaves you hungry, reduced to a stream of milk endlessly pouring from a glass breast."[53] At the film's end, when Pandora and Henrick are finally united and are resolved and ready to die together, the sand in the hourglass freezes, Pandora marvels, "it's as though we're under a spell, outside of time, unending...," Henrick echoes her, "unending...," and the hourglass cracks, as thunder from a sudden squall explodes around them and the yacht founders and sinks.

Another apparently direct citation of a photograph by Man Ray occurs during the scene where Pandora, who has dreamt that Henrick was killed, runs to his bungalow in the middle of a moonlit night. She peers through the windows of two doors and reverse shots show her from within. It is the second of these reverse shots, in which Pandora's hands are held up near her head and against a screen (fig. 65), that very closely reproduces a photograph by Man Ray from the same period as his L'Amour fou work, The Net of 1931 (fig. 66).[54] The Net is one of several images of women similarly

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[53]"Toujours, *comme sur le sable blanc du temps et par la grâce de cet instrument qui sert à le compter mais seulement jusqu'ici vous fascine et vous affame, réduit à un filet de lait sans fin fusant d'un sein de verre.*" Breton, L'Amour fou, pp. 134 (text) and 132 (photo); Caws translation, pp. 114 (text) and 115 (photo).

[54]The relationship between the Man Ray photograph and the Lewin frame has been noted also by Jean-Paul Török in the Pandora scenario he prepared for L'Avant Scène, p. 64,

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patterned, onto whose faces and bodies, that is, images are projected, including a series of Lee Miller at a window (fig. 67), that Man Ray produced in the early 1930s and which suggest another of L'Amour fou's categories of beauty: the "veiled-erotic."

The third category of beauty in Breton's formulation, after "veiled erotic" and "fixed-explosive," is "magic-circumstantial," and this is the category that contains the quasi-mystical sense of desire as fate, and the perception of objective chance as an aesthetic force. It is the "magic-circumstantial" sense of beauty that pervades much of Pandora and the Flying Dutchman--its plot, as well as any number of images and scenes that refer to particular and generalized Surrealist imagery. It is the beauty of what is "magic-circumstantial," for instance, that regards Ava Gardner's face so intently, doubling and tripling it by photographs and paintings placed *en abyme,* dwelling on its serene, frozen perfection in the long, elegiac shot that begins Henrick's flashback to the events of his recitation--"It was her face. It was her face still, though now white and cold as marble...(fig. 69)"--and contrasting to this the highly colored, animated, sometimes almost livid visage of the second Pandora, who, when she sees the painting Henrick has painted of her (see fig. 62), having never, so far as she knows, met her, says, "it's me--not as I am, but as I

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note 14.

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should like to be." But the painting is of her as indeed she once was and once again shall be. Pandora is a reincarnation in the most literal sense, for until Henrick offers her the opportunity to love and therefore to die, she is only a heartless, anaesthetic body (a point that Janet, her competitor for Stephen's affections, makes repeatedly in scenes cut from the U.S. version[55]), a simulacrum of the woman she has been and will be again, paradoxically, only at the moment of death.

The impossible beauty of all this is the beauty of the "magic-circumstantial" a surrealist twist on the uncanny. It is figured in the film by metamorphic and mysterious images, such as in a single shot, another that was cut from the U.S. master print, from the early scene in which Pandora, having induced Stephen to push his racing car into the sea, leans over the edge of the cliff, throws her head back, and revels in the spectacle of the car's violent descent and crash into the water. The shot follows a high-angle close-up of her ecstatic face thrown back, one that is reminiscent of photographs by Man Ray (i.e. Head, 1923) and Jacques-André Boiffard (his untitled photograph of a foreshortened nude, 1930) and precedes a strange composition, in which Pandora's head in profile occupies the entire foreground as she lies

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[55]"You are incapable of true feeling. You're only interested in your body. You have no other feeling. Nothing but sensation!," Janet, in a drunken rage, yells at Pandora in a long passage cut from the beginning of the beach party scene.

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on the ground, vowing to marry Stephen, who stands, static and rigid as the nearby Celtic monolith in the middle ground behind her.

In the missing, transitional image, as nicely described by Sylvie Trosa, the "camera frames in a tilt-shot the angle of the rocks which overlook the sea. One distinguishes a form which seems to be the silhouette of Pandora's body. But the shadow moves and, by a striking effect of *trompe-l'oeil*, reveals not her body, but Gardner's face in profile, in extreme close-up, which stands out against the background of the sea below her."[56] The ambiguous, silhouetted curves suggest, too, the rolling hills of a landscape, a permutation that furthers one's sense of the images as related to those mutations of form that characterize so many Surrealist photographs, Brassaï's False Sky (Ciel postiche), c. 1932-34), for instance. The multiple rotations, ambiguities and metamorphoses of this series of shots enact the manipulation and mutation of the human body to effect what Rosalind Krauss has called "the process of seeing *as if*....that propels the image into the realm of the

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[56]"*La caméra cadre en plongée l'angle du rocher qui surplombe la mer. On y distingue une forme qui semble être la silhouette du corps de Pandora. Mais l'ombre bouge et, par un saisissant effet de trompe-l'oeil, apparaît non le corps mais le profil en très gros plan de Gardner, qui se détache sur le lointain de la mer en contre-bas.*" p. 59.

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vertiginous," and realizes Georges Bataille's notion of the *informe*.[57]

Of all Pandora's magical images, however, the most striking one may not exist at all. Some students who were at the Hampshire College screening are sure that they saw in one of the views out to sea large phantom lips in the sky. I have not seen these lips myself, but would not be surprised were they actually there, as they would constitute another reference to the Surrealist iconography of the early 1930s and specifically to Man Ray's inventory of images of erotic love. His most ambitious painting of that period, The Lovers or Observatory Time (1932-34), "hung for some months over his bed," according to Roland Penrose, who then continues with a quotation from the artist, "like an open window into space. The red lips floated in a bluish grey sky over a twilit landscape.....The lips, because of their scale, no doubt, suggested two closely joined bodies."[58]

Lewin would have been introduced to this favorite among Man Ray's paintings while he was writing his Pandora script, in 1948, when the painter rescued it from his Paris atelier, where it had spent the War, and brought it to Los Angeles, where it was exhibited in his one-man show at the Copley

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[57]Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," October 33 (Summer 1985), p. 33.

[58]Roland Penrose, Man Ray (London, 1975/1989), p. 104. The quotation is from Man Ray's Self Portrait (London, 1963), p. 255. May Ray also produced a solarized photograph of disembodied lips in the same period for his album, The Age of Light (1934).

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Gallery.[59] About his move to Los Angeles and the establishment of his gallery, William Copley later wrote:

> Southern California in 1946 was a most unlikely and certainly a most unnecessary place to proselytize Surrealism. As Man Ray once said, there was more Surrealism rampant in Hollywood than all the Surrealists could invent in a lifetime. The natives didn't know this....Being the dedicated Surrealists that we were, we were sharply aware of the necessity to demonstrate that popular and primitive art were by nature surreal.[60]

Thus the two lips, liberated from the body, elevated, literally, to an icon of mad love, come to stand for more than two figures locked in an embrace, but are a sign, too, of the too often unexamined but, according to Man Ray, Copley, Lewin and friends, inevitable embrace between Surrealism and popular culture.

The lips floating in the sky are a totem of the domain in which Hollywood and Surrealism cohabitate and rule together. The law of this land is love. "Mainstream cinema comes ethically closest to Surrealism in the expression of love," understates Paul Hammond,[61] by way of introducing

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[59]See Penrose, p. 161 ff., and William Copley's unpublished manuscript, "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Art Dealer," Archives of American Art (roll 2709, frame 414 ff.).

[60]Copley, pp. 2, 6. Of Man Ray's friendship with Lewin, Copley writes (p. 10): "He had too few friends of the kind he needed. There was Allie Lewin...a tiny white-headed aging imp, along in years and quite deaf, but with a sense of humor one could live on. He was always turning his hearing aid off at the slightest threat of boredom. He loved Man and his work and the Surrealists. Those of them who knew him, loved him back."

[61]Paul Hammond, "Available Light," (introduction to) The Shadow and Its Shadow (Edinburgh, 1991), p. 43.

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André Breton's assertion that "[w]hat is most specific of the means of the camera is obviously the power to make concrete the forces of love which, despite everything, remain deficient in books....The radical powerlessness of the plastic arts in this domain goes without saying (one imagines that it has not been given to the painter to show us the radiant image of a kiss). The cinema is alone in extending its empire there, and this alone would be enough for its consecration."[62] "The radiant image of a kiss," is, of course, exactly what Man Ray aspired to create in The Lovers or Observatory Time,[63] in which the lips light up the evening sky like a celestial body.

Even if the phantom lips are not really there in Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, then, they are there in spirit. For from the beginning of the film, when a remarkable reverse tracking shot begins with a swinging bell

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[62]André Breton, "As in a Wood," The Shadow and Its Shadow, pp. 82-83. The essay originally appeared the same year as Pandora, in L'Age du cinéma, no. 4-5 (August-November 1951), pp. 26-30.

[63]"Man Ray tells the story of an evening when he was obliged to abandon Kiki to attend a dinner-party in a very smart restaurant. He thought nothing more about her loving farewell kiss, and on his arrival at the restaurant he failed to understand his hostess's critical look; shortly afterwards, however, he saw in a mirror that a splendid impression of Kiki's lips stood out boldly on the impeccable whiteness of his collar. Far from being an embarrassment, it set Man dreaming of lips detached and floating with the breeze. It was a dream that remained with him and which some ten years later he painted in monumental style..." Penrose, p. 100-101.

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inscribed with the name "Alberto" tolling for the dead,[64] to the end, when the story has come full circle, the film concerns itself with conveying Surrealist content. This is as true of its approach to narrative as it is of its imagery. The choice of the story of the Flying Dutchman, itself, as Lewin himself had indicated,[65] in its refusal

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[64]"Production designer John Bryan has made several changes in the local landscape....Into the old Moorish town wall which dominates the bay and encloses the old town of Tossa, he has built an arch of local stones of the same period in which swings a massive bell (named Alberto after the director)....It is through this bell tower that the opening shot in 'Pandora and the Flying Dutchman' is filmed from a tracking ramp at an incline of 30 degrees, perched precariously on a pinnacle of rocks over the clear, blue sea. As the bell clangs to and fro, the camera tracks backwards to frame an exciting scene on the beach far below. ...Higher still, on a rostrum with a similar sloping tracking ramp, has been built the balcony from which Geoffrey...and his niece, Janet...watch the drama on the beach through a telescope." Catherine O'Brien, p. 19.

Gilles Deleuze has used this elaborate opening sequence to indicate how problematic issues of subjective and objective perception can be in the cinema. He indicates how the film, "opens with the long shot of a beach where groups are running towards a point; the beach is seen from a distance and from a height, through a telescope on the promontory of a house. But very quickly we learn that the house is inhabited, the telescope used, by people who are very much part of the set under consideration: the beach, the point which attracts the groups, the event taking place there, the people mixed up in it.... Has the image not become subjective...?" Cinema 1: The Movement-Image, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, trans. (Minneapolis, 1986), p. 71.

Both O'Brien and Deleuze are wrong about this being the opening scene of the film. After the credits is a shot of the surf with a quatrain from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam superimposed. This shot is followed by a scene (ten shots) of the crew of a local fishing boat who discover that their net has caught the bodies of Henrick and Pandora.

The tolling bell, of course, also refers subtly to Hemingway's novel of the Spanish Civil War, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York, 1940).

[65]In his letter to Yves Kovacs.

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of temporal limits, as well as the manner in which Pandora renders the "liquidation of time,"[66]--in the simultaneous image of the freezing of the hourglass and utterance of "unending..."--aspires to surreality, to the irrational beauty that Ferdinand Alquié says "can only be grasped in the heat of an excitement we would call existential if the word did not evoke now a completely different climate. We may call it 'vital,' if we remember that Breton's goal is to attain 'real life'--keeping always in mind that the word life is not used here as biologists use it but in the philosophic sense of existence. Living is not necessarily existing....'Living and ceasing to live are imaginary solutions. Existence is everywhere."[67] This is close to Lewin's own philosophical musings on life and its limitations from the dawn of his career as a director:

> ....Eternity, indeed, might be defined as the life span of that substance which has the least consciousness of its own activity. In this sense, though we may none of us be immortal, we are all eternal.
>
> The artist perhaps intuitively perceives this, since when he is most successful he creates a sense of breathlessness, of suspended animation, of action under the aspect of eternity. This is the true aesthetic emotion, which has nothing whatsoever to do with pity or terror, but has more to do with what James Joyce, using a term out of Thomas Aquinas, called "radiance." It is the artist's intuitive apprehension that

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[66]A term I borrow from Gérard Legrand, "Turkey Broth and Unlabelled Love Potions," The Shadow and Its Shadow, p. 164. The essay originally appeared in L'Age du cinéma no. 4-5 (August-November 1951), pp. 17-20.

[67]Alquié, p. 6.

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> subjective time is the only constant in a relative world.[68]

The "action under the aspect of eternity" that Lewin tried to convey in his letter to a popular science magazine, he attempted again in Pandora to effect aesthetically. The image that he claimed inspired the film, of "the racing car on the beach--a modern machine being driven at great speed past the statue of a Greek goddess standing on the sands," achieves it most poignantly, not only because of the Chirico-esque juxtaposition of ancient and modern, but because of the camera movement, which tracking with the racing car, pivots around the sculpture, such that the camera's point-of-view becomes hers.[69] The poignancy of her regard is also paradoxical, since the goddess has no head--she is *acéphale*[70]. Headless, and made of stone, the

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[68]Letter to Watson Davis, Science News Letter, 4/30/41 (USC).

[69]The shot sets up a tension between the breathless speed of the race car and the ancient inertia of the sculpted goddess that recalls, but also foils, Filippo Marinetti's Futurist assertion that "a roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace." "The Foundation and Manifesto of Surrealism" (1909), in Harrison and Wood, eds., p. 147.
It should be noted that this shot is compromised somewhat in the U.S. edit, in which expository narration, moved from cut scenes, is voiced over the picture.

[70]Another acephalic sculpture is featured in the closing scene of the film when the camera pans across Geoffrey's balcony. Detailed location prop lists (USC) from the files of the Pandora art department (John Bryan and John Hawkesworth), indicate sculptures which correlate to those seen in the final film, as well as others not seen. Included are specific references to several "headless" figures, as well as, among those antiquities missing from the final film: "a grotesque stone Cyclidean idol," a bronze Eros, a

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Hellenistic goddess has no consciousness of her own activity, but she conveys the ineffable regard of the ages, as does the monumental female head that "watches" Pandora run to the sea, strip (just out of view of the camera), and swim out to the yacht in the bay where her destiny awaits her.

When Pandora emerges from the sea and climbs onto the deck of Henrick's ghost ship, as Raphaël Bassan puts it, "Lewin, the aesthete, plays an admirable game of hide-and-seek with the censor..."[71] The moonlit water having just barely obscured her body as she swam, Gardner is then rendered in erotic fragments: first of her dripping hair and glistening shoulders, then, as she begins to climb aboard, of her bare feet as she walks on tip toes toward the yacht's hatch, the cover from which she removes in order to see into the cabin, but which conveniently offers her, too, a veil for her nakedness. The odd, almost fetishistic close-up of

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bronze horse head, a crouching torso, "hobble-skirted buffoons in arrested dancing postures, one with ivory eyes and another with a great single Cyclopean eye made of a round silver ball which shines in contrast to the dark bronze."

[71]"*Lewin joue admirablement, en esthète, à cache-cache avec la censure...*" Bassan, p. 64. Regarding Pandora's relationship to Surrealism, Bassan maintains that, "[i]f there is surrealism in Pandora it is toward the complex constructions of Raymond Roussel, his 'machines célibataires,' that one must look for it..." (*"Si surréalisme il y a dans Pandora, c'est du côte les constructions complexes de Raymond Roussel,, de ses 'machines célibataires' qu'il faut aller le quérir..."*), p. 64.

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her tiptoed feet echoes the pose of a statue she had passed on the beach, one with which she later cavorts (see fig. 64)--a prop department pastiche based on incompatible types--part Apollo or Adonis (it has the long, loose youthful tresses associated with those gods), part Dionysian reveler or Satyr (its tiptoed stance reproduces the dancing posture of figures like the bronze dancing Satyr from Pompeii's House of the Faun).[72]

The use of the various antiquities is strongest in two scenes: this one, in which the presence of the ancient objects looms large and portentous, from Pandora's and Stephen's midnight drive past the goddess, to the Celtic monolith which stands upon the precipice off which Stephen pushes his car, to the sculptures that occupy the waterfront archaeological site to which Geoffrey brings the two, and from which Pandora embarks upon her swim; and the scene of the beach party held to celebrate Stephen's world speed record. In that scene, one Lewin singled out for its Surrealist character, "men in full dress suits dance with girls in bathing suits to the music of 'You're Driving Me Crazy' played by a jazz combination erotically disposed

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[72]The tiptoeing recalls, too, another image from Pompeii, the naked female dancer with cymbals, who spins on tiptoes in a bacchic frenzy, a golden scarf (not unlike the one Pandora drapes upon the tiptoes sculpture), billowing off her shoulder, from the Dionysiac frieze in the Villa of the Mysteries.

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among fragments of ancient statues with the sea in the background."[73]

Radically diminished by the television edit, the beach party scene uses the antiquities to much lighter and more absurdist effect. The actors who are shown dancing and cavorting are minor characters and extras; they do not include the film's two protagonists, who are in a sense obliged, by virtue of their mythic nature, to feel the weight of the ages and the eyes of the gods upon them. Wonderfully strange, distorted shots characterize this scene: a close-up shows a saxophone played above a monumental fallen head of Neptune; a trombonist lies supine in the sand, his head cushioned by the curve of a sleeping hermaphrodite's hip; a fragment of an ionic column supports a glass and a bottle of champagne; a bas-relief of an equestrian lies flat in the sand among the feet of the dancers; a drunken girl in fancy dress deflects an ardent suitor, breaks out laughing in hysterical glee, then walks on her hands, causing the skirt of her gown to fall down over her head and arms, leaving only her kicking, upside-down legs exposed.

The levity of this scene is in sharp contrast to the languorous gravity of the subsequent one, in which Pandora and Henrick escape the party to a quiet part of the beach, where, wrapping her yellow silk scarf, luminous in the

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[73]Letter to Yves Kovacs.

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phosphorescent moonlight, around the Apollo/Satyr sculpture described above (fig. 64), Pandora asks Henrick, who gazes out to sea, "What do you see out there? The past or the future? Or some fabulous land beyond the map?" This scene is one of the film's wordiest: Henrick (who is otherwise quite laconic in this scene, as in many others) recites passages from Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach;"[74] Pandora very inefficiently confesses her love of and her willingness to die for Henrick (whom she does not yet know to require this of her), and when she asks him what he would sacrifice for her, he gazes out to sea, and slowly but definitively responds, "my salvation."

The contrast in this scene between Henrick's ominous, brooding silences and Pandora's euphoric, irrepressible pronunciations reflects the tension in the film overall between ineffable silence and expository noise. The same tension is felt even more markedly in the contrast between Henrick and the film's narrator, Geoffrey. Henrick is, after all, not only a legendary seaman, but a contemporary painter, too--a Surrealist. Pandora is Henrick's film visually; it is full of mystery, melancholy, desire and beauty. But its soundtrack (with the exception of the moody,

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[74]"The Sea of Faith/Was once, too, at the full/...the world, which seems/to lie before us like a land of dreams, Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light/...we are here as on a darkling plain/Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,/Where ignorant armies clash by night."

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elegiac musical score) belongs to Geoffrey, the scholar; it is analytical, literary, academic.

This tension is not unfamiliar in Lewin's oeuvre. It was manifest from his first film, The Moon and Sixpence, narrated by another rather pompous Geoffrey who wants to fathom the enigma of a recalcitrant and uncommunicative artist. It was there in The Picture of Dorian Gray, narrated from within by the vicarious wit of Lord Henry Wotton, pitched against the quiet sincerity of the painter Basil Hallward and the pernicious passivity of Dorian himself, and from without by a heavily expository text derived from Wilde's novel. The tension is subtler in The Private Affairs of Bel Ami, which has almost no voice-over narration, and which may, in this respect, be Lewin's most balanced film. Lewin himself is obviously the source of this tension. A scholar and critic turned artist, he split his own persona between his protagonists and to a certain extent between the visual and aural registers of his films. It is this perpetual tension between impulses that are only occasionally resolved in his work that gives his films their peculiar consistency.

For all the dramatic differences between Lewin's films of the 1940s and the 1950s, as well as those between the conditions of the film industry in those two decades, this one enduring trait persists in his work. The changes that were brought about in Hollywood and beyond as a result of many forces in the late 1940s and 1950s had an immense

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impact on Pandora and on Lewin's last two films. Those changes and those two films are the subject of my next chapter, "Their blessed benightedness," which discusses Saadia and The Living Idol, films which despite their exotic themes and locales, yet perpetuate the rather Cartesian split between mind and matter that characterizes Lewin's entire oeuvre.

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Chapter 7. "THEIR BLESSED BENIGHTEDNESS": SAADIA (1954) AND THE LIVING IDOL (1957)

> The so-called primitive peoples don't know they are poor, illiterate, and superstitious until we tell them. We take their blessed benightedness away from them, and what we give them in return is of doubtful value.
>
> Albert Lewin[1]

> You know, I got along well with the bullfighters in Spain. They carry amulets. I carry amulets. Bullfighting is hazardous. Filmmaking is hazardous. You need to make expiatory gestures to the gods. Maybe that's what my films are all about.
>
> Albert Lewin[2]

Writing about Albert Lewin's last two films is a thankless task. The Living Idol, his last, has disappeared from circulation and is not available at any of the major film archives. Not even M-G-M, the company through which it was released, owns a print. By most accounts this original story of reincarnation and human sacrifice, set among Mayan ruins in Mexico, is a preposterous film and it was a commercial disaster. Saadia, a tale of the confrontation between Western medicine (and metaphysics) and Moroccan sorcery over the fates of a beautiful young Berber woman, a local Caid, a French doctor, and their village, is somewhat more accessible, although in a rather different form than Lewin had intended it (he lost control of the editing[3]),

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[1]Albert Lewin, The Unaltered Cat (New York, 1966), p. 81. The line is spoken by the protagonist of the novel, "Robbie" Roberts.

[2]Quoted in Robert Sitton, "Albert Lewin: Director and Innovator," Park East, 24 March 1966, p. 8.

[3]Lewin, quoted by Doug McClelland, The Unkindest Cuts: The Scissors and the Cinema (Cranbury, NJ, 1972), p. 188: "More serious was the case of Saadia (1954), for the

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but little more highly regarded. The two films are usually characterized as disappointments (by those who see anything to admire in Lewin's work overall), yet as curiously symptomatic of problems within Lewin's entire oeuvre. Philip Kemp sums up this view: "Both films were disappointing, marred by weak casting, and overwhelmed by the preciousness which had always threatened Lewin's work."[4]

The similarities of the two to the earlier films rests in their evident attempts to balance Lewin's intellectual and aesthetic preoccupations with what he deemed marketable appeals. But, by the 1950s, Lewin's intellectual interests were shifting, as were the methods and the market of the commercial film industry, in ways that would prove infelicitously incompatible for the fate of his career.

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public got *no* chance to see this MGM film as originally adapted, directed and produced by Lewin, with Cornel WIlde, Mel Ferrer, and Rita Gam.

'It was the theme in Saadia that intrigued me, not the story: the conflict between medicine and witchcraft,' stated Lewin. 'My arrangement with Dore Schary [then MGM head of production] was that I would shoot it in Morocco, which I did, and edit and score it in England. I was supposed to bring back a complete picture. But TV had thrown Hollywood into a panic. I began getting frantic notes about the budget and finally I had to come back and cut it at the studio in Hollywood.

'I showed it to Dore. Now, the character of the sorceress was tremendously important, because she illustrated the theme. Wanda Rotha was impressive in the part, stole the picture in its first form. Dore objected to the emphasis on her. He pointed to her elaborate fiery death scene and said, 'That dame goes down like the Titanic! She's only a character woman, Al.' He reduced her part--her death is now merely indicated--in favor of the love story, which I had thrown in merely as a sop to the public.'"

[4]Philip Kemp, Albert Lewin entry in John Wakeman, ed. World Film Directors, Vol. I (New York, 1987), p. 660.

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Along with many Surrealists, Lewin had in the immediate post-war period become increasingly interested in the ineffable, the occult, the mystical, the supernatural. But his interest in these (meta)phenomena surpassed that of most of his Surrealist peers and was considerably more academic. By the late 1950s, he was corresponding with Robert Graves and Cyrus Gordon, among others, on matters arcane and esoteric relating to mythology, comparative religion, archaeology and anthropology.[5]

Meanwhile, the Hollywood film industry was undergoing massive and relentless changes, caused by a variety of forces, among which were: the 1949 Supreme Court Paramount decree, the result of a successful antitrust suit first levelled about eleven years earlier at the vertical integration of the five major film studios[6]; the meteoric

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[5]Lewin met Graves when he was researching his Goya script in 1957 in Spain. Their subsequent correspondence was profuse for several years. Lewin was introduced to Gordon, a prolific and prominent scholar of ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures, religions and languages, through Marie Syrkin (wife of the poet Charles Reznikoff), who was Gordon's colleague at Brandeis University. Their friendship, which also began in the late 1950s, lasted until Lewin's death. For more, see Chronology.

[6]RKO, Paramount, Loew's (M-G-M), Twentieth-Century-Fox, and Warner each controlled production, distribution and exhibition of their films. M-G-M, Lewin's studio, was the last of the major five to sign its consent decree and its divorcement of its holdings took most of the rest of the decade to achieve. See Ernest Borneman, "United States versus Hollywood: The Case of an Antitrust Suit," and Michael Conant, "The Impact of the *Paramount Decrees*," both in The American Film Industry, Tino Balio, ed. (Madison, 1976), pp. 332-345 and pp. 346-370, respectively. See also: Robert Sklar, Movie Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies (New York, 1975), pp. 272-74.

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growth of television, which was posing an increasing threat to the vitality of the already financially stressed industry[7]; the post-war return of foreign markets for American pictures and simultaneous threat of protectionism on the part of many countries which desired to boost their national film industries[8]; technological and organizational innovations which, in combination with economic advantages, encouraged location shooting abroad[9]; and the pernicious interference of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), whose two infamous Hollywood hearings (1947 and 1951), and the incumbent blacklisting of over two hundred film workers, intimidated and depleted the industry, leaving it scarred and divided into the subsequent decade.[10]

The effects of some of these forces are evident positively in Saadia and The Living Idol and negatively in the several ambitious projects Lewin was unable to realize

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[7]"The industry decided to differentiate its product and make the most of its natural advantages over its rival. It would exploit widescreens, color, and 3-D," among other gambits, according to Tino Balio, p. 321. See also: Freeman Lincoln, "The Comeback of the Movies," in Balio, ed., pp. 371-386, and Sklar, pp. 269-71 and 276-79.

[8]See Thomas H. Guback, "Hollywood's International Market," in Balio, ed., pp. 387-409 and Sklar, pp. 274-76.

[9] See: David Bordwell, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson, The Classical Hollywood Cinema (New York, 1985), on the package-unit system, "runaway" productions, location shooting, and Technicolor, pp. 332-33; 349-57.

[10]See John Cogley, "The Mass Hearings," in Balio, ed., pp. 410-431; Sklar, pp. 260-67 ff.; and Victor S. Navasky, Naming Names (New York, 1980).

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in the fifties, despite his supposed clout at M-G-M, to which he had returned as a production executive after the second demise of Loew-Lewin in 1948. These projects, which Lewin had thoroughly researched and, if not scripted, developed careful treatments for, were closer in spirit and theme to his earlier films and included two literary adaptations in the earlier part of the decade: one of Ibsen's Peer Gynt, which Lewin planned to score with Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite, and the other of a minor French novel of the twenties, Albert Adès's Un Roi Nu (A Naked King), which was about artists in turn-of-the-century Paris.

Two other cherished projects from the latter part of the decade were original scripts and were also much more literary and Eurocentric than the two films he was able to produce. The first of these was a life of Goya and was ultimately sold to the producers of The Naked Maja (1958), who used none of it. The second was an original and complex story that combined thematic elements from The Picture of Dorian Gray and Pandora and the Flying Dutchman. It was called Diana at Midnight and was inspired by the Faust legend, which was itself to appear *en abyme* as the theme of a modern ballet within the diagetic space of the film.[11] Both of these later projects were conceived as vehicles for

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[11]Albert Lewin, letter to Jerome Robbins, 3 February 1958, USC. The letter sought Robbins participation as choreographer.

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Ava Gardner, whom Lewin dearly wished to use again in a film.[12]

It is almost easier to imagine these four unrealized films than to credit the two that were made. Lewin himself must have rather agreed. His correspondence of the fifties reveals a distinct, although tempered, frustration with his inability to launch the several projects into which he had poured a great deal of time, money and energy--much more, evidently, than was given to preproduction research and scripting of the two he did accomplish.[13] In fact, when Lewin was honored with a retrospective at the Cinématheque Française in 1958, his most recent film, The Living Idol, was not even included in the program, suggesting that he himself probably deemed it unsuccessful.[14] Although it may have been the decision of Henri Langlois and Mary Meerson,

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[12]She did appear as the Duchess of Alba in The Naked Maja.

[13]The massive heart attack Lewin suffered in 1959 put an end to his film career at a time when he knew it, in any case, to be obsolescent. In a letter to Man Ray (5 October 1960; USC), Lewin remarked of his convalescence: "Since producing and directing are out of the question (and would be even without my invalidism, since the Hollywood parade has passed me by), I have kept busy by writing a play." A few months later, in another letter to Man Ray (23 January 1961; USC), he responded to an idea: "I think your idea of invisible paintings is brilliant, though we're glad to have some of the visible ones. I'm engaged in making invisible movies,--I thought perhaps I could raise the money for them since nobody seemed to want to put up funds for anything visible and audible. So far no takers."

[14]Cinémathèque Française, Musée du Cinéma. Hommage a Albert Lewin, essays by Jean Renoir and Henri Langlois. Paris, c. 1958.

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who conceived the *hommage*, to exclude the film, Lewin was strangely silent in the last decade of his life about both Saadia and The Living Idol, devoting much less discourse to these late films than to the four earlier ones in interviews and retrospective statements about his career.[15]

Nonetheless, these two less-than-successful films represent a full third of Albert Lewin's total directorial product and cannot be neglected. And despite their contrast with the several unrealized films of the fifties, the two narratives do legitimately represent one principal direction of Lewin's ideas in his later years, having a great deal in common with The Unaltered Cat, the novel of lycanthropy (or, more accurately catanthropy--as the metamorphosis involved is woman into cat, not man into wolf) and ideas that Lewin published in 1966. Nor do Saadia and The Living Idol lack entirely continuity with Lewin's previous films. In fact, in one significant respect they perpetuate one of Lewin's oeuvre's central foci--that is in their heightened use of art. And in the manner in which art objects are employed

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[15]It was in this period that Lewin was first cited as having claimed "that in each film he makes...an hour and a quarter is for the producers, the censors, and the lousy public, and only one quarter of an hour for his own pleasure and that of the good public (*"il déclare que dans chaque film qu'il réalise...une heure et quart est pour les producteurs, les censeurs, le mauvais public, un seul quart d'heure est pour son propre plaisir et celui du bon public*)," Ado Kyrou, Amour-Erotisme et Cinéma (Paris, 1957), p. 405. This claim--or excuse, perhaps--is repeated elsewhere, including in Matthews, but in no instance is the source of the remark given.

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within the two films, an enduring proposition of Lewin's entire body of work becomes manifest.

> In spite of years of racial, if not religious admonition, I find myself irresistibly attracted to graven images, and am quite sure that Moses descending from the mountain with the tablets of divine law found my prototype among those worshipping the golden calf.
> -Albert Lewin[16]

There was an aspect of the ineffable in the "nostalgia" of Charles Strickland for a "primitive" place he'd never been as embodied by the Tahitian idol that haunted Lewin's The Moon and Sixpence. The uncanny aura of art was emphasized therein by the revelation in color of the "visionary" pictures made by a blind man in the last stages of leprosy. This technique for enhancing the power of art was used, too, in Lewin's subsequent two films, The Picture of Dorian Gray and The Private Affairs of Bel Ami. In the former, there is a magical equivalence between portrait and portrayed, as well as supernatural power attributed to the Egyptian cat figurine that accompanies the action; in the latter the horrible image seems a hallucination, or projection, of the character's inner conflicts. In Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, the uncanny encounter which is the

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[16]Letter to Robert Graves, 20 May 1959, USC, which continues: "The Jews disparagingly called it a calf, but it was obviously a noble Sumerian bull with a heavenly blue beard, blue bands, blue eyes, and blue-tipped golden horns, the legacy of Hathor and, I suppose, Artemis, enclosing a countenance of soft yellow gold. I confess that I still prefer the bull to the Mosaic ukase, and suspect that the Jews proscribed graven images and preferred eloquence because they had no gift for the plastic arts and a big talent for words."

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very theme of the film is brought about around a portrait. To a greater or lesser extent, each of these narratives accords art a magic that it is presumed in the modern world not to have. At one level this metaphorizes the "magic" of movies, but at another it points to an interest in a more "savage" view of representation that is increasingly prominent in Lewin's work, his art collecting and his correspondence in the 1950s.

In Saadia, "civilized" and "primitive" art forms are contrasted only to be elided in terms of their uses. The film's basic theme and two of its main characters have been introduced by a rather pedantic expository voice-over narration after the credits:

> Morocco is a land of strange and haunting contrasts. Here, the primitive camel and the gasoline truck take on fuel side-by-side for the long haul over mountain and plain and desert. The mingling of old and new creates dramatic patterns in the lives of the people and in the character of the young prince, the Caid, Si Lahssen. Educated in France, he has brought his Western knowledge to the service of his country. Through crowded streets and noisy marketplaces, he drives his modern motor car to the ancient gate of the walled town and where the new, paved road parallels the time-worn camel trail, he moves swiftly to the military post, which guards the village of Aïn el Oued, one of the age-old settlements on the edge of the Sahara. Inside the post, he drives to the hospital of his friend Henrik, the doctor, whose greatest struggle is to overcome witchcraft and sorcery in the remote villages of the district.[17]

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[17]With the advice of Abdallah Kahil, I have transcribed the name of the village, which is only spoken (never by native actors), not written, in the film or credits, based on other North African place names and Arabic meanings. Aïn el Oued would mean "source of the river," or "riverhead."

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These two male characters, Si Lahssen (Cornel Wilde) and Henrik (Mel Ferrer), soon encounter the two female protagonists, the title character, Saadia (Rita Gam), and the sorceress, Fatima (Wanda Rotha), who has been a sort of mentor to the motherless Berber girl. The circumstances are dire--Saadia is suffering from what turns out to be appendicitis. Henrik performs an emergency appendectomy on the spot, with his friend Si Lahssen assisting, while barnyard animals look on. Meanwhile, however, Fatima is invoking her own powers of healing. According to the narration: "In her hut above the village the sorceress Fatima prepared to use the statuette which in her witchcraft symbolized Saadia, in a ritual of black magic" (fig. 73). She implores the "demon she had invoked": "The maiden, Saadia, do not let her die. Save her. Save Saadia and send her back to me." She is then "possessed with devils" and is shown supine and semi-conscious, clutching the homeopathic figurine to her breast and fondling it passionately. There is a narcissistic and homoerotic overtone to Fatima's interest in Saadia that is meant clearly to be seen as unhealthy. When Saadia has recovered and Henrik, the doctor, encounters Fatima at the girl's sick bed, he suggests as much to her:

> I'm told that when you're in the mood you can conjure up an elegant devil that gives you more delight than any mortal man... But this devil who delights you has given you no children. I understand you, Fatima, and I have compassion for you. You are a lonely woman--lonely and childless. You wanted Saadia near you. Saadia could be your child. You would make her a witch like

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> yourself--shunned by everyone else, cursed with the evil eye so that no one would have anything to do with her and you would have her all to yourself. There would be no others to take her from you--no husband, no father, no friends. She would belong to you and to you alone, and you would not have to be lonely anymore.

Then Henrik, in response to Fatima's assertion that he must not believe in her powers, continues:

> You're mistaken. I do believe in them. I believe that human thought is a powerful force that can be used for evil if its concentrated on one object with sufficient intensity--and for good, also, fortunately. That is what prayers are for. You have a statuette of Saadia, I suppose?

Here the basic conflict of the narrative is set up. Beyond this point, Fatima's powers, which are considerable, are pitted against the propositions of enlightenment. Fatima's promise that the devil will strike Henrik at the next full moon seems to be fulfilled when an outbreak of bubonic plague occurs then. Henrik's powers, those of Western medicine, can fight the plague, but only with vaccines that are captured and ransomed by mountain bandits when the airplane transporting them crashes. Saadia, an expert horsewoman, takes it upon herself to ride off to the bandit camp and boldly recovers the medicine by pretending to allow herself (à la the biblical Judith) to be seduced by the band's chief, Bou Rezza (an utterly camp cameo by Michel Simon; see fig. 74), whom she then murders, escaping, just barely, his camp with the vaccines and her life. The epidemic is stopped, the loss of life was relatively small and contained. The village and the fort celebrate. Saadia has endeared herself to both Henrik, and, as it later turns

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out, Si Lahssen, who privately draws and paints her face obsessively (see fig. 75 for one example). But Fatima is not done with them. She steals a portrait of Henrik that Si Lahssen has made and given to Saadia and uses it to invoke further evil. The possible effect of her curse arises in the form of a revenge assault by the Berber bandits upon Saadia, when she happens to be riding in the company of Henrik, Si Lahssen and his princely entourage. In the ensuing shootout, Si Lahssen is gravely wounded and in his delirium reveals his love for Saadia. The film ends with love and interdenominational, communal prayer overwhelming the forces of evil, Si Lahssen's swift recovery and, finally, with his marriage to Saadia.

This sketch of the plot almost does justice to Saadia, a flawed film of contrasts almost as strange as those that it claims for Morocco. The leaden, almost embarrassed performances of the three romantic leads, Wilde, Ferrer and Gam, are overpowered by the character parts played with much greater zest and irony by Rotha, Simon, Marcel Poncin (Moha, Saadia's father) and Jacques Dufhilo (a bandit leader), although it appears that these parts, particularly Rotha's, lost a good deal of their strength when Lewin lost control of the editing. The alternatively pedantic and sensational script also seems to have lost any sense of balance it may have had previously in the editing; after a certain point Fatima's story fades away and the film's conclusion feels abrupt. The authentic and often beautiful locations,

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settings, costumes and other "native" details come almost to seem the film's *raison d'etre*[18].

And occasionally Saadia is almost redeemed by scenes of picturesque authenticity or lyrical construction, including two consecutive ones set during the full moon: in one, Saadia is standing outdoors in the moonlight, secretly watching and listening to Henrik playing a Chopin Prelude at his piano (the same, of course, that was the leitmotif in Dorian Gray), when some jolly French soldiers come by singing and draw her attention to the full moon, for which Fatima has made such ominous predictions. The next scene is a birthday celebration for the Captain of the fort, at which Moroccan women perform native song and dance for the French company[19].

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[18]As J.-A. Fieschi remarked of Lewin's films, "he seemed more concerned with their gloss than with their depth, with visual ritual than with universality. At worst, he gave us that unbelievable Saadia, purely a set decorator's film, in which the textiles and objects fail to endow the parodic anecdote with the least gravity."
"*...il parait plus se soucier de leur éclat que de leur profondeur, de jeur rituel plastique que de leur universalité. Au pire, cela donne l'effarant Saadia, pur film de décorateur où les reflets des tentures et des objets échouent à doter du moindre poids de nécessité une anecdote parodique.*" Albert Lewin entry, "Directed By: 60 + 60 (+1) Cinéastes," Cahiers du Cinéma, Vol. 25, Nos. 150-151 (December 1963-January 1964), "Situation II du Cinéma Américaine", p. 141.

[19]Lewin, who had a great fondness for song and dance, included at least one example of each in each of his films. In The Moon and Sixpence the singing is at Dirk and Blanche's flat and the dancing is the native wedding dance performed in Tahiti. In Dorian Gray there is Sibyl Vane's "Little Yellow Bird" song and the Devi Dja company's performance of the temptation of Buddha. In Bel Ami there is the title song, the song that Georges plays for Laure at

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But the most relevant thematic elements of Saadia are those that connect the film to Lewin's earlier work--its interest in the uses (and abuses) of art and its cultivation of one of representation's more primordial aspects--that of magic. Repeatedly in his work Albert Lewin contrives to re-animate the representational image with magic, uncanniness and power. Representation is the site in his films of a desire that distorts. In Saadia, Fatima lavishes on her homeopathic object--the statuette of Saadia--a concentrated desire that is made to seem evil. But we later discover that Si Lahssen, the French-educated, "civilized" prince, is just as passionately focussed on representations of Saadia. The walls of his private room are covered with drawings of her that reveal a desire no less obsessive than Fatima's.

Si Lahssen's representations may be more mimetic, a presumed measure of distance from magical thinking, but they no less firmly establish the object of his wishes.[20] And Fatima does not insist on abstraction in the representations she will employ. She finds Si Lahssen's very naturalistic

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Clotilde's piano, and the rowdy dance Georges and Clotilde perform at the Reine Blanche. The opening scenes of Pandora feature flamenco dancing and the title character's rendition of a song written by Dorothy Parker; later there is the jazz combo's "You're Driving Me Crazy" and the dancing of the beach party scene. The Living Idol's credits include one for the writer of a song, "Tepo," and choreography credits, too.

[20]"The more firmly the belief in the 'magical identity of the picture' prevails, the less attention we need to pay to its external attributes. Likeness is the tie which links picture and depicted when the belief in their identity has vanished." Ernst Kris, Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art (New York, 1964), p. 77.

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portrait drawing of his friend Henrik as or more effective than a figurine for her homeopathic purposes. If Si Lahssen is less effective in influencing the object of his desire than Fatima, it is due not to the lesser power of the mimetic representation, but to the lesser power of the "artist," who no longer has faith in the magic of his representation.

The elision in Saadia of the initially contrasted attitudes toward art of the "modern" and the "primitive" is repeated in Lewin's last film, The Living Idol, which he called a "highbrow horror" film.[21] In this last Lewin film the identity of depicted and depiction is the content of what initially seems a delusion,[22] but is finally left as a disturbing possibility. In that narrative, a kind of mad genius of an archaeologist, Alfred Stoner (James Robertson-Justice), develops the conviction that his adopted daughter, Juanita Acosta (Liliane Montevecchi), is the reincarnation of--or in some manner retains within her the soul of--a Mayan virgin sacrificed to the Mexican god represented by a

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[21]Ross, Don. "Horror With Archeology: Lewin and the Jaguar Cult." New York Herald-Tribune, 3 December 1956, Sec. 4, p. 4.

[22]As a delusion, Professor Stoner's conviction that there is an identity between an ancient sculpture and Juanita is very like Norbert Hanold's belief in the "reality" of Gradiva, the young woman depicted on a bas relief, in Wilhelm Jensen's Gradiva: A Pompeiian Fancy, which Freud analyzed in Delusion and Dream (Boston, 1956). When Lewin moves away from the possibility of delusion, he moves, too, from any possible psycho-sexual explanations that must accompany that phenomenon.

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fierce red jaguar inside the pyramid that he has been excavating.[23] Stoner sees in Juanita's "pure Indian" features an uncanny resemblance to the sculpted visages of Mayan maidens (see fig. 76).

United with this conviction is another--its compliment--in which Professor Stoner believes a jaguar kept in the Chapultepec Zoo, like Juanita, is somehow the living counterpart of the stone idol to which the virgin was sacrificed. Professor Stoner calls the "inexplicable attacks of melancholy" from which Juanita suffers "loss-of-soul-sickness" and is delighted by her terror at both the ancient and living jaguars, as well as the caged animal's evident frenzy upon meeting her.[24] He contrives to prove his theory conclusively by releasing the animal from the zoo to pursue its and Juanita's destiny. The cat indeed makes its way to Juanita, after seriously injuring Stoner, but she is saved, of course, by a love interest, Terry Matthews (Steve Forrest), an American journalist who has come to Mexico to write about Stoner's excavations. When Matthews goes to the museum, to which Stoner has removed the jaguar idol and other excavated objects, he "finds the Professor there,

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[23]The famous post-classical Mayan red jaguar was filmed *in situ* inside the 'Castillo' at Chichén Itzá. "It is a throne, a stone seat, in the form of a jaguar, painted red and inlaid with jade; on its back was a mosaic disc composed of precious materials." Justino Fernández, A Guide to Mexican Art, Joshua C. Taylor, trans. (Chicago, 1969), p.22.

[24]William Lewin, "A Guide to the Discussion of the MGM Photoplay, The Living Idol," Photoplay Studies, Vol. 23, No. 5 (1956-1957), p. 6.

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bleeding badly from his wounds. The museum is a shambles, the walls battered, the floor covered with fragments of ceramic pieces, as if the stone sculpture of the jaguar had come to life at the moment when the real one was liberated from his cage, and had wrecked the museum trying to escape."[25]

The Living Idol's most unusual aspect is its most academic, too: a scene in which Professor Stoner lectures on the history of human sacrifice, using as illustrations eighteen lantern slides of a series of watercolors by Carlos Mérida that were made expressly for the film.[26] The

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[25]William Lewin, p. 7.

[26]Mérida, who was born in Guatemala in 1893, was active in Mexico for most of his long career. He was an early advocate of the revival of indigenous styles and motifs. His most famous work, public murals and paintings, combines these "native" qualities with a distinctly cubist system.

The eighteen images represent: 1) a Carthaginian sacrifice to the idol Moloch; 2) the Cretan Minotaur; 3) Andromeda and Perseus; 4) the sacrifice of Iphigenia; 5) an ancient Mesopotamian sacrifice upon a ziggurat; 6) Abraham and Isaac; 7) a gladiatorial contest in the arena of Imperial Rome; 8) a Dravidian Hindu sacrifice; 9) a Druid sacrifice; 10) a pre-historic cave drawing speculated to record human sacrifice [a highly dubious interpretation]; 11) Hitler, reviewing a goose-stepping parade of German troops [an even more dubious example of the theme]; 12) a Renaissance painting of the Crucifixion; 13) a classic Mexican sacrifice--immolation on the platform of the pyramid--copied from the Florentine Codex, prepared in the sixteenth century by Fra Bernardino de Sahagun; 14) the Florentine Codex illustration of the sacrifice to Xipe-Totec; 15) the Florentine Codex illustration of the sacrifice of the youth to Tezcatlipoca; 16) the Florentine Codex illustration of the sacrifice of the new fire, in which the light is kindled in the breast of the victim; 17) the skull-rack in front of the pyramid in the central square of Tenochtitlan; 18) a Mayan maiden in sacrificial robes, her arms and legs stretched out and bound to crossed posts (the Professor has Juanita costumed and posed according to

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pictures are bold and colorful illustrations, in which Mérida's usually rather more abstract and geometric primitivism is subordinated to the expository demands of the lecture. Instead of the cubistic stylization common in his contemporary work, Mérida stylizes his images according to a more "primitive" formula. Unmodulated, graphically delineated figures are organized hieratically on flat ground. The style of the figures manages to appear at the same time rather naive and subtly based on the known figurative styles of each culture whose sacrificial methods are represented (fig. 77).

Despite the art historian's necessary interest in the presence of such eccentric pedantry, it is not hard to imagine that such a scene--played by such a protagonist[27]--weighs heavily on whatever visceral thrills this "highbrow horror" film might offer. A slide lecture is usually soporific to even the most academic audience, and despite its several superficial similarities to the cinema

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this image--see fig. 78).

[27]James Robertson-Justice (1905-1975), the Scottish born actor who played Stoner in the film, was apparently well-qualified to play such a pedant, and friends of Lewin say that working with the actor was one of Lewin's greatest pleasures during production. Educated at Marlborough College and the University of Bonn, Robertson-Justice had earned a doctorate and may thus have been the only individual Lewin worked with in film whose academic credentials outstripped his own. "...formerly a journalist and a naturalist, he became an expert in falconry and trained Prince Charles in that ancient hunting art. He held the honorary post of rector of the University of Edinburgh." Ephraim Katz, The Film Encyclopedia (New York, 1979), p. 981.

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(projection of photographic material, accompanying "sound," etc.), is a medium whose entertainment potential must be reckoned considerably less than that of the silver screen.

Finally, the most that Saadia and The Living Idol can be said to have done for Lewin personally was to have afforded him the opportunity to broaden his travels and his art collection and to have prepared him, by their failure, for the mandatory retirement that followed the heart attack he suffered in 1959. Why Albert Lewin, as he gained experience and autonomy, lost his grip on what "works" in the movies is a troubling question. Although these last films no less than the previous ones aspire to that equilibristic navigation between their director's own aesthetic and intellectual preoccupations and the movie-going public's tastes, there is no doubt that with each progressive film, Lewin moved farther away from achieving his ideal.

Early in his career, Albert Lewin was a canny advisor to Irving Thalberg and had a reputation for almost infallible instincts as a producer at M-G-M. The Moon and Sixpence, Lewin's first directorial film, was the only of the six that turned a considerable profit. His second feature, The Picture of Dorian Gray, was at least as popular, and was his most critically acclaimed, but was a phenomenally expensive production. Beyond this point, Lewin's films became not only progressively more eccentric and less commercially viable, but, by almost any standards,

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progressively uneven and flawed, as well. What Lewin remarked sadly about the history of cinema--that it has a happy ending if told backwards--is more undisputably true, ironically, of his own career.[28]

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[28]Letter to Dwight MacDonald, 18 March 1958, USC. See my introduction, p. 20, note 16.

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Conclusion: MOVING PICTURES AND MAGICAL IDOLS: A SYMPTOMATOLOGY OF HOLLYWOOD CINEMA AT ITS LIMITS

> I, too, am not a mystic. I am a materialist, but I believe that words, even spoken words, are matter, that thoughts are matter, and that emotions are matter, and since matter, we have been told, is indestructible, they continue to exist, passionately seeking a living utterance out of their gray Elysium. The poet's ancestors have chosen him to speak for them.... They inhabit the billions of cells in his mind and celebrate ancient festivals in his sleep when the guards are off duty.
>
> Albert Lewin[1]

The sense of representational objects as potent effigies--images with a heightened relationship to that which they represent--is one of the most consistent attributes of Albert Lewin's small but distinctive cinematic oeuvre. When he imagined his ancient "prototype" provoking the wrath of Moses by bowing down before the golden calf, he was expressing--albeit somewhat whimsically--a deeply personal and lifelong visceral excitement about art that is evident in his literary, dramatic, musical and, especially, visual passions. Art was, to Albert Lewin, a creed and an ideology unto itself. Religion interested him in as much as it could be understood as an artful human construction.[2]

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[1]Letter to Robert Graves, 5 March 1958, USC.

[2]"The only religions that interest me are those which have as little preceptual morality as possible and which use elaborate ceremony and ritual, combining all the arts for a moving theatrical effect. This goes back, I suppose, to the magic which my corpuscles remember from the arcane caves where the bull was painted on the wall to be assaulted by symbolic javelins thrown by dancing and chanting priests," Lewin wrote to Robert Graves, 20 May 1959, USC.

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And Albert Lewin saw little in human history other than art to inspire his confidence.[3]

Lewin often articulated, as in the letter excerpted above, a view similar to that which Philip Rieff attributes to Sigmund Freud, that the "artist is gifted in a rare manner for which Freud demands respect and attention. Lacking the kind of knowledge scientists and men of affairs use, nevertheless the artist has something better: 'psychic knowledge.' Being endowed in a way superior to the ordinary neurotic with atavistic capacities, the artist can 'draw from sources that have not been made accessible to science.'"[4] This sense, that artists are rather like mediums of their ancestors--vessels of atavistic human actions, aspirations and beliefs--is accompanied in Lewin's aesthetics by a profound interest in the various childhoods of art.

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[3]"How...you can maintain your optimism is a mystery to me," Lewin wrote to John Howard Lawson in 1938 (29 March, USC) about their differences over Communism and the coming war. "I know you are deeply sincere, and so I must conclude that you are the dupe of your own humanitarianism. All your thoughts are fathered by wishes. You have withdrawn from a too frightful world into a land of chimeras.

"As for me, I am a profound pessimist. I think nothing can stop the march of fascism....Fascism will wax and flourish over an unhappy world for a couple of hundred years until a new, young culture will rise phoenix-like out our embers, as the Egypt of Thebes rose out of the Egypt of Cairo, the Greece of Athens out of the Greece of Mycaene [sic], Rome out of Etruria, and Christian Europe out of Rome. These births and deaths involve changes without necessarily involving improvements - at least to the naked eye."

[4]Introduction to Delusion and Dream, p. 11.

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In his musings about the history of art and literature, and in his art collecting, Lewin dwelt upon images and objects that represented to him beginnings--art of an individual or collective naivete or youth. Until he became friendly with Man Ray, who inspired him to collect Surrealist art, Lewin's art collection consisted mainly of "naive" paintings and "primitive" sculpture.[5] Lewin was also interested in artistic decadence as is abundantly evident in his first three films. But this is less of a paradox than it might at first appear. For the decadence of a culture not only stands in a complimentary relation to its own infancy, but the decadence of one culture is inevitably linked through its demise to the infancy of another (or is, in fact, entirely coincident, as with Late Roman and Early Christian civilization). And decadence, often also cultivates a taste for otherness: the exotic, the ancient, the esoteric or primitive. But Lewin's view is of the "primitive" other as a part of oneself: an ancestor, a memory, a seed. Lewin's strange cinema, born of a youthful

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[5]"This might be a reaction against his own sophistication, I suggested--although young, the movies were certainly not primitive art. My statement could have influenced him, for he soon began to acquire works of a more cerebral nature, like those of some of the Surrealists." Man Ray, Self Portrait (London, 1963), p. 350.

See Appendix C for works by the French painters Bauchant, Bombois, Séraphine, Vivin; Americans Hirshfield, Kane, Pippin; and Haitians Hyppolite, Obin, among other "naive" or "primitive" painters that the Lewins collected, as well as pre-Columbian and African objects and European and post-Colonial "folk" pictures and objects of various sorts.

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enthusiasm, evolves from this peculiar variant of primitivism, from his romance with the individual and collective past.

In the early 1920s, when Lewin became so irrevocably captivated by the cinema that he abandoned forever his careers as scholar and critic, moving pictures were, after all, still a very young, although certainly no longer, if they ever had been, a "naive" or "primitive," art. Within the modern Western paradigm, the other arts, particularly literature, which was Lewin's first love, seemed already past the point of decadence. To him this tradition was becoming tiresome:

> I don't blame Stein for being bored with the frozen forms of English syntax. Poetry is alive when languages themselves are in a formative state. Shakespeare beat soft steel to shoe the stallion Pegasus. The same was true of Homer's Greek and the French of the Roland. Writing now is playing cribbage with polished bones. (Some people are good players) English is a dead language and writing a process of exhumation. Stein thinks she can revivify the corpse by an autopsical excision of nouns, adjectives and punctuation marks. A literary Polyanna putting cold cream on a chancre. Joyce, meeting the problem with genius, goes down to a dazzling defeat. There is only one hope - let the Japs settle England, and the Russians follow them, and a new language may be born, as living English came out of the mingled blood, groans, shrieks, cries, and the ecstasy of raped Celts, Romans, Saxons, and Normans. The price of creation is chaos.[6]

Lewin's cynicism about the fates of particular cultures was the compliment of his genuine faith in the phoenix-like persistence and power of art. His response to the epiphany of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Caligari reveals a

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[6]Lewin to Jim Tully, 28 November 1934, USC.

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sense of the magical possibilities of a visual medium in a formative stage--one in which an entirely new, silent "language," born of a fortuitous mating of history and technology, is combined with the aspects of the eternal, the universal, to which he believed he responded in Western forms from Myceneaen jewelry and Homer's Iliad to Botticelli's Primavera and Villon's Ballade des Dames du Temps jadis,[7] to Chirico's Mystery and Melancholy of a Street and Kafka's The Castle. This is reflected in the seriousness with which he contemplated the silliness of Buster Keaton's The Playhouse, a short 1921 comedy about a stagehand's fantasy of playing every role, from conductor, musicians, dancers and audience, at a variety show:

> ...it is both as film artist and as art collector that Lewin views the Keaton *oeuvre*. Lewin finds more in The Playhouse than the admitted technical originality and virtuosity, startling as these are.
>
> A few years ago, on location in Mexico, Lewin was recalling the picture, which he had not seen again since 1921. With a memory like Buster's own he went over the sequences. Then, however, he dwelt on "atmosphere." "An altogether extraordinary emotional effect," he observed, "came from the dreamlike, obsessive, hallucinatory repetition of that strange frozen face. It was almost nightmarish--a phantasmagoria of masks.
>
> "There is no question," Lewin concluded, "that Buster Keaton, among other things, was a surrealist even before surrealism. Such fantasy! Not even Pirandello ever conjured up such extraordinary visions."[8]

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[7]Villon's phrase *"neiges d'antan,"* from the refrain *"Mais où sont lex neiges d'antan?"* (But where are the snows of yesteryear?), is cited in Lewin's letter to Pegeen Sullivan, 16 November 1945.

[8]Rudi Blesh, Keaton (New York, 1966), p. 168.

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Albert Lewin responded above all to a level of visual fantasy and stylization in the mise-en-scène of the silent cinema and often decried, as has been noted, the trend toward a formulaic and banal dramatic realism that he observed early in the development of narrative cinema and believed was gravely exacerbated by the introduction of synchronous sound, which he felt tended to root the camera to a shallow and predictable field of vision in front of static figures with moving mouths.

Thus, despite the heavy verbosity of his scenarios, Lewin contrived to reproduce something of that stylized and dynamic quality he saw in the best of silent cinema in his own films, as I have suggested in "The Mystery and Melancholy of a Scene." His intentions were articulated in a response he composed, but never sent evidently, to James Agee, who had given The Picture of Dorian Gray a rather negative review.[9] Lewin's five-page rebuttal to Agee's main complaints includes the following reply to the suggestion that the young John Barrymore would have made a more suitable Dorian Gray:

> As for Hurd Hatfield, the whole point of his studied, mask-like, enigmatic performance, which he delivered to me with sensibility, imagination and subtlety, escapes you. It is no disparagement of Hatfield's talent for me to agree that John Barrymore at twenty would have been wonderful--although John Barrymore's interpretation, I

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[9]See Agee on Film (New York, 1967), pp. 147-149, which reproduces Agee's March 10, 1945 review in The Nation.

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> am afraid, might not have been sufficiently stylized to convey what I had in mind.[10]

Lewin's deliberate and stylized movements of figures in space, which, as has been several times noted, often invokes by means of patterned floors the metaphor of chess pieces moved about upon a board, his repeated use of dolls, puppets and mannequins, the studied, often quite affectless circumscription of speech and movement characteristic of his direction of actors, and the copious visual symbolism placed within carefully and densely composed frames are effects of a view of men and women at the mercy of forces--internal and external--much greater than they can imagine or control. His characters suffer from the delusion that they are agents, while the audience is given to understand that they are pawns.

Lewin dwelt on this tragic view of humanity in an unpublished essay about "The Marionette," whose very existence he described as "the ultimate irony."

> And how are we, aware of the string and the voice, to contemplate him without pity and terror, feeling the strings upon our own members--the strings of immediate and remote circumstance--the economic, psychological, biological, and geological determinisms that move our feet into the patterns of biography? "I am that I am!" asserts the marionette. "Tat tvam asi!" The affirmation reverberates through the labyrinth of evolution, up by star and star to the silence of those holes in the sky which awe even the astronomers.[11]

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[10]"Rough draft" of letter, evidently unsent, to James Agee, USC.

[11]"The Marionette," unpublished typescript, n.d., USC.

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The distinctive style of Lewin's films, particularly the three in black-and-white, derives from this esoteric and tragic view of the world and from a both philosphically and nostalgically predicated romance with the charm of the silent cinema.[12]

This contrast infects Lewin's films such that they can seem, almost impossibly, gravely self-important and yet, at the same time ironic, even playful. This is a source of subtle and often gratifying tension within the best--or, at least, most balanced--of Lewin's films, The Picture of Dorian Gray and The Private Affairs of Bel Ami. It should be said unequivocally that the superiority of these two films to the other four is due in large part to the superiority of their sources. Lewin, the scholar-critic, understood and appreciated Wilde's and Maupassant's works, the neatness of their plots and premises beautifully. But the films' virtues are due in equal part to the stunning visual interpretation that Lewin brought to them, aided by the finesse of studio production at its height. The Moon and Sixpence, a sort of trial run, as has been suggested, suffers both for having

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[12]Lewin's seemingly strange sensibility was, in fact, touted in a Paramount press release about Lewin during his term there: "So far he hasn't inflicted poetry on the trustful movie fans. But one of his delusions is that rolling melodrama, with primitive impulses and simple types, is folk art. If you agree with him and say that folk art is nothing if not anonymous, he will agree with you half way and remark that the names won't mean anything a hundred years from now, but that the films, if the gelatine doesn't gum up, will be both amusing and hallowed by age." Paramount press release, dated 24 March 1939, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

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derived from a weaker source and for having been produced on a smaller scale, with less panache.

Pandora and the Flying Dutchman, probably Lewin's most ambitious film, and often his most beautiful, yet lacks the balance that its predecessors could boast. Its critics, for and against, often resort to the term "vertiginous" to characterize its unsettling and puzzling contrasts--not only those "intentional" contrasts meant to achieve a Surrealist effect, but its embarrassing swings between clumsiness and grace, pedantry and poetry, travesty and tragedy. Its failings and its virtues suggest that Lewin as original screen-writer lacked the restraint and sensibility that characterized him as an interpreter of proven material. The unhappy results of his last two films underline the problem. Saadia, taken from an obscure and obviously negligible novel, and The Living Idol, another original script, rely heavily on Lewin's talent as a writer and they suggest it was wanting.

This is proven conclusively by the novel that Lewin published near the end of his life, The Unaltered Cat. The book betrays its author's over-educated, somewhat dilettantish desire to expound upon the most diverse philosophical, aesthetic, and academic points. And the characters in this story, which is nominally about an anthropologist who learns that his young wife is a lyncanthrope (more precisely, a cat-person; c.f. Jacques Tourneur's far more exciting use of this plot premise, the

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1942 film, Cat People), do expound and argue and pontificate *ad nauseam*. Such a story can have interest only so far as it invokes a sense of horror, if not at the literal claims of the narrative, at least at its metaphorical power. But the only horror in The Unaltered Cat is its author's evident intellectual *horror vacui;* and whatever power the plot might have had is washed away by the deluge of ideas that flows across its rather flimsy premise. The novel finally reads like a faculty-club dinner table conversation--sometimes erudite, informative, provocative, but often enough tedious, didactic and tendentious.

If the novel of ideas is rarely successful and even more rarely well-received, then the film of ideas is even less so in both respects. In retrospect, this can be seen as the incipient problem in Lewin's oeuvre, if not from the beginning, certainly from the turning point of Pandora. And it is on this point that the reception of Lewin's films hinges. Often deemed by his critics "middle-brow," disparagingly, or "high-brow," sarcastically, Lewin himself hardly hesitated to wield these same ultimately futile and dismissive terms.[13] He was outraged by James Agee's review of The Picture of Dorian Gray and seven years later was still fuming:

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[13]They so obviously derive from a distorted kind of class-consciousness that they need specify nothing other than a denigration of actual class or an imputation of snobbish pretentions.

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> The middle-brow critic has the notion that it is his function to serve as a bridge between the artist and his public. He is not a bridge at all, but a road-block....James Agee...is one of the middle-brows I refer to who consider themselves stupendous highbrows. He said in his review that he had to thank me for making him read the Oscar Wilde book. He admired the book and despised the picture. While preparing the picture, I happened to have read the contemporary criticisms of Wilde's book. It was furiously attacked by people just like James Agee, who said things about the book not unlike things he said about the picture... The middle-brow has always been a somewhat exasperating human being. He lives in a world created by Herbert Spencer, and finds his phenomenal environment familiar and obvious.[14]

It may well be true that a critic admitting to having been introduced to a minor classic of literature by a motion picture was leaving himself open to such derision, but Agee was far from alone in his dislike of Lewin's films. If American critics were split about The Picture of Dorian Gray,[15] they tended to be increasingly unaminous in their low opinions of Lewin's later films. Lewin's particular combination of tragedy and irony, spectacle and ritual, pomposity and play, had a particularly "un-American" mien. Andrew Sarris sums up many an American critic's response to films that aspire to sophistication or literacy in his evaluation of Lewin and the other directors whom he places

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[14]From a letter to Will and Ariel ("Puck") Durant, 14 January 1952, USC.

[15]Lewin summed up the response himself in his unsent letter to Agee: "The divergence of opinion regarding my film...is violent. Harry Hansen, Alton Cook, Howard Barnes, Eileen Creelman, Kate Cameron, and a number of others, approve of it with varying degrees of enthusiasm. At the same time it is a subject of amusement, contempt or condemnation by Bosley Crowther, John Mason Brown, the New Yorker, Time, P.M., and by you in the Nation."

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in his "Strained Seriousness" category of American directors, composed of "talented but uneven directors with the mortal sin of pretentiousness. Their ambitious projects tend to inflate rather than expand."[16]

If there is any epithet more damning than "middle-brow," in our culture at large, and in the microscosm of American film, it must be "pretentious," an unexamined and wildly misused, but surprisingly effective, perjorative. It usually ignores any distinction whatsoever between genuine and feigned knowledge, expertise or literacy and levels its dismissal at any person or product that manifests these qualities. Albert Lewin, whatever his failings as a writer and director, was not a pretender to the worlds of arts and letters--he was, as a scholar and critic, a graduate of these worlds. That has not stopped a majority of his American critics, almost to a man (so to speak) his inferior in terms of education and literacy, from condemning him and his films as pretentious and snobbish.[17]

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[16]Andrew Sarris, The American Cinema (New York, 1968), p. 189. Lewin's eclectic company in this category includes: Richard Brooks, John Frankenheimer, Stanley Kubrick, Richard Lester, Sidney Lumet, Tony Richardson, John Schlesinger, and Robert Wise. It should be noted that many of these "American" directors are actually British. Compare the "mortal sin" that damns these directors to the dubious distinction of being categorized as "Lightly Likable," by virtue of being "talented but uneven directors with the saving grace of unpretentiousness." p. 171.

[17]e.g. Sarris speaks of Lewin's "naive conception of refinement" (Film Culture, No. 28); Lewin's fellow director, Val Lewton, called Dorian Gray "a disgustingly pretentious piece of poopishness," (Joel Siegel, letter to Velvet Light Trap, No. 11); David Thomson writes that Lewin's "arty

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The qualities for which Lewin's films were roundly condemned by such critics are at odds with an idea of the American cinema. It is hard to imagine European films that share many of these same qualities with Lewin's--Michael Powell's The Red Shoes, Alf Sjöberg's Miss Julie, Max Ophuls' Lola Montès, Igmar Bergman's The Seventh Seal, Jean-Luc Godard's Contempt, for instance--being so readily dismissed as pretentious. These may well be better films than most of Lewin's, but not because their makers are less pretentious or more genuine men of ideas, rather because they are better, or more thoroughly, artists. Lewin was, indeed, perhaps less of an artist because he was more of an intellectual. His ideas often encumbered and undermined his artistry. Again, this is a quirk more readily forgiven in European films, Antonioni's for instance, or Godard's, than it can ever be in their American cousins.

Why American criticism has tended, for the most part, to cherish a fantasy of a kind of unschooled, native genius in its home-grown filmmakers (Griffith, Flaherty, Ford, Keaton, and Hawks, for instance, although not Welles), but welcomes sophistication, erudition and artifice from abroad, is a question rather beyond the scope of this study and my

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aspiration showed like a teenage slip," and "he cultivated a garish sophistication...and sometimes achieved real vulgarity." (A Biographical Dictionary of Film, p. 322); Ephraim Katz, who is more generous, still relies on such terms: "a curious but interesting mixture of the naive and the sophisticated, the dilettantish and the fascinating, the vulgar and the refined." (The Film Encyclopedia, p. 717).

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expertise. But it is certainly one of the main forces that has kept Lewin, since his death, firmly at the boundary of the Hollywood cinema. From the very apogee of that system, as a powerful producer at Thalberg's M-G-M--the studio that epitomized Hollywood production at its glossy best--Lewin moved with each step he took, farther and more inexorably away from its center. But the very facts of his presence there, the distance he travelled, and with whom, testifies to a system whose boundaries were inherently flexible.

Fatally like his own characters, perhaps, Lewin was undermined by his own perversity--by his irreverent wish to see how far one could go in transgressing and defying the canon that genuinely represented a Hollywood creed. As Claude Arnaud observed of Dorian Gray's and Pandora Reynolds's attacks on their own portraits:

> Their attempts to efface these traces of subjugation to myth are paid for in kind: one cannot attack with impunity a work of art, that spark of sacred fire that the gods have entrusted to men.[18]

Moving pictures, too, are art. And like idols and icons, they are imbued with myth, power, and magic. Albert Lewin was in a better position than most to understand this. Nonetheless, in his own directorial career, he progressively distanced himself from the formulae which constituted the most mythic elements of Hollywood movies. Ironically it was

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[18]"Les statues meurent aussi." Cinématographe, No. 74 (January 1982), p. 59: *"Leur tentative d'effacer ces traces d'assujetissement au mythe se soldent par un échec: on ne s'attaque pas impunément à l'oeuvre d'art, à l'étincelle de feu sacré que les dieux ont confiée aux hommes."*

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by using mythic themes that he did so. His films denatured the myths of cinema by exploring their prototypes.

Albert Lewin indeed walked a tightrope. The successes and failures of his films demonstrate that his "hope to make a few pictures which will be both commercial and artistic, and which will have enough originality and distinction to be remembered for a little while" was not a pipe dream. His equilibrism produced some remarkable films, strange and beautiful, as well as some rather too strange and not so beautiful. The films translated many ideas and images from Lewin's intellectual and artistic milieu into the language of the dominant popular medium of his day. If something was lost in the translation, perhaps something else was gained.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: CHRONOLOGY

1894 Albert Lewin born September 23 in Brooklyn to Marcus and Yetta (née Mindlin) Lewin, working-class Russian-Jewish emigrants; third of three children (William, b. 1889; Sarah, b. 1891).

1903 Lewin family moves to Newark, New Jersey; Lewin later characterizes his childhood in an interview (Rosenberg and Silverstein, pp. 100-101):

> *My father did a variety of things. He helped build the Louisville and Nashville railroad by being a waterboy on a construction gang.* He later worked, as they say, on shirts in New Jersey, and I think that's where he met my mother, who also worked on shirts in a factory. For some time he was the only news dealer in Flatbush. The whole family worked at this business.*
>
> *I was the youngest, having an older brother and sister. My mother fought very hard to get me into good schools, whether or not they were in our district. I never suffered starvation or anything like that. Kids don't know whether they're poor or rich. I was quite contented as a boy....*
>
> *My mother was illiterate, but very, very capable. The Jews didn't educate their daughters. Her brothers were schooled, but she wasn't. My mother was passionately determined that her children would have the education she didn't have. She really took the reins. Out of a little neighborhood ice cream store in Newark, she sent three children through college.* She did this by Homeric labor. It's a typical immigrant story. My father, with little formal education, was an intellectual. He read Shakespeare and Schiller and Lessing in German. He was also a follower of Ingersoll, the famous atheist. And I was brought up, you might say, uncorrupted by any religious training whatsoever.*
>
> *My parents were mad about music. They used to go to the opera at the Metropolitan, dragging me up to the family circle, 'way,' way up there where you needed a spyglass to see the people on stage. But my mother knew all the arias. I still have a tremendous collection of her phonograph records of Caruso and Melba, Tetrazini, everybody from that period. I used to play the mandolin and the violin when I was a kid and that led me to the NYU Glee Club as a mandolin player.*
>
> *Marcus (known as Max) probably did not work as a "waterboy" on the construction of the Louisville-

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Nashville Railroad. Max was not a very young man when he emigrated, and none of his surviving nieces and nephews are familiar with this story, which they speculate may have been a flight of Lewin's fancy, or his idea of a joke. They also find Lewin's statement that his mother put three children through college something of an exaggeration, as his sister Sarah (known as Sadie) attended a normal school (i.e. for technical training), not a college; and both of Yetta's sons (known as Will and Allie) had some form of financial assistance and completed their undergraduate educations in three years.

Anne Lewin Diament, William Lewin's eldest daughter, adds that her grandfather Max was known as a Socialist, but may have leaned towards Anarchism, since he named his second son for the Anarchist martyr, Albert Parsons, who was hanged for his alleged participation in the Haymarket affair in Chicago (1886-87). Lewin used the middle name at least through his college years, but rarely after moving to California.

1911 Graduates Newark's Barringer High School, with honors, as valedictorian; receives four-year scholarship to New York University, Washington Heights. Lewin's brother Will graduates from New York University and begins his forty-four year career as an educator in the Newark public schools.

1914 One of Lewin's fraternity brothers (Pi Lambda Phi) is David Loew, one of the twin sons of Marcus Loew, founder of Loew's theater chain and owner after 1920 of Metro Pictures; Loew and Lewin become friends and much later (1940) business partners.

1915 Graduates with honors, Phi Beta Kappa, as class historian and commencement speaker, from New York University with Bachelor's degree in literature; wins first prize in University's Sandham Prize oration contest with "The Golden Statue," a denunciation of

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war; awarded scholarship to Harvard University, where he begins in the fall.

1916 Earns Master's degree in English Literature from Harvard University, where he

was a charter member of the Harvard Poetry Society, which was born in 1916. Robert Frost, Conrad Aiken, John Gould Fletcher, and Amy Lowell came to meetings. We wrote bad verses and read them at each other. George L. Kittredge taught the Shakespeare and Beowulf courses at Harvard. He wanted me to take my Ph.D. under him. He told me I had one of the best exam papers he had ever read. But something made me feel that the academic world wasn't what I wanted. In spite of that, I ran into the head of the English department at Missouri while he was taking a sabbatical at Harvard. He invited me to come to Missouri, and I accepted pretty much on impulse (Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 101).

Lewin is introduced in New York to Charles Reznikoff, who had studied at Missouri and who is to become one of his closest lifelong friends; the meeting and early days of the friendship are remembered later by Reznikoff, a foremost Objectivist poet, in a poem, which reads in part:

Al read nothing on his knees,
and delighted in finding out for himself
what made a poem or story tick--
if it did. We began to spend much time together,
our spirits swaggering about,
blaming and praising each other's writing,
as well as that of the rest of the world--
(By the Well of Living & Seeing, pp. 133-136)

1917 Employed as instructor of English, University of Missouri; there teaches verse writing:

At Missouri, we had a marvelous bunch of people... Thorstein Veblen was there. He was a very close friend of mine for two years... And Manley O. Hudson, who became American representative in the International Court was also there (Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 101).

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Two of Lewin's poems, "Feet of the Wind" and "Twilight," are published in The Poetry Journal, edited by Amy Lowell.

1918 Called up for service, leaves Missouri and serves briefly in a teaching position at Fort Dix; honorably discharged from military service; employed by Jacob Billikopf, to whom he is introduced by Manley O. Hudson, as assistant director for the American Jewish Relief Committee, New York; on August 17, marries Mildred Mindlin-Jacobs (known as Millie, a maternal first cousin, reared until her teens in England), of whom he much later said:

> *She could have done anything... she graduated from Hunter...at the head of her class, summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, and everything else. She took her Master's at Columbia with honors. Once we were married, she never wanted to do anything but look after me and she did, all her life. She could have done anything. She was brilliant. But she didn't want to.* (From an unpublished portion of a typescript of the Rosenberg and Silverstein interview, USC);

undertakes doctoral studies in literature at Columbia University.

1920 Teaches summer school at Newark's Central High School. Millie graduates with honors from Hunter College.

1921 The editor of The Jewish Tribune, a friend of Lewin's,

> *asked me if I'd like to be the dramatic critic. I did, for no pay, but for the free tickets which I liked. I had just gotten married. We loved the theater, and I became interested in going to the movies at that time. I wrote a column called 'Playthings,' and it seemed to attract some attention around New York. I received fan letters from some quite famous critics. Bernard Bergman, who was the editor, didn't care what I wrote.*

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I had a free hand. I reviewed films as often as I did plays (Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 102);

reviews The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari among other films for The Jewish Tribune; resolves to get into the movie business. Millie earns a Master's degree in economics from Columbia University.

1922 Through the influence of Jacob Billikopf, a major film exhibitor, Lewin is hired as a New York reader for Sam Goldwyn; continues doctoral studies (completing all requirements for the Ph.D. except his dissertation), criticism, Jewish Relief position; friends from New York years, besides Reznikoff and his wife, Marie Syrkin, include critic Cecilia Ager.

1923 Persuades Goldwyn to send him to California; in Culver City, continues as reader for Goldwyn; trains as script clerk, works in this capacity for directors King Vidor and Victor Sjöström (Seastrom); works briefly and unofficially as an assistant editor in which context he has the unique opportunity to view the original, uncut version of Erich von Stroheim's Greed; participates in the founding of Little Theater Films, an association of movie people interested in advancing "artistic quality" in the cinema (other members include Curtis Melnitz, Paul Bern, and directors Rex Ingram, Ernst Lubitsch and Maurice Tourneur), described, with tongue in cheek, by a contemporary journalist:

New foments were at work in Los Angeles towards the middle of the year 1923. Even among those who daily

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perpetrated trite and sentimental libels on life in the name of motion pictures rebel spirits were beginning to rattle their chains and chatter nervously of revolt.

Their rattling and chattering needed coyly to be camouflaged with gestures of submission. They were still in the ogre's castle and must tread on tiptoe.

The Little Theater Films movement was being launched with trepidation by a group of those whose long experience with bad pictures had convinced them that good pictures could be made.

But the rebels were confronted by the damning necessity of being commercially successful or artistically a failure. Hence they were torn by two opposing forces...

In the dark forest of Hollywood a group of these insurgents are assembled in a sheltered glade. A fire is going. They are huddled together for warmth about a punch bowl. Even here they must be circumspect. Some of the smug, contented leaders of the tribe have seen their fire shining at a distance and have joined the group. (Don Ryan, "Tempest-Tossed: First Little Theater Films Production," Los Angeles Record, 29 May 1923, p. 1.)

1924 Moves to Metro as screenwriter; writes adaptation of Charles Norris's Bread; merger of three studios results in founding of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), with Louis B. Mayer serving as Vice President and General Manager and Irving Thalberg (at 24 years old) as Vice President and Production Supervisor.

1925 Lewin continues writing continuity and scenarios for MGM silents.

1926 Adapts James M. Barrie's Quality Street for MGM.

1927 Lewin, now head of MGM's story department, meets and becomes friends with director Robert Flaherty, who, after the success of his films, Nanook of the North and Moana, had been contracted by MGM to direct White Shadows of the South Seas (of which he abdicated control on location, leaving the final product to be

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directed by W.S. Van Dyke, as MGM's first synchronized sound film); the two become lifelong friends--Flaherty introduces Lewin to many of his future friends over coming years, including Jean and Dido Renoir, Mary Meerson of the Cinématheque Française, Hugh and Barbara Gray, and journalist Ernestine Evans.

1928 Lewin co-authors script of The Actress for MGM; is promoted to Thalberg's personal assistant.

1929 Promoted to producer at MGM, responsible for projects in which Thalberg takes closest interest, including Garbo's last silent picture, The Kiss, directed by Jacques Feyder. William Lewin organizes an educational sound-film unit for Western Electric Co. (later to become Encyclopedia Britannica films).

1930 Produces Devil-May-Care for MGM. Although very close and loyal to Thalberg, Lewin mostly eschews personal friendships with other movie executives; among his close friends during the MGM years are the composer Herbert Stothart and his wife Mary, an artist (who after her husband's death in 1949, marries Paul Wescher, an art historian), Dr. Rudolph Marx and his wife Agnes, Frank Davis, an MGM film editor and amateur pilot, and the opera singer Marguerite d'Alvarez; another close friend, screenwriter Anita Loos, gives Lewin, upon his first trip to Europe, an introduction to Janet Flanner (New Yorker correspondent) and her fellow journalist and lover, Solita Solano, who both

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become friends and correspondents, as does another American in Paris, Djuna Barnes.

1931 Produces The Guardsman, Alfred Lunt's and Lynn Fontanne's only starring talkie. Lewin's father dies, September 4.

1932 Produces Smilin' Through for MGM. Lewin becomes very friendly with Danish explorer and writer, Peter Freuchen, who is employed by MGM on a production (Eskimo, 1933, W.S. Van Dyke, director) based on his own books about his quarter century among Eskimos in Alaska. Lewin spends a great deal of time in coming years socializing and corresponding with a coterie of colorful, adventurous, jocular fellows that includes Flaherty, Freuchen, and writer-personalities Frank Scully, Jim Tully, Oliver St. John Gogarty and Gobind Behari Lal.

1933 Secretly explores the possibility of leaving MGM to set up an independent production company with Sol Grossbard, Anita Loos, John Emerson and Jules Furthman; the scheme is not realized. Lewin's brother Will receives Ph.D. from New York University with doctoral thesis, "Photoplay Appreciation in American High Schools," reflecting his enduring commitment to audio-visual education.

1934 Produces Red-Headed Woman and China Seas for MGM. William Lewin's doctoral dissertation is published by the National Council of Teachers of English.

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1935 Produces Mutiny on the Bounty for MGM; negotiates again with Sol Grossbard, now interested in being set up alone as an independent producer; this scheme, too, comes to naught. Now chairman of the English department at the new Weequahic High School in Newark, William Lewin with Max J. Herzberg founds Educational and Recreational Guides, Inc. (E.R.G.I.), which publishes materials to support audio-visual education, including the periodical, Photoplay Studies.

1936 Lewin meets Chinese writer Lin Yutang, who is consulting on production of The Good Earth, the two become friends and correspondents. Irving Thalberg dies. Lewin quits MGM; travels in Europe.

1937 Lewin's last MGM production, The Good Earth, is released; he is hired as a producer for Paramount, where he becomes one of only twenty-one Hollywood producers, excluding studio executives, making a salary of over $100,000; plans epic Gettysburg (written by Clifford Odets) and Knights of the Round Table, but is forced to take on lesser projects. Lewins commission Richard Neutra to build them a modern house on a narrow beach-front property they've purchased in Santa Monica.

1938 Frustrated and dissatisfied at Paramount, Lewin brings his old friend, the poet Charles Reznikoff, from New York to assist him as a researcher and reader, mainly employing him with pre-production research on pet project, Knights of the Round Table (this period of the

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friendship is described in nearly documentary detail in Reznikoff's posthumously published novel, The Manner Music, in which Lewin is called "Paul Pasha"). Lewin, previously rather left-liberal (with some Trotskyite sympathies), although always cynical politically, becomes vigorously anti-Stalinist, arguing his point in correspondence with several friends (including John Howard Lawson, Clifford Odets, Peter Freuchen and Ernestine Evans) leading up to and following outbreak of Second World War.

1939 Lewin's second two of his three Paramount productions, Spawn of the North and Zaza, are completed. He and Millie travel to Europe in early part of year and tour Arthurian locations in Wales, Devon, Somerset, with Hugh Gray (co-founder with Professor Eugène Vinaver of an Arthurian Society at Oxford and later a professor of cinema studies at UCLA and translator of Bazin's What is Cinema?) and his wife Barbara Gray (Oxonians both and friends of Robert Flaherty), who become close lifelong friends. They also visit Paris, where they visit friends, do a good deal of gallery hopping and art buying, and meet Marcel Duchamp, who, learning of Lewin's interest in modern primitive art, takes him to see Wilhelm Uhde's collection.

Upon returning to New York, Lewin, who has long suffered from progressive hearing impairment, undergoes surgery to restore hearing--it is only temporarily

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effective. Lewins move to 514 Ocean Front, Santa Monica, into the newly completed Neutra house (figs. 79-80). With salutations from Marcel Duchamp, the Lewins invite Walter and Louise Arensberg to one of their first Santa Monica dinner parties.

In view of mounting indications of a coming war in Europe, Paramount definitively cancels plans for Knights of the Round Table:

> *...the agent said that the studio because of "the uncertain European situation"...would not make the picture Paul had been eager to make and had told no end of people in Hollywood, in New York, and in England he was going to make. Why, the picture was what his trip abroad was for! He had been working at it for three months at the studio--the script was almost ready--and he had been negotiating with actors and actresses, musician and artist, expert and director. The picture into which he was going to put all his love for his country and for England, all the urgency of the times* (Reznikoff, The Manner Music, p. 35).

Lewin negotiates unsatisfactorily with Universal, RKO and other studios, still attempting to get Knights underway; meanwhile, anticipating his break with Paramount, proposes an independent production of The Red Pony (with Steinbeck as writer, Robert Flaherty as director and himself as producer) to David Loew. Mime, artist and author Angna Enters spends most of the summer with the Lewins in Santa Monica and paints a portrait of Millie. The Lewins visit Death Valley with friends Rudolph and Agnes Marx in November.

1940 Lewin quits Paramount, abandoning, among others, a couple of projects he'd been working on with Preston

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Sturges; founds Loew-Lewin Productions with David Loew. Loew-Lewin, wishing to fight Nazism and aid Britain, undertakes a production adapted from Erich Maria Remarque's Flotsam and purchases film rights to Nevil Shute's R.A.F. story, Landfall. Lewin much occupied after Nazi occupation of France and Denmark with assisting friends and associates in those countries, including Jacques Feyder, Jean Renoir, Gilles and Claire Guilbert, Peter Freuchen.

Lewin meets Man Ray, who is to become one of his closest friends, recently arrived in Los Angeles, at a party given by Walter and Louise Arensberg, as Man Ray later recalled:

Another agreeable encounter was with a small, white-haired, immaculately dressed man.... Al Lewin was fond of painting and invited me to his house on the beach in Santa Monica, to see his collection.... Allie, as everyone called him, invited me not only to his house, but to luncheons, tête-à-tête, to the studios when he was directing, or just to his suite of offices, as if he were trying to find something for me to do.... A creator needs only one enthusiast to justify him, I thought. Allie showed me his enthusiasm by adding some of my works to his collection, which I considered more important than any job he could have gotten me in the movies (Man Ray, pp. 349-52).

Clifford Odets' Night Music opens in Boston--one of its protagonists, a low-level movie employee, makes two references to Al Lewin (who helped finance the production).

1941 Loew-Lewin Productions releases So Ends Our Night (based on Remarque's Flotsam), about refugees of the Third Reich trying to escape occupied Vienna; it is

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received very warmly in England, somewhat less so in the U.S.; Loew-Lewin is forced to defend the film before a House panel investigating films for propogandizing U.S. entry into the War, but the investigation is dropped when Pearl Harbor is attacked. Lewin plans to adapt Odets' Night Music, brings Odets back to Los Angeles to work on script.

Jean Renoir (see fig. 83), with the aid of Lewin and Robert Flaherty, escapes France and comes to Hollywood, meets often with Lewin, professionally and socially; in a letter to Albert André, Renoir describes his friend,

whose profession is the same as mine,...the only difference is that since he's been at it in this town for thirty years, he's amassed a pretty nice fortune. He shares my view of parties, and he gives absolutely impeccable dinners: French champagne, Russian caviar, real foie gras, to say nothing of an unrestrained passion for garlic, which is a real pleasure.... The same friends get together there, from the widest variety of professions: a German physician with a gift for anthropology, his wife, who is an American suffragette [the Marxes], an operetta musician who's ended up at MGM with his wife [the Stotharts], a devoted anarchist, a very funny person, a couple of actors, Man Ray, and lots of people who aren't famous at all but are good drinkers and good company (Bertin, pp. 214-215);

Barbara Gray (wife of Hugh Gray, now serving in R.A.F.) and her children, refugees from the London blitz, come to Los Angeles under Lewin's aegis and live with the Lewins for a time; Barbara is hired as a research assistant and British language consultant on Loew-Lewin's production of The Moon and Sixpence.

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1942 Loew-Lewin Productions completes The Moon and Sixpence, written and directed by Lewin, his first directorial effort. Millie does war work with Red Cross Motor Corps, a canteen unit and the Women's Auxiliary. Lewins meet Peggy Guggenheim and Max Ernst during one of their visits to Los Angeles--their common friends include Man Ray and Djuna Barnes. David Loew dissolves partnership in order to do war work; Lewin re-hired by MGM, assigned to direct Madame Curie, taken off production after ten days.

1943 Starts to develop The Picture of Dorian Gray for MGM; after consulting with James Thrall Soby of MoMA, and considering, among others, Salvador Dali, Pavel Tchelitchew and George Grosz, Lewin hires Ivan (and his brother Malvin) Albright to execute the portrait featured in the film; seeks out Perkins Harnly to draw Victorian interiors, Devi Dja to perform a Javanese Gamelan dance; visits the Albrights and the Devi Dja company in Chicago and Harnly in New York during an April cross-country train trip.

1944 Struggles with Pandro S. Berman, producer, over production details, budget and editing of Dorian Gray; becomes friendly with Sidney Janis, from whom Lewins sometimes buy art for their growing collection.

1945 MGM releases The Picture of Dorian Gray; Lewin quits MGM after production over artistic conflicts; Loew-Lewin revived; Lewin begins researching and writing an

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adaptation of Maupassant's Bel Ami; sets up competition for a painting of The Temptation of Saint Anthony to appear in the film and invites twelve artists (Ivan Albright, Eugene Berman, Leonora Carrington, Salvador Dali, Paul Delvaux, Max Ernst, Leonor Fini, Louis Gulgielmi, Horace Pippin, Abraham Rattner, Stanley Spencer, Dorothea Tanning) to submit works, naming Alfred Barr, Marcel Duchamp and Sidney Janis as judges; Lewin persuades Darius Milhaud to compose and conduct the film's score.

1946 The judges of The Bel Ami Competition select Max Ernst's painting as the winner in March; all the paintings then comprise a touring exhibition and are challenged by an obscenity charge in Boston. Lewins give a "double wedding" party for newlyweds Man and Juliette Ray, Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning in October. Lewins are visited by Roland Penrose and Lee Miller during their three week visit to the Los Angeles area. A friendship with Will and Ariel Durant begins, according to Ariel:

> *here was an artistic, imaginative mind that always kept us on our intellectual toes. We had met him and his kindly, gracious wife, Millie, at the table of Harry and Lilian Kaufman... now we met them in the exquisite home that Richard Neutra had built for them in Santa Monica. Allie loved to get Will into an argument; attacked him mercilessly, and always ended by embracing him. Once, at a party...Allie accused Will of shameful ignorance; the next morning he traveled I don't know how many miles to knock at our door and beg forgiveness. He became one of our dearest friends.* (Durant and Durant, p. 249).

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1947 The Private Affairs of Bel Ami is released by Loew-Lewin through United Artists; it is included in the Festival Mondial du Film et des Beaux-Arts, Brussels in June.

1948 The Loew-Lewin partnership splits up again:

> *David formed a very ambitious company and got a bug to expand, wanting me to have a unit. I wanted to have a modest company, making one picture at a time. So I bowed out and returned to Metro as an executive. I was more or less on the board that ran the studio, and I did a hell of a lot of anonymous doctoring* (Rosenberg and Silverstein, p. 119).

Meanwhile, Lewin researches and writes his next personal project, Pandora and the Flying Dutchman. Guests at the Lewins' thirtieth anniversary party include Mary Anita Loos (niece of their friend Anita Loos), Max Ernst & Dorothea Tanning, Jean & Dido Renoir, composer Dimitri Tiomkin & his wife, ballerina Albertina Rasch, Marguerite d'Alvarez, Herbert & Mary Stothart, Helen Freeman, Hugh & Barbara Gray, Richard Sale, Man & Julie Ray, cameraman Floyd Crosby and his wife Aelis, painter Karin van Leyden and her husband, and Angna Enters, who presents the Lewins with a painting of the dinner scene (fig. 81) as an anniversary gift (Enters, p. 342).

1949 Lewin is involved in a supervisory capacity in pre-production of Quo Vadis, while John Huston is scheduled to direct.

1950 Lewin, whose contract with MGM allows him sabbatical time for independent projects, films Pandora and the

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Flying Dutchman on location in and around Tossa on the Spanish Costa Brava and in Wales, and in London studios; Man Ray executes a painting for the film, which is not used, as well as a color photograph of Ava Gardner, which is. While in London Lewin spends time with Roland Penrose and Lee Miller, from whom he borrows a Man Ray chess set to appear in the film; through the Penroses meets Dylan Thomas. Jacob Billikopf dies. Gordon Wiles, designer of Lewin's first three directorial films, dies.

1951 Pandora and the Flying Dutchman released. Robert Flaherty dies. Man Ray and Julie move from Los Angeles to Paris; Jean Renoir, who has been in India filming The River, is also making the move back to France, via Italy, where he shoots The Golden Coach.

1952 Lewin researches and scripts an adaptation of Peer Gynt.

1953 Shoots Saadia in French Morocco, by the government of which he is later honored with a medal; approaches various European studios (in France and Italy) about an independent production adapted from Albert Adès' Un Roi Nu. Lewin's friend, Marguerite d'Alvarez dies.

1954 Saadia released by MGM; the Lewins move from California to a Fifth Avenue apartment in New York (see fig. 82; somewhat later, Mae West buys the Neutra house in Santa Monica). Alfred Barr, James Soby, Andrew Ritchie, René d'Harnoncourt and Dorothy Miller of the Museum of

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Modern Art all come to view the Lewin art collection; a MoMA members' tour is held May 12 (see Appendix C).

1955 In Mexico for production of The Living Idol, associates with Leonora Carrington, Remedios Varo, Wolfgang Paalen, Alice Rahon and others, adding works by each to the Lewin art collection.

1956 Jean Renoir, Lewin and MGM producer Maurice Silverstein (who was head of MGM Latin American unit when Lewin filmed in Mexico) discuss forming a production company; Lewin approaches Ingrid Bergman about a role in Un Roi Nu, which he hopes to film on location in Europe with proposed company; meanwhile begins work on an original script, based loosely on the Faust legend, Diana at Midnight, conceived as an Ava Gardner vehicle.

1957 The Living Idol released by MGM; Lewin approached by the Theater Arts department at UCLA, where his friend Hugh Gray is on the faculty, regarding his interest in a faculty position, which he declines. He spends most of the summer in Spain, researching and writing script of a Goya bio-pic, finally sells it to producers of The Naked Maja, who employ none of it. Lewin's friends Peter Freuchen and Oliver St. John Gogarty die, Freuchen accidentally in Alaska.

1958 Lewins spend several months in Europe, including Italy (Florence, Naples, Rome), looking into locations for Diana at Midnight, England and Paris, where the Cinématheque Française holds an "Hommage a Albert

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Lewin." Lewin corresponds with Robert Graves, with whom he became friends while researching Goya in Spain, about matters archaeological, anthropological, historical and literary; approaches Jerome Robbins about choreographing Diana at Midnight, which is to include a ballet sequence set against a Spoleto-like background.

1959 Lewin suffers a heart attack; on doctor's orders retires from films, abandons idea of film of Diana at Midnight, considers translating it into a novel.

1960 Lewin's brother Will dies, August 24; Manley O. Hudson dies.

1962 Lewin writes a (never produced) stage play, Bed Without Pillows.

1963 Lewins travel widely in Near and Far East (Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan). Clifford Odets dies.

1964 Around this time Lewin begins involved correspondence and friendship with Cyrus Gordon, scholar of Ancient Near Eastern language and culture, whom Lewin met through Charles Reznikoff's wife, Marie Syrkin, author, translator, Labor Zionist editor, and a colleague of Gordon's at Brandeis University.

1965 Lewin's wife and mother die--Millie of cancer in February and his mother in July; Angna Enters becomes his fairly constant companion until his death.

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1966 Lewin honored by a tribute, exhibition and film series at The Gallery of Modern Art in March; also honored in London, and in Toronto, where the Gallery of Modern Art retrospective is repeated.

1967 The Unaltered Cat, Lewin's first novel, published by the Harvill Press of London and in the U.S. by Scribner's; The Picture of Dorian Gray is selected to inaugurate the Festival of the Development of the Cinema in the United States held at the American Embassy in London. Lewin and Angna Enters travel to London and the continent. Ernestine Evans dies.

1968 Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut solicit Lewin's help (among others) in February for their campaign to save Henri Langlois and the Cinématheque Française. Lewin dies, May 9 of pneumonia. He is cremated and his ashes are mingled with Millie's in a favorite Ming vase; Charles Reznikoff delivers the funeral eulogy. Angna Enters destroys the unfinished manuscript of Lewin's second novel, tentatively titled Midnightmare, remarking that it reveals "the decline of his inventive powers" (Mandel, p. 327); Lewin leaves various sums of money and select pieces of his art collection to many friends and relatives, his library to New York University, and divides the balance of his estate between two charities: the Motion Picture Relief Fund and the Society of the New York Hospital; his art

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collection is auctioned in two sales by Parke-Bernet (see Appendix C).

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APPENDIX B: FILMOGRAPHY

Organized first by whether the films were realized or not, then chronologically. Lewin's role on each is indicated in parenthesis according to the following abbreviations: continuity (c), story (s), adaptation (a), scenarist (sc), producer (p), associate producer (ap), production supervisor (ps), director (d). Lewin's uncredited participation is indicated by superscripted "u" following the corresponding abbreviation. Complete cast and credits are given only for each of Lewin's six directorial projects; otherwise, only the director and production company are indicated.

REALIZED PROJECTS:

1924 BREAD (c), Victor Schertzinger (d) Metro

1925 THE FATE OF A FLIRT (c), Frank R. Strayer (d) MGM

1926 LADIES OF LEISURE (s, c), Thomas Buckingham (d) MGM

BLARNEY (co-sc), Marcel De Sano (d) MGM

TIN HATS (c), Edward Sedgwick (d) MGM

1927 A LITTLE JOURNEY (sc), Robert Z. Leonard (d) MGM

ALTARS OF DESIRE (c), W. Christy Cabanne (d) MGM

SPRING FEVER (co-sc), Edward Sedwick (d) MGM

QUALITY STREET (co-sc, co-a), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

1928 THE ACTRESS (co-sc), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

1929 THE KISS (ps^u), Jacques Feyder (d) MGM

DEVIL-MAY-CARE (ps^u), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

1931 THE GUARDSMAN (ps^u), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

THE CUBAN LOVE SONG (ps^u), W.S. Van Dyke (d) MGM

1932 RED-HEADED WOMAN (ps^u), Jack Conway (d) MGM

SMILIN' THROUGH (ps^u), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

1934 WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS (ps^u), Gregory La Cava (d) MGM

1935 CHINA SEAS (ap), Tay Garnett (d) MGM

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY (ap), Frank Lloyd (d) MGM

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1937 THE GOOD EARTH (ap), Sidney Franklin (d) MGM

TRUE CONFESSION (p), Wesley Ruggles (d) Paramount

1938 SPAWN OF THE NORTH (p), Henry Hathaway (d) Paramount

1939 ZAZA (p), George Cukor (d) Paramount

1940 SO ENDS OUR NIGHT (co-p), John Cromwell (d) Loew-Lewin; adapted from Erich-Maria Remarque's novel, Flotsam

1942 THE MOON AND SIXPENCE (d, sc) Loew-Lewin; Adapted from the novel by W. Somerset Maugham; Producer: David L. Loew; Production Design: Gordon Wiles; Musical Score: Dmitri Tiomkin; Associate Producer: Stanley Kramer; Director of Photography: John F. Seitz; Art Director: F. Paul Sylos; Editor: Richard L. Van Enger; Sculpture: Nina Saemundsson; Paintings: Dolya Goutman; Technical Advice and Dances: Devi Dja and her Bali-Java Dancers; CAST: George Sanders, Herbert Marshall, Steve Geray, Doris Dudley, Eric Blore, Albert Basserman, Molly Lamont, Elena Verdugo, Florence Bates, Heather Thatcher, Robert Grieg, Kenneth Hunter, Irene Tedrow [89 minutes; B/W with sepia and color sequences]

1945 THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY (d, sc) MGM; Adapted from the novel by Oscar Wilde; Producer: Pandro S. Berman; Special Assistant to the Director (Production Design): Gordon Wiles; Musical Score: Herbert Stothart; Director of Photography: Harry Stradling; Art Directors: Cedric Gibbons and Hans Peters; Set Decorator: Edwin B. Willis; Editor: Ferris Webster; Paintings: Henrique Medina and Ivan Le Lorraine Albright; CAST: George

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Sanders, Hurd Hatfield, Donna Reed, Angela Lansbury, Lowell Gilmore, Peter Lawford, Richard Fraser, Reginald Owen, Lydia Bilbrook, Morton Lowry, Douglas Walton, Mary Forbes, Devi Dja and her Balinese Dancers, Sir Cedric Hardwicke (narrator) [110 minutes; B/W with Technicolor inserts]

1947 THE PRIVATE AFFAIRS OF BEL AMI (d, sc) Loew-Lewin; Adapted from Guy de Mauppasant's novel, Bel-Ami; Producer: David Loew; Production Design: Gordon Wiles; Musical Score: Darius Milhaud; Director of Photography: Russell Metty; Art Director: Frank Sylos; Set Decorator: Edward Boyle; Editor: Albrecht Joseph; Painting: Max Ernst; CAST: George Sanders, Angela Lansbury, Ann Dvorak, Warren William, Katherine Emery, Frances Dee, John Carradine, Susan Douglas, Hugo Haas [112 minutes; B/W with Technicolor insert]

1951 PANDORA AND THE FLYING DUTCHMAN (d, s, sc, p) Dorkay Productions (Albert Lewin and Joseph Kaufman)/Romulus; from an original story suggested by the legend of the Flying Dutchman; Production Design: John Bryan; Musical Score and Conductor: Alan Rawsthorne; Musical Director: Hubert Clifford; Director of Photography: Jack Cardiff; Assistant Art Director: Tim Hopewell-Ash; Set Decorator: John Hawkesworth; Editor: Ralph Kemplen; Costume Design: Beatrice Dawson; Special Effects: W. Percy Day; CAST: James Mason, Ava Gardner, Nigel Patrick, Sheila Sim, Harold Warrender, Mario Cabre,

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Marius Goring, John Laurie, Pamela Kellino, Patricia Raine, Marguerite D'Alvarez, La Pillina (flamenco dancer) [122 minutes (edited-for-television version runs 112 minutes and omits performances by Marius Goring, Marguerite d'Alvarez and La Pillina); Technicolor]

1954 SAADIA (d, sc, p) MGM; Adapted from Francis d'Autheville's novel, Échec au Destin; Musical Score: Bronislau Kaper; Director of Photography: Christopher Challis; Art Director: John Hawkesworth; Editor: Harold F. Kress; Photographic Effects: Tom Howard; CAST: Cornel Wilde, Mel Ferrer, Rita Gam, Michel Simon, Cyril Cusack, Wanda Rotha, Marcel Poncin, Anthony Marlowe, Helene Vallier, Mahjoub ben Brahim, Jacques Dufhilo, Bernard Farrel, Richard Johnson [82 minutes; Technicolor]

1957 THE LIVING IDOL (d, s, sc, co-p) MGM; from an original story; Co-Producer: Gregorio Walerstein; Musical Score: Mañuel Esperon and Rudolfo Halffter; Director of Photography: Jack Hildyard; Art Director: Edward Fitzgerald; Assistant Art Director: Augustin Ytuarte; Editor: Rafael Ceballos; Costumes: Armando Valdes Peza and Ramon Valdiosera; Still Photography: Ted Castle; Paintings by Carlos Mérida; Choreography: Jose Silva and David Campbell; Technical Advisor: Dr. Luis Aveleyra; CAST: Steve Forest, Liliane Montevecchi,

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James Robertson-Justice, Sara Garcia, Eduardo Noriega [Eastman Color; Cinemascope]

UNREALIZED OR UNFINISHED PROJECTS:

1937 MANON LESCAUT; Lewin as producer and George Cukor as director proposed to Paramount along with Zaza (1939), as a vehicle for Isa Miranda; Manon Lescaut was thought to be too arty and expensive a risk.

1938 KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE; Lewin tried for years to produce this, particularly vigorously during his years at Paramount and immediately following; in 1938 he intended it to be scripted by Talbot Jennings, directed by Henry Hathaway and to star, among others, Frederic March, John Barrymore and Isa Miranda; in 1939, before Paramount called it off, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. had been signed to play Lancelot, Lewin expected Madeleine Carroll and Olympe Bradna to co-star and Benjamin Britten had been signed to score it; shortly after his return from a research and location scouting trip to England and Wales, growing hostilities in Europe and anxiety about the expenses led Paramount executives to call it off; there is no evidence that Lewin had any connection to the Knights of the Round Table that Richard Thorpe directed for MGM (1953), although Lewin was at the studio then and the film did feature his favorite actress, Ava Gardner; other projects which

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Lewin advocated for Paramount and which were not realized (at least under his auspices) were:

NORTHWEST PASSAGE, which was later produced in color, King Vidor (d), by MGM;

GETTYSBURG, which Clifford Odets had adapted from the book, Long Remember, and which Lewin saw as a Gary Cooper vehicle;

TWO BAD HATS, which Preston Sturges had re-written from a first script by Talbot Jennings, and which he later directed himself as The Lady Eve (1941) for Paramount.

1939 THE RED PONY; Lewin proposed this to David Loew as an independent production to be adapted by Steinbeck and directed by Robert Flaherty; Steinbeck did later adapt it for a color film directed by Lewis Milestone with an Aaron Copeland score (1949).

1940 LANDFALL, which Lewin wanted adapted from Nevil Shute's novel about the R.A.F. and to produce for Loew-Lewin as a contribution to Britain's war effort.

1941 THE MATING CALL; this title is attached to both an adaptation of Clifford Odets' Night Music, on which Odets worked with Lewin in 1941 (Lewin apparently recommended the name change), and to a draft script by Ben Hecht, which may have been an adaptation of the same play; neither was produced, for financial reasons and, ultimately, due to the dissolution of Loew-Lewin in 1942; later, in the late forties, Jean Renoir purchased the film rights to Night Music, hoping to

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produce it with his and Burgess Meredith's short-lived independent company, the Film Group, which hoped to make low-budget features from stage plays, but which, in fact, produced none.

WIND, SAND AND STARS, Lewin and Jean Renoir, recently arrived from France, discussed adapting the St. Exupery book for Loew-Lewin. David Loew did, later, produce a Renoir film, The Southerner (1945) with Robert Hakim. {TITLES that Loew-Lewin registered reflect some of the other material that Lewin wanted to retain an option to develop, although certainly not all of the many dozens of films can be considered as actual projects; they include: Gil Blas, Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates, Henry Esmond, The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling, Hypatia, The Iliad, Ivanhoe, Jane Eyre, Johannes Brahms and Clare Schumann, John Brown's Body, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The Life of John Keats, Little Dorrit, Lorna Doone, The Marble Faun, Mesmer, The Moonstone, Moby Dick, Mysteries of Paris, The Aeneid, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, Arabian Nights, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Enoch Arden, Fingal's Cave, The Odyssey, Paul and Virginia, A Pilgrim's Progress, Pudd'nhead Wilson, Rip van Winkle, The Scarlet Letter, Sinbad the Sailor, Thaddeus of Warsaw, Volpone, and many others}

1942 MADAME CURIE (d), Lewin was assigned to this when he returned to MGM in 1942, but lasted only 10 days before

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being removed from the production by Sidney Franklin (p) and replaced with Mervyn LeRoy (d).

1949 QUO VADIS (ps), Lewin was only associated with this production while John Huston was slated to direct and Gregory Peck to star; when these two left the project, so did Lewin. The film was released in 1951, Mervyn LeRoy (d).

1952 PEER GYNT; Lewin devoted considerable time and energy to researching and writing an adaptation of Ibsen's play ("combined with the music of Grieg's 'Peer Gynt Suite'") hoping to undertake a production with a London company after he completed Saadia.

1953 A NAKED KING (sometimes A QUITE NAKED KING; Lewin never got this adaptation of Albert Adès' Un Roi Nu, which he had written and planned to direct for an independent production company in Europe, off the ground.
HANK, an original script, set in Latin America, made even less headway toward realization.

1954 MADEMOISELLE DE MAUPIN and SOCRATES; Lewin was under contract to Jacques Grinieff to do pre-production research on one or the other of these themes, but nothing appears to have come of either.

1957 GOYA (sc), ultimately none of Lewin's script, which he envisioned for Yul Brynner as Goya and Ava Gardner as the Duchess of Alba, was used by the producers of THE NAKED MAJA who finally bought it from him; the Italian-American co-production, which did star Ava Gardner,

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with Anthony Franciosa as Goya, and which was directed by Henry Koster, was released in 1958.

DIANA AT MIDNIGHT; another of Lewin's original screenplays, a modernized version of the Faust legend (with a Faust ballet *en abyme*), which he planned to produce and direct himself, with Ava Gardner starring; the project was left unrealized when Lewin suffered a heart attack in 1959; also in the late 1950s, Lewin researched Indian themes for a film he evidently never wrote.

1960 BRUGES LA MORTE; an idea Lewin worked on briefly when recovering from his heart attack.

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APPENDIX C: THE ART COLLECTION OF MR. AND MRS. ALBERT LEWIN

A list of works known to have been at one time in the Lewin collection, with provenances (prior to Lewin's acquisition) where known, as well as dates of acquisition and de-acquisition, later owners, and exhibitions lent to where known; A=auctioned by Parke-Bernet after Lewin's death; M=listed as having been in the Lewins' apartment May 12, 1954, when Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) membership was invited to tour their collection; the list for the MoMA tour was sketchily drawn up and descriptive; where it is certain or probable that the same work is referred to differently in the MoMA list and the Parke-Bernet catalogue, the auction title is given first and underlined, the tour title is given in parenthesis. Question marks (?) indicate some uncertainty about the identity of the artist or work, its provenance or exhibition history.

(American Primitive)
Green Landscape, 19th Century
Oil on canvas, 22 x 30 inches
Exhibitions: MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954 — A M

(American)
Paris Street Scene, 20th Century
Oil on canvasboard, 11 3/4 x 15 3/4 — A

(18th Century)
Amsterdam 1774 — M

ALBRIGHT, Ivan (1897-1983)
Trees, Trees and Then More Trees (Maine Scene), 1939
Watercolor and gouache, 14 x 20 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist (1946) — A M

ARA
Campfire Scene — M

ARA
Head of a Woman (Girl with Hat?)
Oil on board, 16 x 12 inches
Provenance: Stendahl Galleries, Los Angeles — A M

ARA
Mother — M

BAUCHANT, Auguste-André (1873-1958)
Roses sur Fond Bleu (Flowers), 1934
Oil on canvas, 16 x 11½ inches — A M

BAUCHANT, Auguste-André
Fruit and Flowers — M

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BAUCHANT, Auguste-André
Le Fruitier, 1950
41 3/4 x 59 3/4 inches A M

BAUMBACH (or BRAMBACH)
Landscape with Cattle (Pasture)
Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches A M

BENQUET, A.
Shipwreck: A Pair of Paintings
Oil on board, each 13 x 15 3/4 inches A

BENQUET, A.
Retour du Marche de la Basquaise
Oil on board, 7 x 10 3/4 inches A

BOMBOIS, Camille (1883-1970)
The Forest (Country Landscape?)
Donated to the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, 1959M
BOMBOIS, Camille
Scene de Riviere (Landscape with Figure?)
Oil on canvas, 21 3/4 x 18 inches A M

BOMBOIS, Camille
Ferme a Travers les Arbes (Trees?)
Oil on panel, 6½ x 10 inches A M

BRANCHARD, Emile (1881-1938)
Forest Scene (Birch Trees)
Oil on canvas, 19 3/4 x 28½ inches A M

BRAUNER, Victor (1903-1966)
Le Monstre (Four-Legged Face), 1954
Encaustic on paper, 19½ x 25 3/4 inches A M

BUFFET, Bernard (1928-
Flowers
Donated to Amherst College, 1960? M

BURRI, Alberto (1915-
Abstraction
Mixed media on canvas, 36 x 36 inches
Provenance: Acquired from the artist (1952)
Exhibitions: MoMA, The New Decade: 22 European Painters and Sculptors, 1955 A M

CAMPIGLI, Massimo (1895-1971)
Two Women M

CAPACCI, Bruno
The Battle, 1967
Mixed media on paper, 13½ x 16 3/4 inches
Provenance: probably acquired from the artist A

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CAPACCI, Bruno
Sisters, 1967
Pen, ink and wash, 13½ x 9½ inches A

CARR, Emily? (1871-1945)
Storyteller
woodcut M

CARR, Emily?
Puppet Show
woodcut M

CARRINGTON, Leonora (1917-
Edwardian Hunt Breakfast, 1955
Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 inches
Provenance: Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico City A

CARRINGTON, Leonora
Landscape with Figures, 1948
Oil on panel, 17¼ x 36 inches
Provenance: probably acquired from the artist A

CARRINGTON, Leonora
Samain, 1951
Oil and tempera on panel, 36 x 22 inches
Provenance: probably acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico City A

CARRINGTON, Leonora
Tiger Devouring a Woman
White ink on black paper, 12½ x 15½ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist (with dedication) A

CASSATT, Mary (1845-1926)
Mother and Child
Drypoint M

CHAGALL, Marc (1887-1985)
Night Over Vitebsk, 1914
Gouache
Sold to Hirschl & Adler Gallery, c. 1967
Exhibitions: Art Institute of Chicago, Twentieth International Watercolor Exhibition, 1941; New Art Circle, New York, 1942 M

DAMME, Suzanne van
Abstractions: Nine Miniature Paintings (in one frame)
Mixed media on paper, each about 5 x 4 inches A

DAMME, Suzanne van
Composition
Mixed media on paper, 17 x 13 inches A

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DAMME, Suzanne van
Kabuki Dancer
Oil on Masonite, 34 x 27 inches A

DAMME, Suzanne van
Organic Language
Gouache, oil and unprimed burlap on masonite, 31 x 27 inches
Provenance: Gallerie Thibaut, New York A

DAMME, Suzanne van
Pair of Abstract Compositions
Mixed media on paper, each 27 x 17 3/4 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

DAMME, Suzanne van
Three Small Abstractions
Oil on canvas, 4½ x 4; 5½ x 4½; 5½ x 4½ inches A

DAPHNIS, Nassos (1914-
Landscape
Oil on canvas, 10 x 12½ inches A

DELVAUX, Paul (1897-
Les Amants, 1947
Ink and pencil, 8 3/4 x 10 3/4 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist (with dedication) A

DELVAUX, Paul
Girl with a Rose
Sold to William Copley, c. 1967 M

DELVAUX, Paul
Modele, 1948
Ink and watercolor, 9½ x 7½ inches A

DELVAUX, Paul
The Summons (also known as Appeal), 1944
o/c, 62 x 60 cm.
Purchased c. 1951
Auctioned? M

DELVAUX, Paul
Women: Two Drawings
Pen and ink, 6¼ x 5 and 5 x 7 inches A

DORIANI, William (1891-?)
Still Life (Flowering Bush)
Oil on canvas, mounted on board, 13½ x 9½ inches A M

DORIANI
Interior (Room)
Oil on canvas, mounted on board, 13½ x 9½ inches A M

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DUBUFFET, Jean (1901-1985)
The French Farm (Landscape)
Provenance: René Drouin
Auctioned 1967
Exhibition: MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954; Sidney Janis Gallery, Three Generations, 1964 M

DUCHAMP, Marcel (1887-1968)
Boite en Valise, 1952
Leather case containing sixty-eight reproductions of works by Duchamp, inscribed: "Chers Lewins--cette boite contient 68 items et toute mon affection"
Provenance: gift of the artist A

ENTERS, Angna (1906-1989)
Cirque Medrano M
La Cuisine Française M
Monte Carlo Interior M
A Party (The Lewin's 30th Anniversary dinner) M
Portrait (Mildrid Mindlin Lewin) (1939) M
Vienna Provencal M
(all bequeathed to the artist)

ERNST, Max (1891-1976)
Escutcheon, 1949
Pen and ink with collage, 8½ x 7 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist (with dedication) A

ERNST, Max
The Window
Auctioned 1967?
Exhibitions: MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954; D'Arcy Galleries, New York, Surrealist Intrusion into the Enchanter's Domain, 1960-61 M

ERNST, Max
Sun and Sea (Seascape)
Auctioned 1967
Exhibition: Sidney Janis Gallery, Three Generations, 1964 M

ERNST, Max and MAN RAY
Bonne Fete à Albert, 1948
Pencil and ink, 17 x 15 inches
Provenance: gift of the artists A

EVE, Jean (1900-1968)
Corbeille de Marguerites
Oil on canvas, 14½ x 21½ inches A M

EVE, Jean
Le Village de Limay (Vue du Chemin des Celestins, 1930
Oil on canvas, 20 3/4 x 28½ inches A M

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GOURGRUE, Jacques-Enguérrand (1930-
Huitieme Chambre (Voodoo)
Oil on board, 18 3/4 x 22 3/4 inches A M

HARNLY, Perkins (1901-
Southern Pacific Railroad Station, 1946
Watercolor, 26 x 19 3/4 inches A

HAWKESWORTH, John (1920-
Loading Nets, Tossa, 1950
Ink and watercolor, 14¼ x 19¼ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

HIRSHFIELD, Morris (1872-1946)
Girl with Her Dog, 1943
Oil on canvas, 45½ x 35½ inches
Provenance: Sidney Janis Gallery
Bragaline Collection (1980)
Exhibitions: Whitney Museum of American Art, American Folk Painters of Three Centuries, 1980 A M

HIRSHFIELD, Morris
Zebra Family, 1942
Oil on canvas, 33½ x 49 inches
Acquired c. 1943-44
Auctioned 1967; Sidney Janis Gallery (1980)
Exhibitions: Whitney Museum of American Art, American Folk Painters of Three Centuries, 1980 M

HURTADO
Figure M

HYPPOLITE, Hector (1894-1948)
Une Femme Nu
Oil on board, 23½ x 29½ inches
Exhibitions: Haitian Art Center, New York; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam A

JANIS, Harriet
Shadowed
Pastel, 10 x 8 inches
Provenance: Zabriskie Gallery, New York A

JAWLENSKY, Alexei von (1864-1941)
Abstract Face M

JOHNSTON, Ynez (1920-
The Bridge of Faces
Mixed media on board, 14 x 20½ inches A M

JOHNSTON, Ynez
Composition (Mexican Scene?)
Mixed media on board, 17½ x 24 inches A M

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KANE, John (1860-1934)
Scots Day at Kennywood, 1933
Oil on canvas, 19 7/8 x 27 1/8 inches
Donated to MoMA, 1953 M

KLEE, Paul (1879-1940)
Old Cemetery
Mixed media on paper over cardboard, 14 3/8 x 19 inches
Provenance: Karl Nierendorf Galleries (purchased 1945)
Donated to MoMA, 1958
Exhibition: San Francisco Museum of Art, Dominant International Trends, 1945 M

LAURENCIN, Marie (1885-1956)
Portrait de Jeune Fille (Girl)
Colored pencils, 10 x 8 inches A M

LEBDUSKA, Laurence (1894-1968)
Tropical Fish (5 paintings)
Oil on panel, each 11½ x 13 3/4 inches
Provenance: Probably Contemporary Arts, New York (1937) A M

LEBDUSKA, Laurence
Jungle Scene (Lions)
Oil on panel, 14½ x 19½ inches
Provenance: Probably Contemporary Arts, New York (1937) M

LEBDUSKA, Laurence
Jungle Scene (Ocelot Attacking)
Oil on canvas, 10 x 12 inches
Provenance: Probably Contemporary Arts, New York (1937) A M

LEBDUSKA, Laurence
Tropical Foliage
Oil on panel, 14½ x 19½ inches A

LITWAK, Israel (1868-?)
Jacob's Dream, 1948
Watercolor, 16½ x 11½ inches A

LITWAK, Israel
Family Gathering, 1940
Colored crayons, 19 3/4 x 29 3/4 inches
Provenance: Karl Nierendorf Galleries (1945) A

LOTHROP, George E. (1867-1939)
Wood Nymphs
Oil on canvas, 23½ x 19 3/4 inches A

MAGRITTE, René (1898-1967)
The Door M

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MAGRITTE, René
The Tree (a.k.a. Tree and Clouds; Fantastic Landscape)
Auctioned 1966
Exhibitions: MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954; D'Arcy Galleries, New York, Surrealist Intrusion into the Enchanter's Domain, 1960-61 M

MAGRITTE, René
La Victoire, 1939
Oil on canvas
Auctioned 1966
Exhibition: Dallas Museum for Contemporary Arts, Magritte, 1960-1961

MAILLOL, Aristide (1861-1944)
Nu de Dos (Figure)
Pencil on brown paper, 8 x 7 inches A M

MAN RAY (1890-1976)
Abstraction, 1961
Oil on board, 5 3/4 x 8 inches
Provenance: gift of the artist A

MAN RAY
Abstraction, 1958
Oil on board, 7 x 5½ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

MAN RAY
A la Lumiere Lunaire, 1948
Ink and stain on wood panel, 24 x 20 inches
Provenance; acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954; D'Arcy Galleries, New York, Surrealist Intrusion into the Enchanter's Domain, 1960-61 A M

MAN RAY
Blues Singer
Donated to Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1960 M

MAN RAY
Comte de Lautreamont, 1950
Oil on panel, 12 x 9 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A

MAN RAY
Dance in the Subway, 1948
Oil on board, 18 x 24 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A

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MAN RAY
Gens du Monde, 1929
On panel, 74 x 39 inches
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A M

MAN RAY
Head of a Woman, 1944
Ink, pencil and watercolor, 13½ x 10¼ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

MAN RAY
Rose-Verte (Green Rose), 1937
Oil on panel, 17½ x 14 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, Three Surrealist Painters, 1937 A M

MAN RAY
Lady MacBeth M

MAN RAY
Le Poisseau and Milles Nids pour Mildred Fille d'Or (a pair of paintings), 1946
Oil on canvas, 6¼ x 8 and 6 x 8 inches
Provenance: gift of the artist (to Mildrid Lewin) A M

MAN RAY
Vase-Figure (The Mug), 1946
Oil on canvas, 18 x 14 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A M

MAN RAY
Peinte Naturelle, 1958
Oil on canvasboard, 13 3/4 x 17¼ inches
Provenance; acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A

MAN RAY
Coastal Scene, 1946
Ink and watercolor, 9¼ x 12¼ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A M

MAN RAY
Le Roman Noir, 1938
Oil on panel, 8½x 6¼ inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

MAN RAY
Souvenir de Paris, 1951
Oil on panel, circular, 7 inches in diameter
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

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MAN RAY
Swiftly Walk Over the Western Wave, Spirit of Night, 1940
On panel, 6 x 9 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A M

MAN RAY
Taming of the Shrew (Mort de la Cocotte en Papier, 1948
20 x 16 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A

MAN RAY
Le Tournant, 1936
Construction composed of a printing block mounted on a patterned buckram, 17 x 14 inches A

MAN RAY
The Village (Ridgefield, New Jersey), 1913
Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist
Collections of Arturo and Vera Schwarz (1977); Lucien Scheler (1989)
Exhibitions: L.A. County Museum of Art, Man Ray, 1966 A M

MAN RAY
Chess set, 1946
Inlaid wood board and thirty-two turned wood pieces
Provenance: acquired from the artist A M

MATTA (Echuarren) (1911-
Abstraction M

MATTA
Composition
Chalks on collage, 14 x 18 3/4 inches
Provenance: Sidney Janis Gallery, New York A M

MÉRIDA, Carlos (1893-1984)
Los Desposorios, 1954
Mixed media on cloth, 14½ x 19¼ inches A

MOORE, Henry (1898-1986)
Figure M

MUKAI, Shuji (1939-
Abstraction, 1963
Mixed media with wire on canvas, 16 x 12½ inches A

OBIN, Philomé (1892-?)
Les Funerailles du Heros M

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PAALEN, Wolfgang (1905-1959)
Visage Planetaine (untitled?)
Oil on canvas, 14 x 10 inches
Purchased 1953? A M

PEYRONNET, Dominique-Paul (1872-1943)
La Mer (Seascape)
Oil on canvas, 21½ x 32 inches
Provenance: Valentine Gallery, New York A M

PICASSO, Pablo (1881-1973)
Salome (2) etchings M

PIPPIN, Horace (1888-1946)
Sunday Morning Breakfast (Family Breakfast), 1943
Oil, 20 x 16 inches
Acquired c. 1943-44
Auctioned 1967?
Exhibitions: Philadelphia Art Alliance, Horace Pippin Memorial Exhibition, 1947?; Carnegie Inst., Three Self-Taught Pennsylvania Artists, 1966 or 1967? M

RAHON, Alice (1916-
Abstraction, 1954
Watercolor, 19 x 8¼ inches A

RAHON, Alice
View of a Town (Cité d'Andromede?)
Oil on canvas, 35 x 57 inches A M

RAHON, Alice
Fiesta in a Timid Village, 1952
Oil and sand on canvas, 12½ x 21 inches
Provenance: Galeria de Arte Mexicano, Mexico City; Paul Kantor Gallery, Los Angles
Exhibitions: San Francisco Museum of Art, Alice Rahon, 1953; MoMA, The Fantastic Landscape, 1954 A M

RAHON, Alice
El Trigo, 1954
Oil on canvas, 45½ x 35 inches
Provenance: acquired from the artist A

RAHON, Alice
Untitled (monotype) M

SABO, Ladis W. (1870-1953)
Landscape with Hunters, 1945
Oil on canvas, 18 x 24¼ inches A

SAEMUNDSSON, Nina
Head (sculpture) M

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SALEMME, Attilio (1911-1955)
Nemesis, 1946
Oil on canvas, 12 3/4 x 24 inches
Provenance: Wellons Gallery, New York A

SALEMME, Attilio
Sketches of Fantastic Figures, 1958
Pen and ink, 21 x 28 inches A

SALEMME, Lucia (1919-
Lantern Light
Oil on canvasboard, 16 x 21 inches A

SCHWOB, André
Le Douanier
Oil on board, 5 x 4 inches A

SÉRAPHINE de Senlis (Séraphine Louis) (1864-1934)
Flowers and Fruit
Auctioned 1967 M

SÉRAPHINE
Fruit Tree M

SÉRAPHINE
Grand Bouquet de Fleurs
76 x 50½ inches A M

SÉRAPHINE
Tree M

STOTHART, Mary
Flowers M

TANGUY, Yves (1900-1955)
Figure, 1931
Pencil, 10½ x 7 3/4 inches A

TANNING, Dorothea (1912-
The Magic Flower Game
Oil on canvas, 35½ x 17 inches
Provenance: John Levy Gallery, New York A

TANNING, Dorothea
Untitled M

VARO, Remedios (1908-1963)
Magic Cat
Oil on masonite, 38 x 33½ inches A

VIVIN, Louis (1861-1936)
Norman Village M
Auctioned 1967 M

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WAYNE, June (1918-
The Law Court (Courtroom), 1951
Oil on canvas, 36 x 50 inches A M

WILTON, Paul (née Weinstock)
Ships and City
Probably acquired 1943 or 1944 M

ZSISSLY (Malvin Albright) (1897-)
Orchard (Flowering Tree), 1937
Gouache and watercolor, 13 3/4 x 20 inches
Provenance: probably acquired from the artist (1946) A M

ZSISSLY
Street Scene, 1937
Watercolor, 13½ x 19 inches
Provenance: probably acquired from the artist (1946) A

OTHER WORKS AUCTIONED BY PARKE-BERNET AFTER LEWIN'S DEATH:

ORIENTAL ART:

9 Siamese bronzes
6 Indian pieces, bronze, brass, stone and wood
2 Philippino pieces, wooden
4 Indonesian pieces, wooden and brass
2 Chinese stone figures
2 Japanese pottery figures

CHINESE EARLY DYNASTIC POTTERY AND PORCELAIN:

5 T'ang pieces
2 Han pieces
3 Wei Dynasty pieces
1 Sui Dynasty piece

PRE-COLUMBIAN AND POST-COLUMBIAN ART:

2 Peruvian Chancay pottery figures
1 Panamanian gold ornament
63 (approx.) Mexican pottery figures and vessels, various periods
1 Mexican jadite necklace
20 Mexican stone pieces, various periods
2 Mayan pottery figures
4 Pre-Columbian stone carvings
1 Aztec stone figure
1 Dominican stone head
4 American Indian wooden dolls
1 American Indian stone figure
1 American Indian pottery vessel
2 Kachina wooden dolls

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AFRICAN ART:

Bapende ivory miniature mask
Gabon iron bell
2 Dan wooden dance masks
African horn pipe
2 Bakuba wooden cups
Senufo wooden dance mask
Gabon wooden dance mask
Dahomey brass group
2 Bakota wooden reliquary figures (*Mbula-ngulu*)
Guru wooden dance mask
Fang wooden reliquary figure
Senufo wooden heddle pulley
African wooden mask

SPANISH-COLONIAL FOLK ART AND PAINTINGS:

5 Small religious paintings
3 South American votive paintings, 19th Century
Mexican Santo, 19th Century
2 Wooden statuettes and a decorated crucifix
2 Carved wooden figures of St. Dominic, early 19th Century
SS. Anthony of Padua and Luke
South American wooden statuette, c. 1800
Spanish Colonial figure of the Virgin
2 Spanish Colonial relief carvings, 18th century

EUROPEAN AND OTHER PAINTINGS AND FOLK ART:

Italian School, 18th Century
The Visitation
Miniature painting on glass, 6¼ x 4 3/4 inches

Franco-Flemish School, 17th Century
Printemps
Gouache on parchment, 5½ x 7 inches

Arabian School (Algeria)
The Kaaba, Mecca
Glass painting, 13 x 16 inches M

Georgian School
SS. Dimitri and George
Tempera on cloth, 21 x 35 inches

Siamese School
Praying Maidens
Tempera on cloth, 29 x 40 inches

Dalmatian School
St. George
Fragment of a painting, 17 x 12½ inches

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Swedish School, 19th Century
Biblical Scene (A Christmas Story)
Mixed media on cloth, 46 x 82 inches M

The following works listed as present during the 1954 MoMA Member's tour of the Lewin apartment are not sufficiently well described to determine to what extent they overlap with pieces auctioned by Parke-Bernet:

(French Medieval) Madonna M

(Mexican) untitled panels (2) M

(New Mexican) untitled panel M

(Abyssinian) untitled M

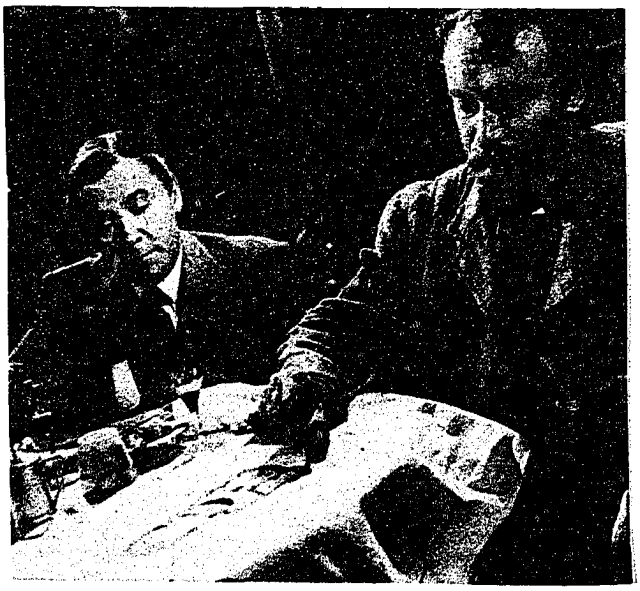
(Persian) untitled miniatures M

(Cambodian) Four Seated Figures M

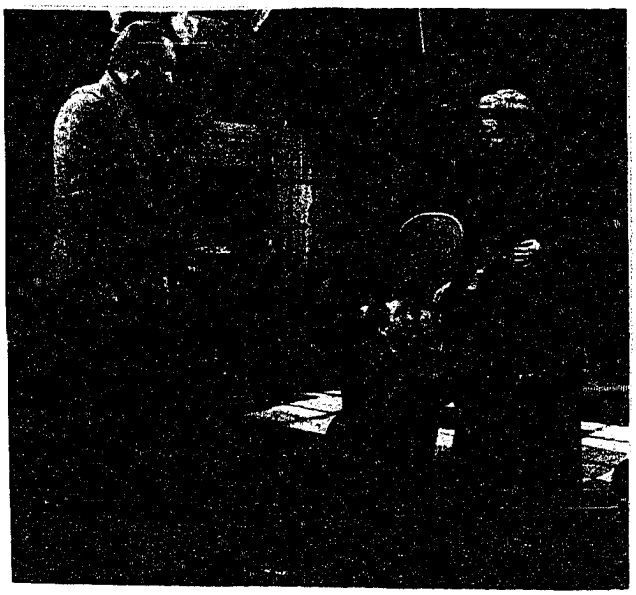
(Siamese) untitled M

(Spanish) untitled glass painting M

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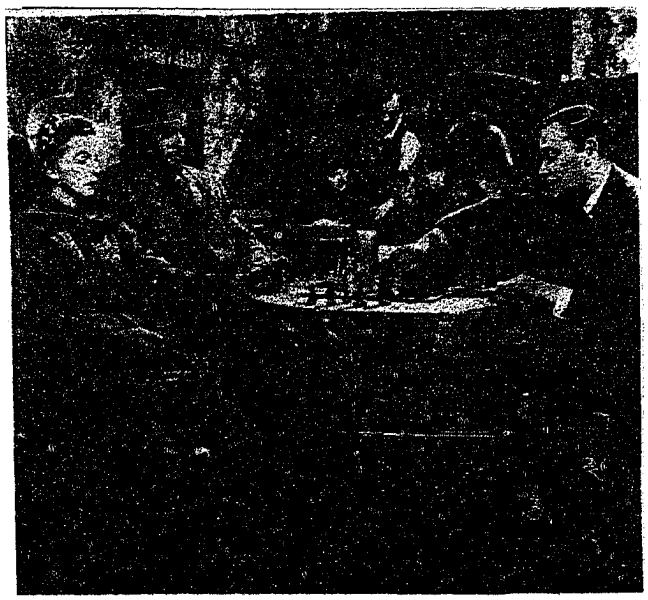


1. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). The narrator (Herbert Marshall) watches Charles Strickland (George Sanders) draw a Tahitian idol at a Paris cafe.



2. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Strickland knocks down his friend, fellow painter, and mentor, Dirk Stroeve (Steve Geray), whose wife (Doris Dudley, right) he has seduced.

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3. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Blanche Stroeve, Strickland, and the narrator at a Paris cafe chess table.



4. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Ata (Elena Verduga, left), who will become Strickland's wife, meets him at the Tahitian hotel of her Eurasian relative, Tiaré Johnson (Florence Bates, right).

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5. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). Strickland at his easel.



6. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). A detail of Dolya Goutman's pseudo-Gauguin mural as compared by Life Magazine to a Gauguin's Ia Orana Maria (c. 1891-92).

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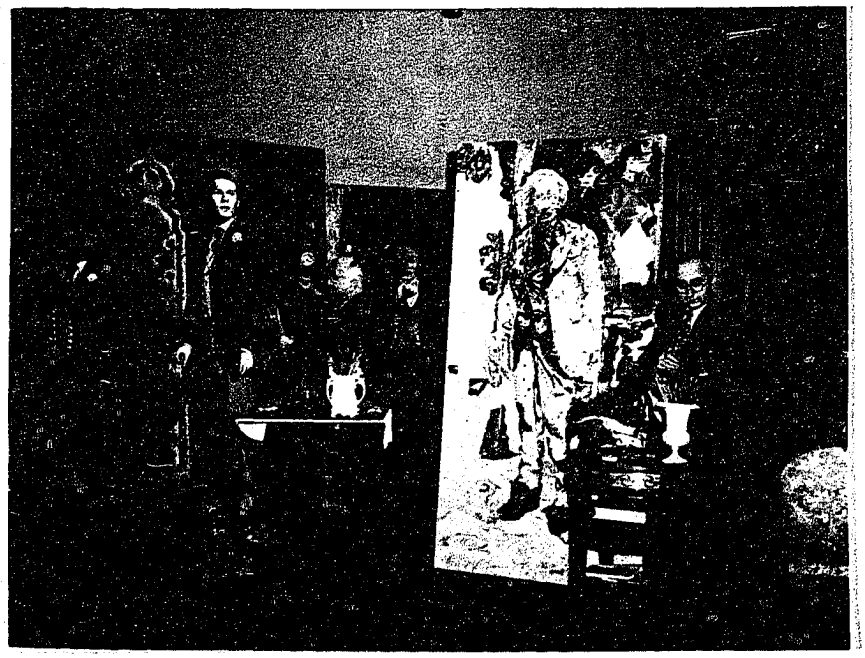


7. The Moon and Sixpence (1942). A detail of Strickland's (Goutman's) "masterpiece."



6. Sandro Botticelli. Primavera (c. 1478). Corresponding detail of the composition upon which Goutman's pseudo-Gauguin was based.

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9. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Ivan and Malvin Albright at work on before and after versions of the portrait at M-G-M in 1944.



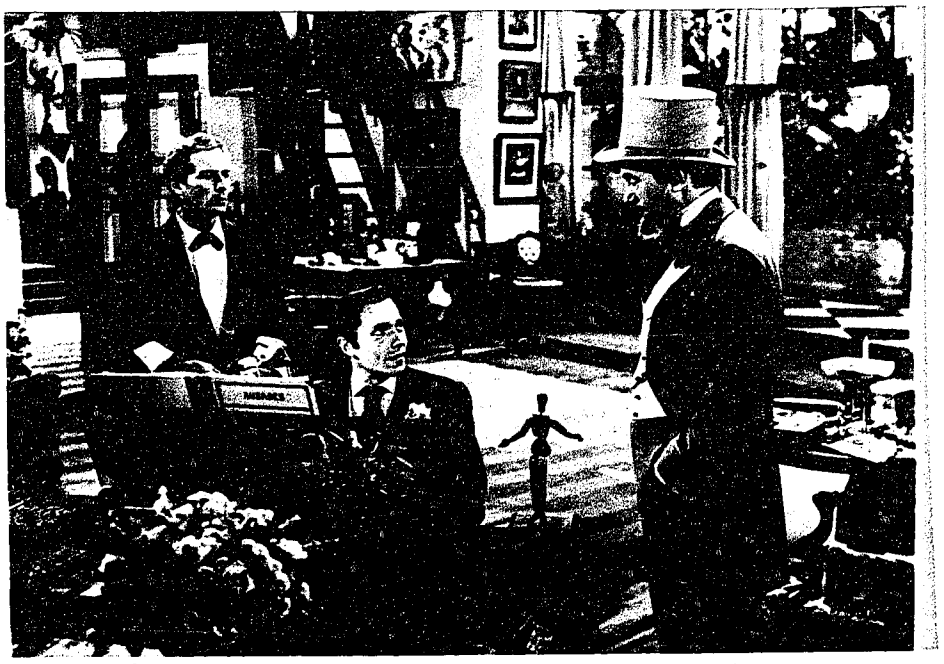
MOVIE OF THE WEEK:

The Picture of Dorian Gray

Oscar Wilde's famous parable makes a morbid, unusual film

10. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's feature on the film showed stills of Dorian (Hurd Hatfield) posing for the portrait (top), as well as before the original and altered versions of the painting (bottom).

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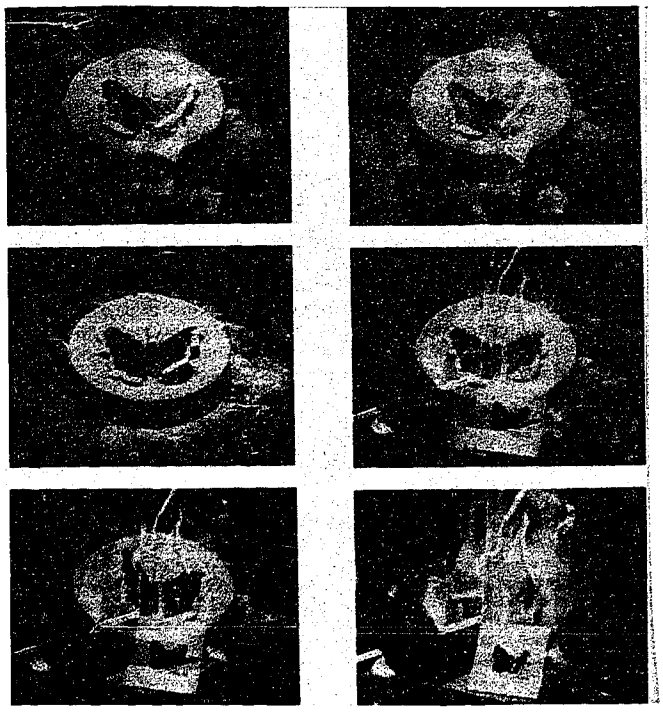


11. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil Hallward (Lowell Gilmore, left) reluctantly introduces Dorian to Lord Henry Wotton (George Sanders, right).

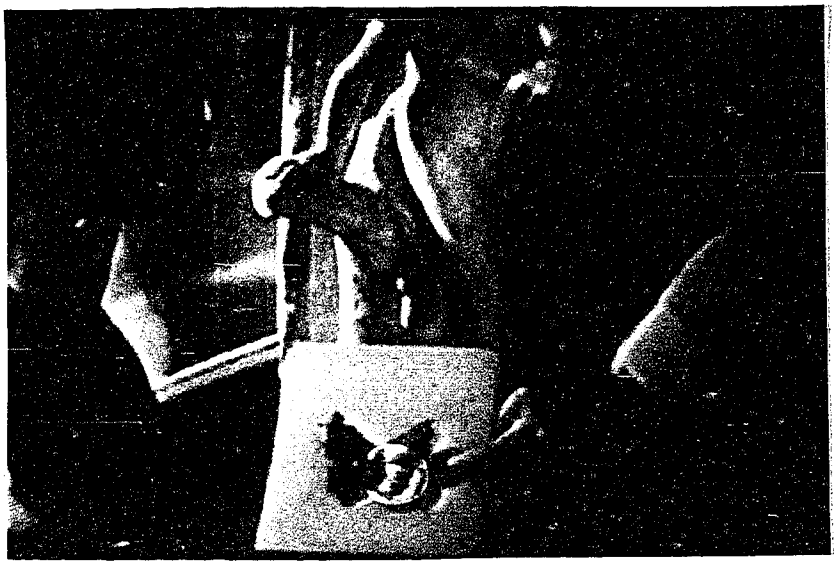


12. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil working on his portrait of Dorian in his studio.

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13. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Six frames of the dissolve from Dorian's face as he poses, to the dying butterfly, to a still life composition.



14. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). The conclusion of the dissolve.

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15. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian enters a cabaret called The Two Turtles, a sandwich-board advertisement, "Dr. Look" visible behind him.



16. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Inside The Two Turtles a puppet-xylophone act is underway.

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In London's lower depths, where he looks for new experiences, Dorian is won by beauty and innocence of Singer Sibyl Vane (Angela Lansbury).

Sibyl falls in love with Dorian. But after compromising her he perversely refuses to marry her. When he sends her money Sibyl commits suicide.

17. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life Magazine illustrates with numbered stills the performance of Sibyl Vane (Angela Lansbury) at The Two Turtles (1) and Dorian's malevolent seduction of her before his portrait (2).

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③ **Dorian's portrait starts to change.** After Sibyl Vane's suicide Dorian notices with horror that lines indicating cruelty have formed about its mouth.

④ **The artist** who painted the portrait, Basil Hallward (Lowell Gilmore).

18. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the first, slight alteration in the portrait (3) and Dorian's refusal to allow Basil to see it (4).

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19. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Basil's niece, Gladys Hallward (Donna Reed) visits Dorian, who faces a mirror in which a reproduction of Verrocchio's David (c. 1465) is reflected.



20. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian hosts a performance of an Indonesian dance about the life of Buddha (Devi Dja and her Balinese dancers).

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Many years later the artist's niece Gladys (Donna Reed) falls in love with Dorian. She has known him ever since she was a child in uncle's studio.

Artist Hallward reproaches Dorian for evil reputation, asks him to explain why he leads life of vice. Dorian decides to show him the portrait.

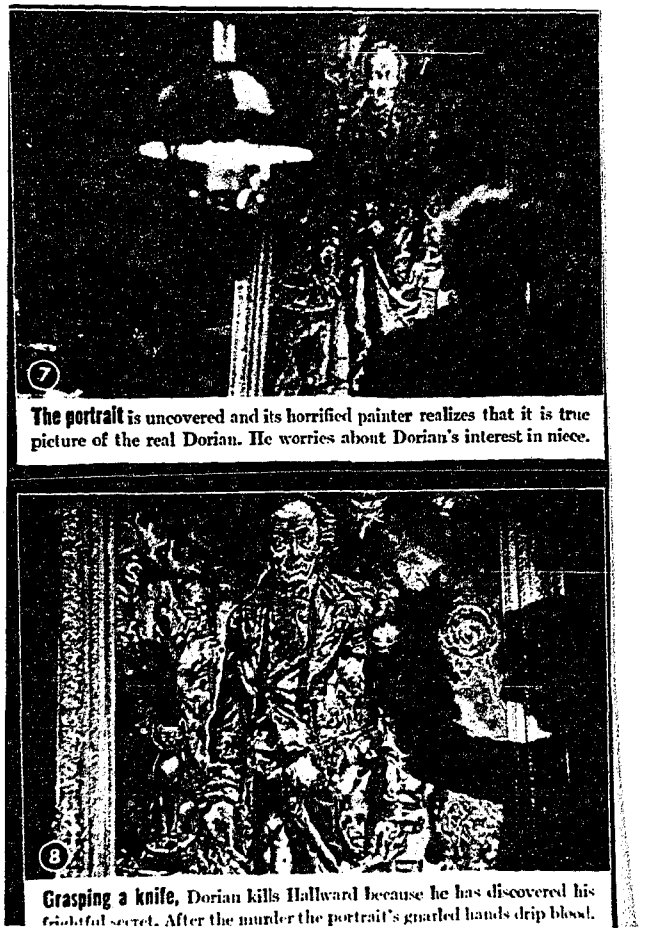
21. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Gladys and her suitor David Stone (Peter Lawford) watching the performance (5), and of Basil's visit to reproach Dorian (6).

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22. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian listens to Basil's reproaches and determines to show him the portrait.

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The portrait is uncovered and its horrified painter realizes that it is true picture of the real Dorian. He worries about Dorian's interest in niece.

Grasping a knife, Dorian kills Hallward because he has discovered his frightful secret. After the murder the portrait's gnarled hands drip blood.

23. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Basil before the uncovered portrait (7) and the shadow of Dorian as he murders Basil (8).

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24. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian stills the lamp that Basil had set swinging when he was stabbed and fell.

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At Scotland Yard Dorian and Gladys are asked about Hallward's disappearance. Evidence has been destroyed. Police can find no trace of Hallward.

In a London brothel Dorian meets Sibyl's brother (*seated*) who has trailed him for 18 years. But Dorian looks too young to be man brother wants.

25. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of Dorian and Gladys visiting Scotland Yard about Basil's "disappearance" (9) and Dorian entering the house at Blue Gate Field where James Vane (Richard Fraser, right) is with a French prostitute (Renie Carson) (10).

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26. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). At the house at Blue Gate Field, Dorian stops to speak with Adrian Singleton (Morton Lowry, right), who draws his picture in chalk, while a companion, Kate (Lillian Bond), looks on.

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27. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Adrian gives Dorian away to Vane, who follows him outside and corners him, but Vane sees Dorian's youthful face and believes he has the wrong man.

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28. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Dorian and Lord Henry on the train to Selby, Dorian's country house.



29. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). David, Gladys and Henry read the note in which Dorian indicates that he has returned to town and breaks off with Gladys.

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30. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). In the schoolroom in which he stores the portrait, Dorian resolves to reform.

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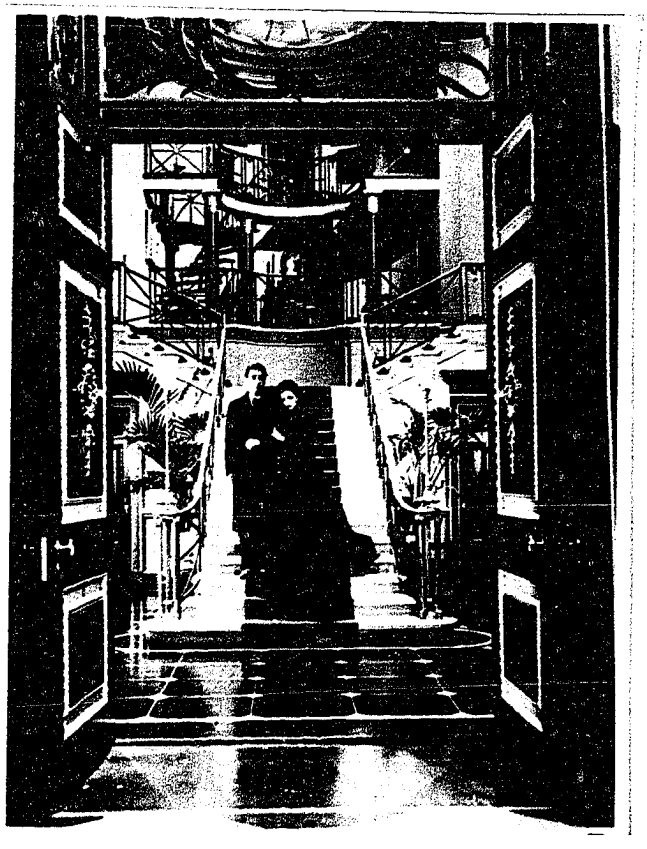
31. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the portrait mutating back to its original form after Dorian stabs it through the heart (13 and 14).

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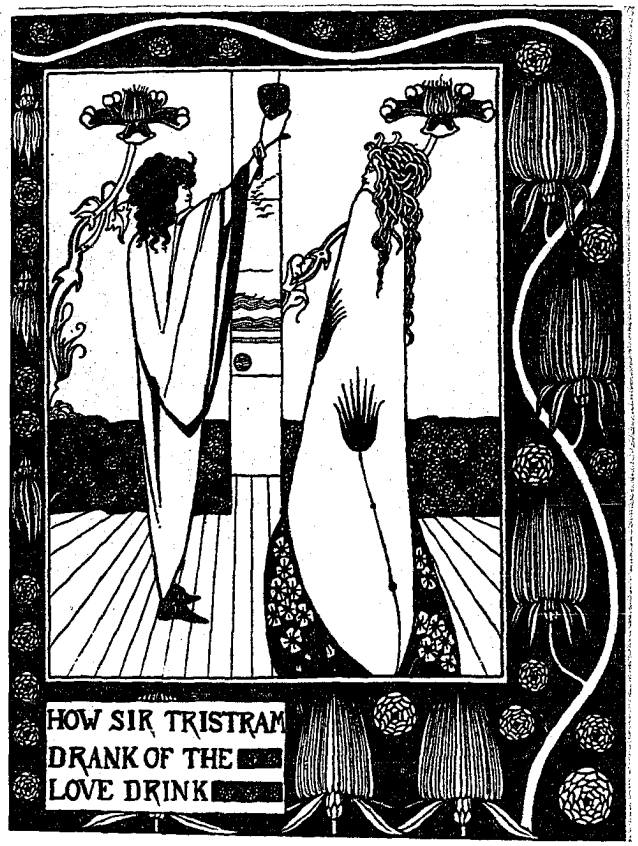
32. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). Life's illustrations of the restored portrait (15) and Dorian's body, which has assumed all the degradation the portrait has lost (16).

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33. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1945). David escorts Gladys, shaken by the sight of Dorian's horrible corpse, downstairs at the film's conclusion.

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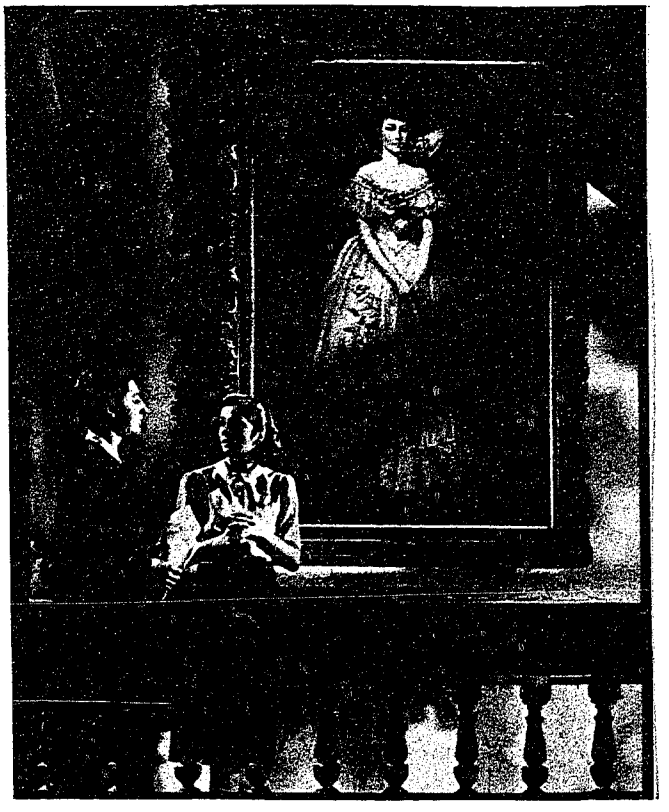
34. Aubrey Beardsley. How Sir Tristam Drank the Love Drink, from Le Morte d'Arthur (1893-94).

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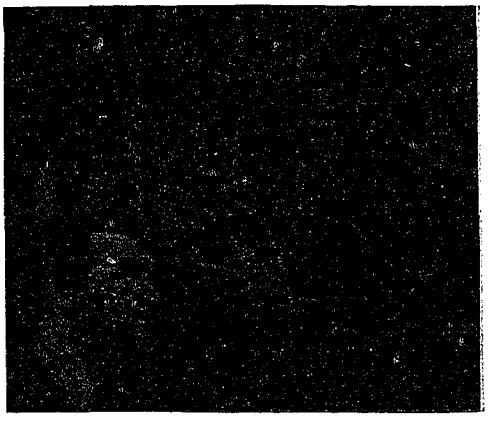


35. Ivan Le Lorraine Albright. The Picture of Dorian Gray (1943-1944). Oil on canvas, 217.1 x 106.7 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago.

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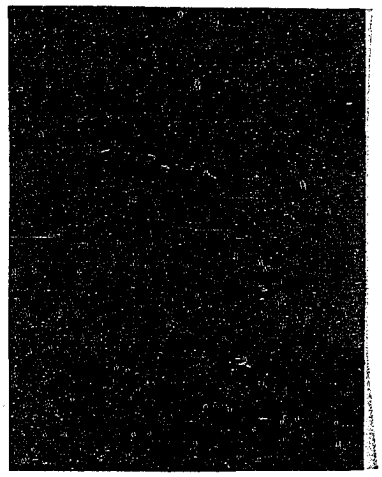


36. Rebecca (1940), directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Judith Anderson, Joan Fontaine, and the portrait of a de Winter ancestress.

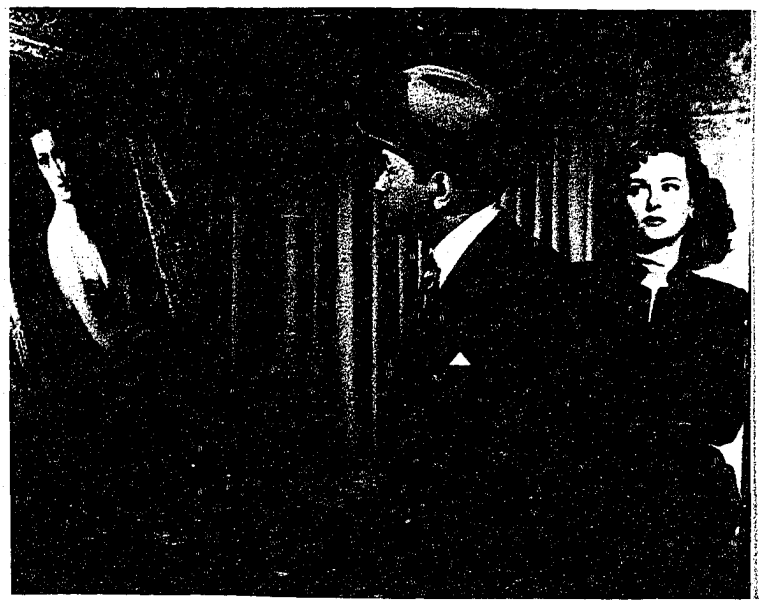


37. Suspicion (1941), directed by Alfred Hitchcock. Cary Grant and the portrait of General MacLaidlaw (Cedric Hardwicke).

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38. Laura (1944), directed by Otto Preminger. Clifton Webb, Dana Andrews, and the portrait of Laura (Gene Tierney).



39. The Woman in the Window (1944), directed by Fritz Lang. Edward G. Robinson, Joan Bennett and her portrait.

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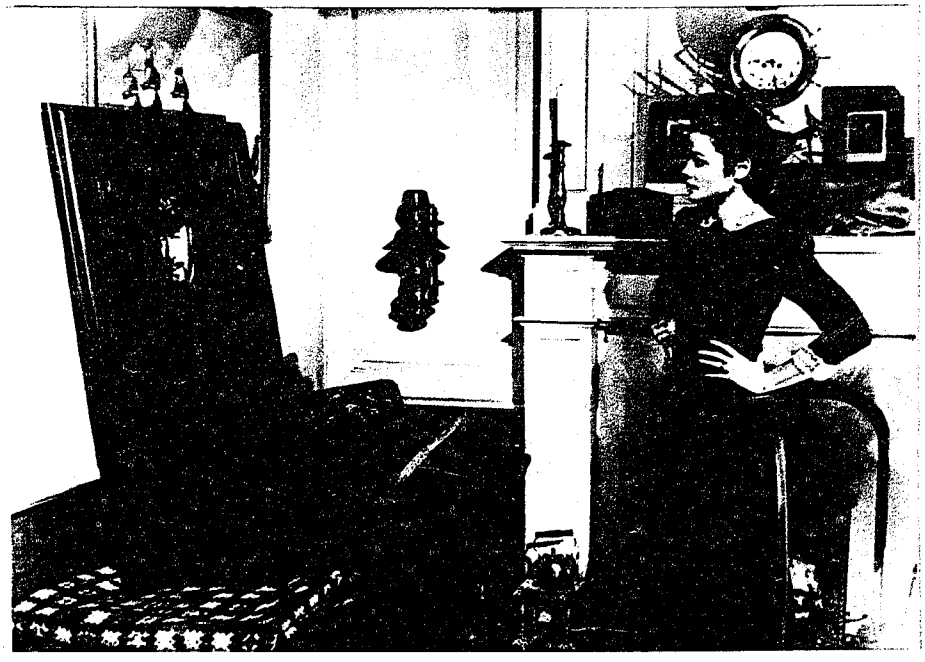


40. Scarlet Street (1945), directed by Fritz Lang. Joan Bennett and Edward G. Robinson.

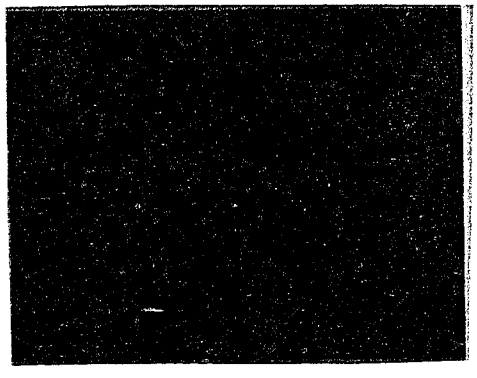


41. The Two Mrs. Carrolls (1945), directed by Peter Godfrey. Barbara Stanwyk and her portrait.

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42. The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947), directed by Joseph Mankiewicz. Gene Tierney and the portrait of Captain Gregg (Rex Harrison).

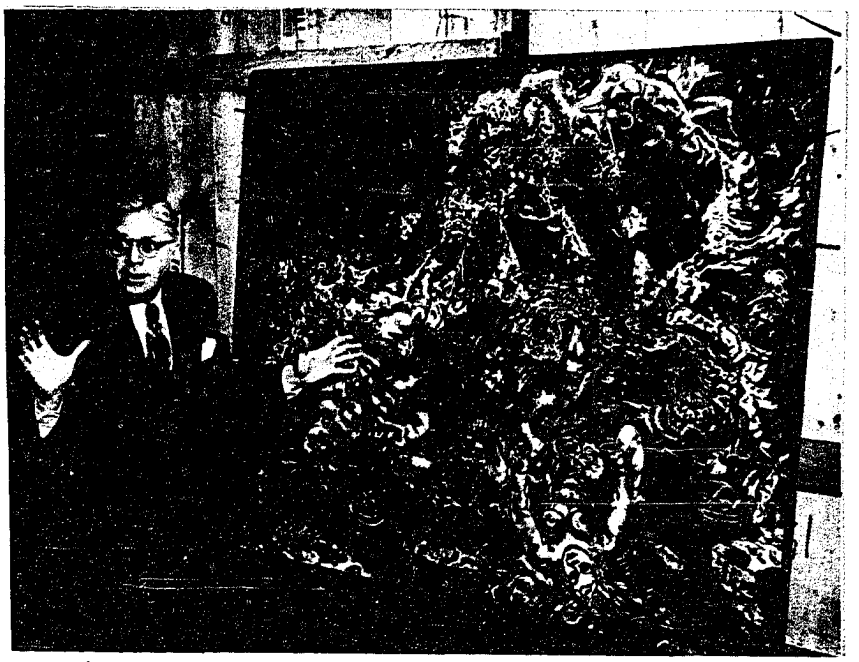


43. Portrait of Jennie (1948), directed by William Dieterle. Cecil Kellaway, Joseph Cotton, and the portrait of Jennie (Jennifer Jones).

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44. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Albert Lewin examines submissions by (left to right) Ivan Albright, Dorothea Tanning, Abraham Rattner, Max Ernst, Salvador Dali, and Horace Pippin (photo by William Leftwich).



45. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Albert Lewin gesticulates before Ivan Albright's Temptation of Saint Anthony (photo by William Leftwich).

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46. The Bel Ami Competition (1946). Judges Marcel Duchamp, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., and Sidney Janis contemplate Max Ernst's winning submission (photo by William Leftwich).



47. Max Ernst. The Temptation of Saint Anthony (1945). Oil on canvas, 108 x 128 cm. Wilhelm-Lehmbruck-Museum, Duisburg.

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48. Poster for The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947).

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49. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges Duroy (George Sanders), plays with his "Stick" and attracts the interest of Rachel (Marie Wilson), as he sits with Charles Forestier (John Carradine) at the Café Desir.

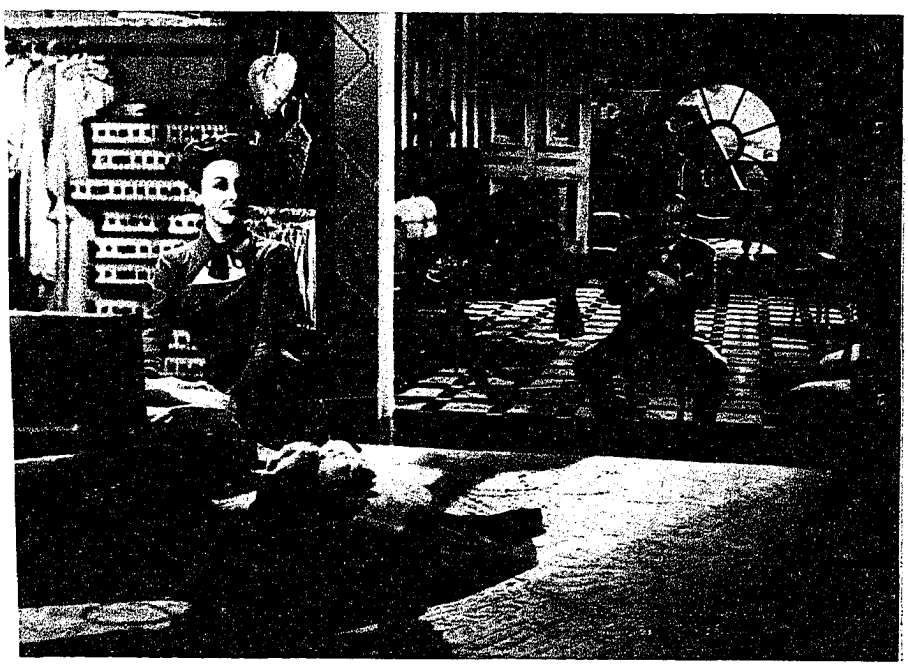


50. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine Forestier (Ann Dvorak, center) introduces Georges to her friend, Clotilde de Marelle (Angela Lansbury) at a dinner party at the Forestier home.

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51. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Clotilde and Georges in a carriage on the way home from slumming at the Reine Blanche.



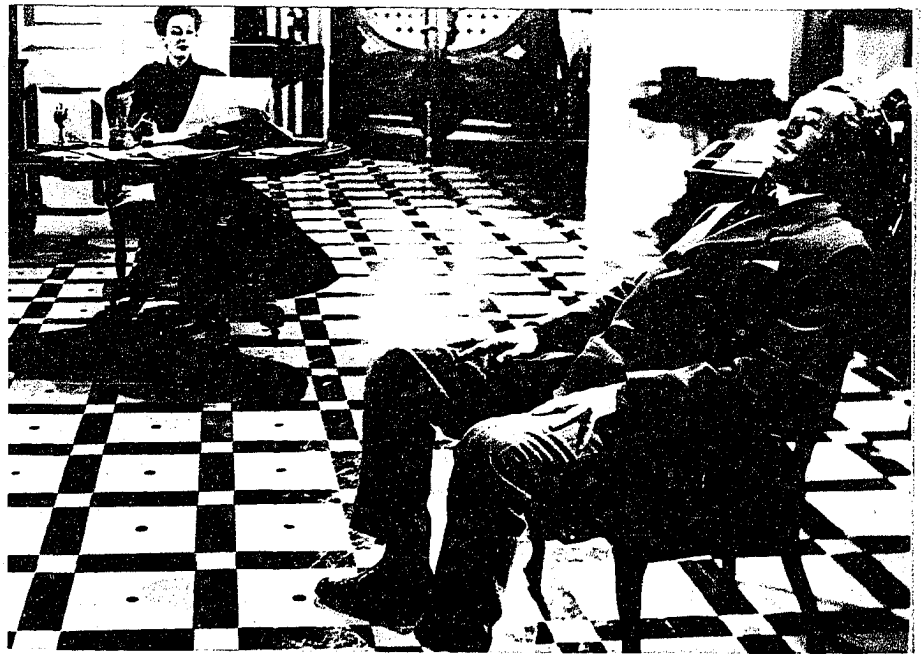
52. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine Forestier packs for a trip to the country with her consumptive husband as Georges declares his interest in her.

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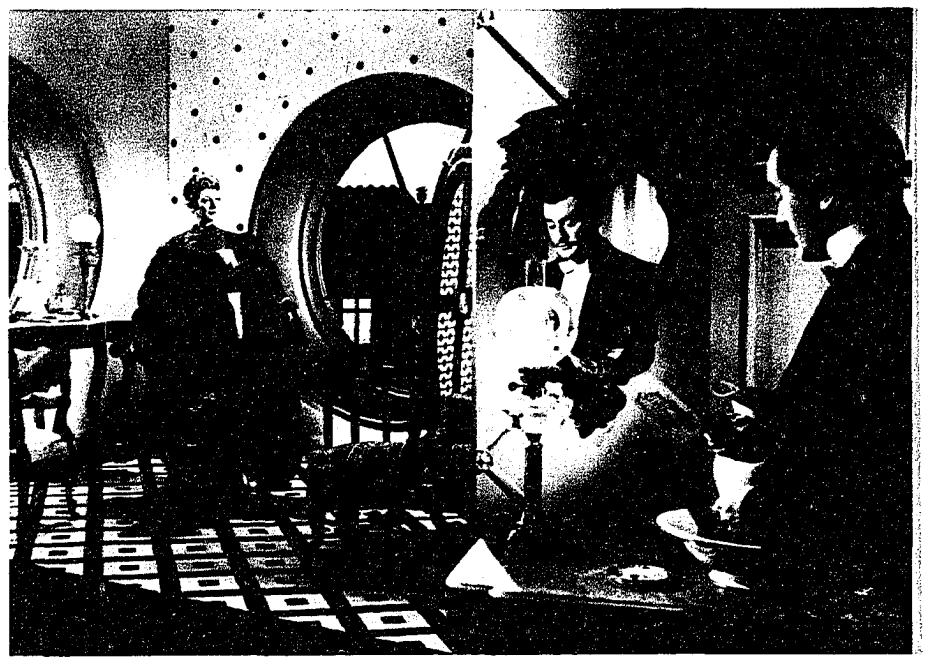


53. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges unsuccessfully pursues the virtuous Marie de Varenne (Frances Dee) outside the Cathedral of Notre-Dame.

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54. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine works with her scissors, while Georges, now her husband, broods over her inheritance from the Comte de Vaudrec.

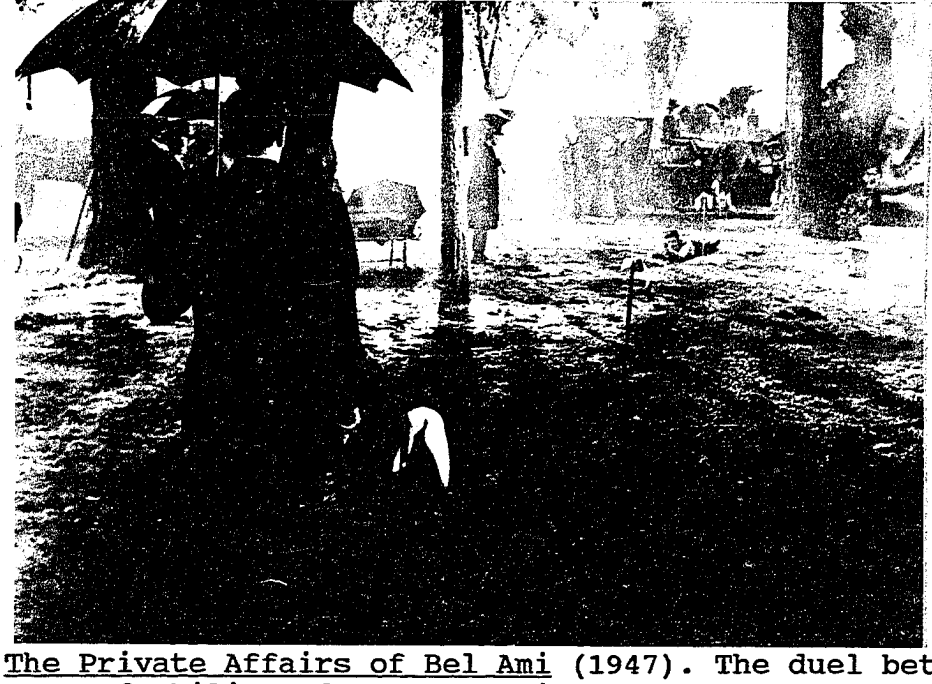


55. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Madeleine and Georges ready themselves for the Walters' party.

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56. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). Georges and Mme. Walter (Katherine Emery) in front of the Ernst painting.



57. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami (1947). The duel between Georges and Philippe de Contel (Richard Fraser).

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58. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). The narrator, Geoffrey Fielding (Harold Warrender), restoring a Greek vase.

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59. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). A flamenco dancer (La Pillina) performs at Las Dos Tortugas.



60. Man Ray. Explosante-fixe (from L'Amour fou), 1934.

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61. Man Ray and Ava Gardner in his Hollywood studio, 1950, with his portrait of her as the mythical Pandora.



62. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick van der Zee (James Mason) and Pandora Reynolds (Ava Gardner) with his painting of Pandora (by Ferdinand Bellan) in the cabin of his ship.

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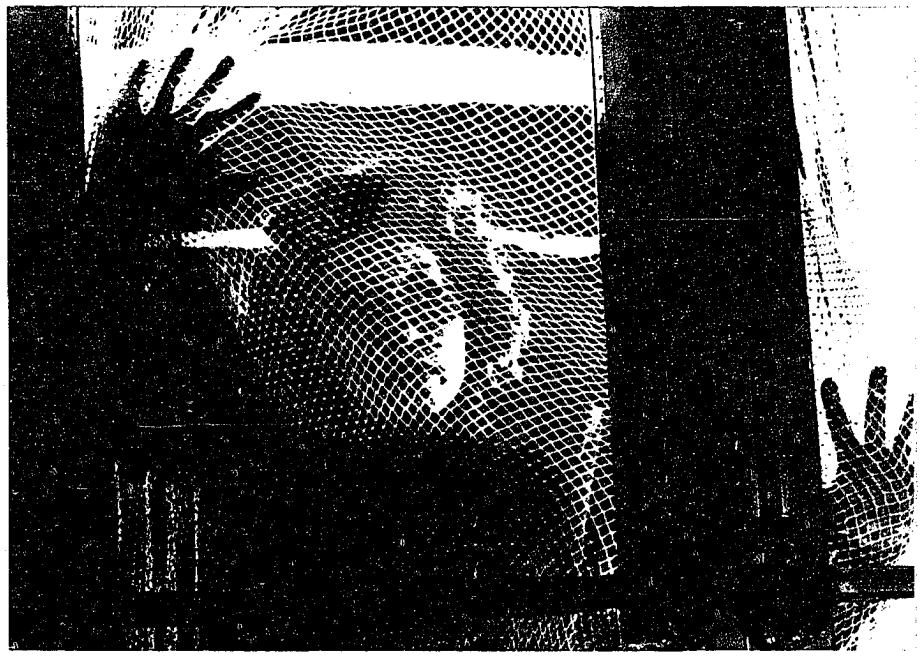


63. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora assaults Hendrick's painting of her.



64. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora interacts with a dancing statue on the beach as Hendrick watches.

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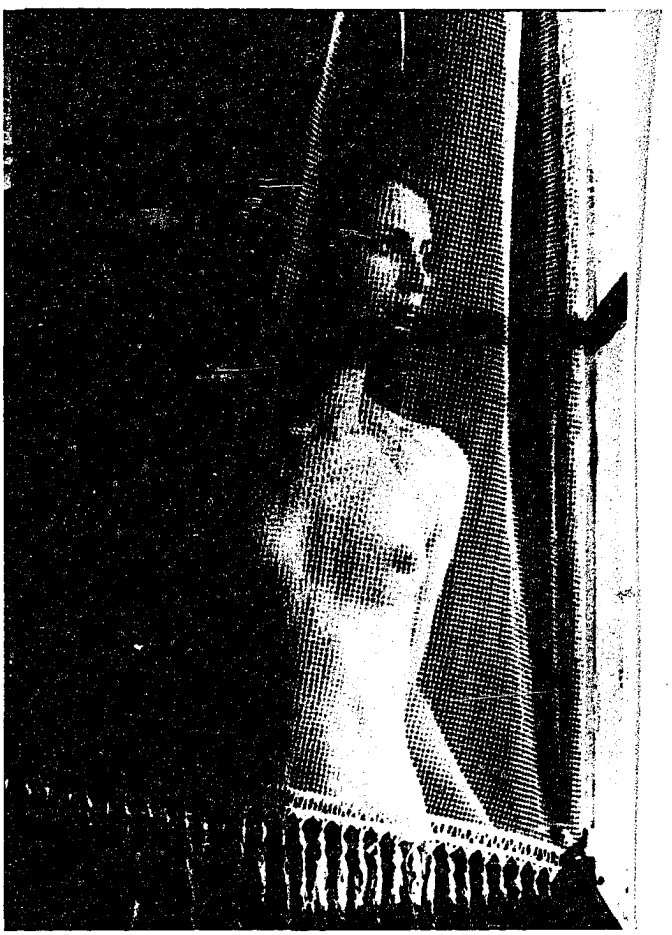


65. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Pandora, alarmed by a dream, attempts to enter Hendrick's bungalow.



66. Man Ray. The Net (1931).

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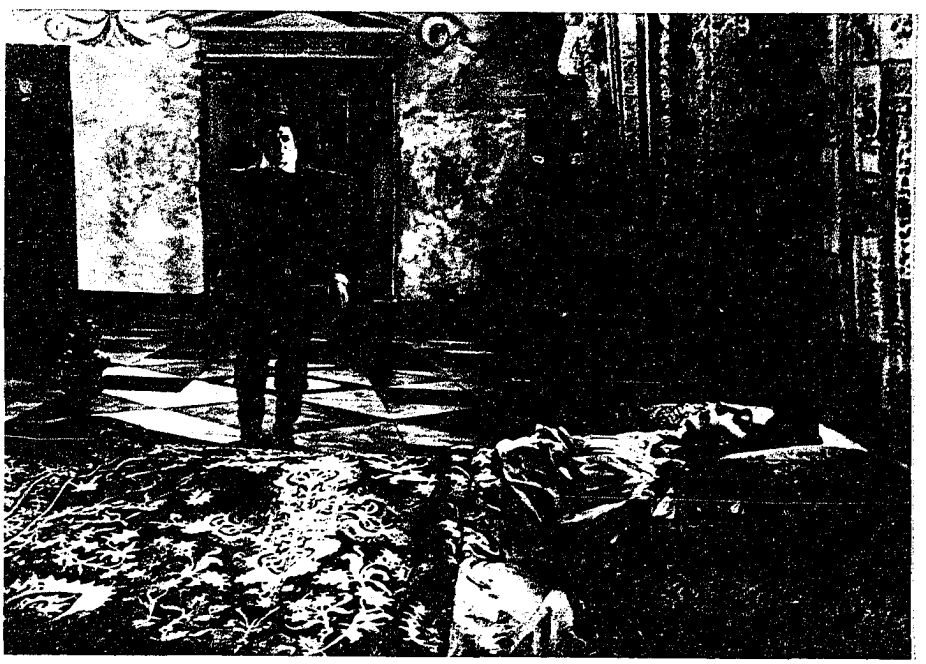


67. Man Ray. Untitled (c. 1929).

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68. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick, Geoffrey, and Stephen Cameron (Nigel Patrick) await Pandora as she leaves Juan Montalvo's deathbed.

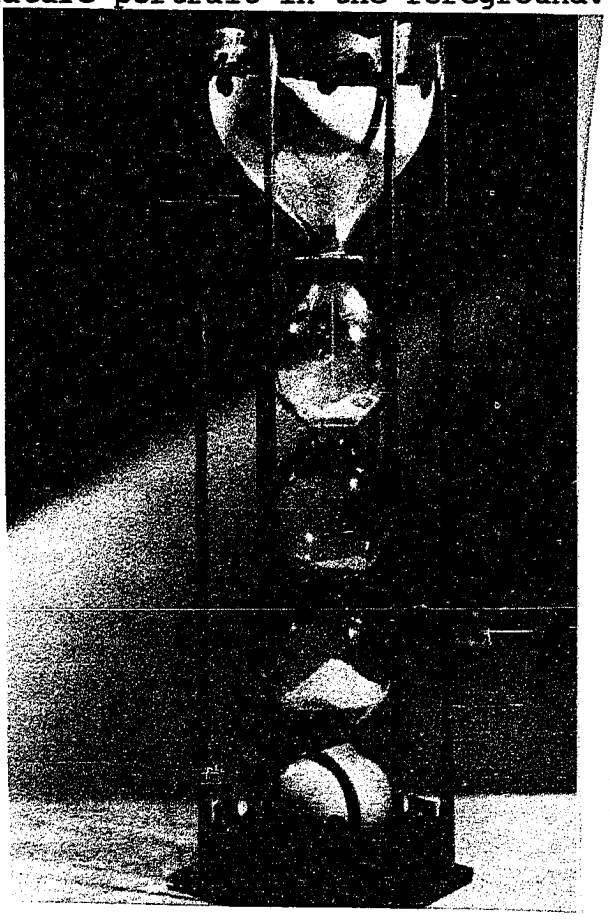


69. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). In flashback, Hendrick at the deathbed of his murdered bride.

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70. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951). Hendrick and Pandora aboard his ship, with the hourglass and (Man Ray's) miniature portrait in the foreground.



71. Man Ray. A stream of milk endlessly pouring from a glass breast (from Breton's L'Amour fou). 1930s.

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72. Saadia (1954). Seated, left to right, in the Caid's quarters: Si Lahssen (Cornel Wilde), Henrik (Mel Ferrer), and the Khadir (Cyril Cusack).



73. Saadia (1954). The sorceress, Fatima (Wanda Rotha), focuses her homeopathic powers on figurine representing Saadia.

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74. Saadia (1954). The bandit, Bou Rezza (Michel Simon), embraces Saadia (Rita Gam).



75. Saadia (1954). One of Si Lahssen's obsessive portraits of Saadia.

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76. The Living Idol (1957). Dr. Alfred Stoner (James Robertson-Justice, center) explains to Terry Matthews (Steve Forrest), the resemblance between Juanita Acosta (Liliane Montevecchi) and an ancient Mayan figure.



77. The Living Idol (1957). Carlos Mérida's illustration of an ancient Mesopotamian sacrifice, from Stoner's lecture on the history of human sacrifice.

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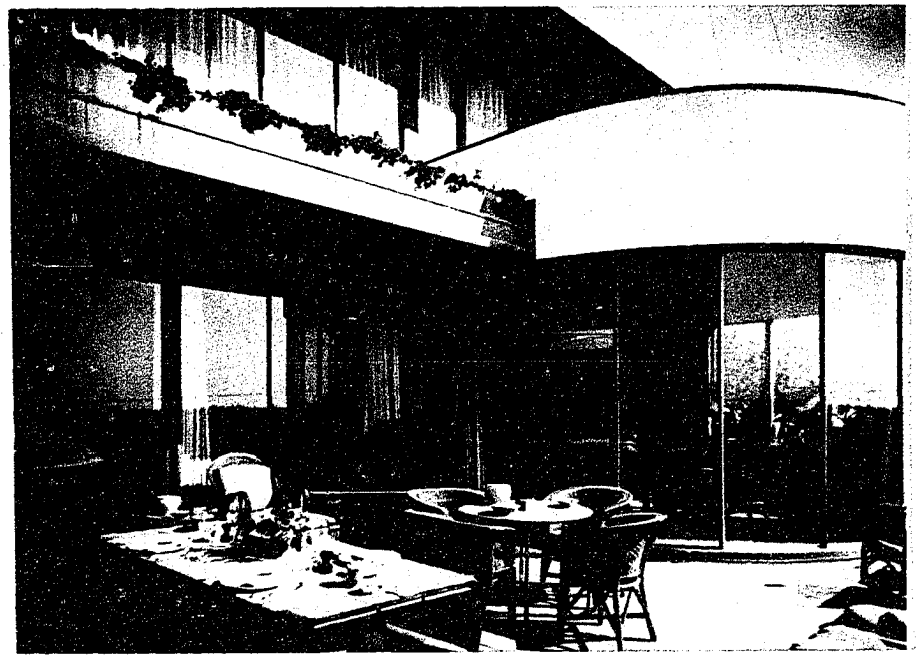


78. The Living Idol (1957). Juanita is used by Stoner to model sacrificial robes and to assume the posture of a virgin sacrificed to the Mexican jaguar god.

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79. The Lewin house at 514 Ocean Front, Santa Monica, designed by Richard Neutra (1939). Interior view (photo by Fred R. Dapprich).

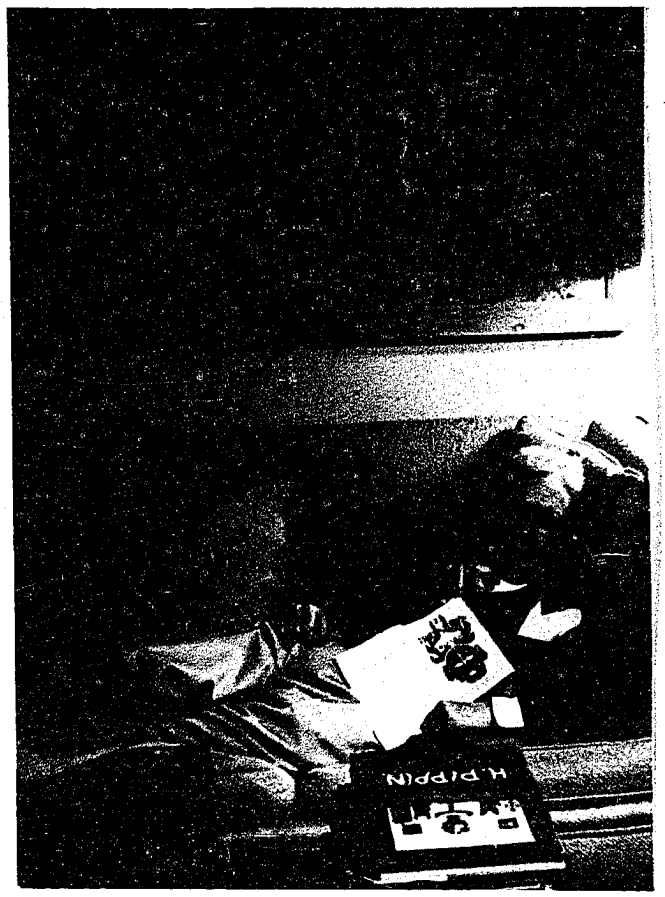


80. The Lewin house at 514 Ocean Front, Santa Monica, designed by Richard Neutra (1939). Exterior view (photo by Fred R. Dapprich).

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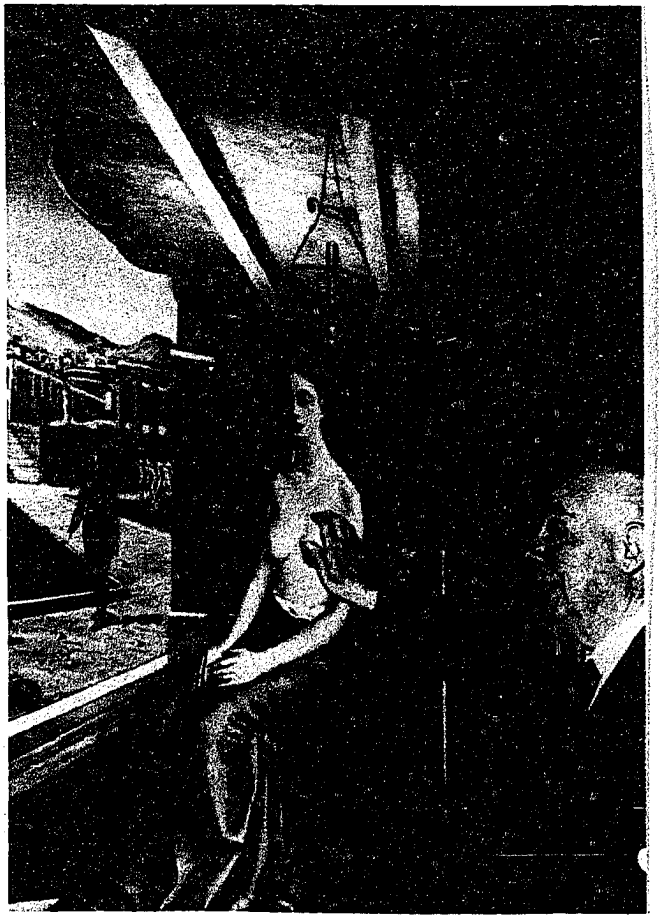


81. Angna Enters. A Party (1948). A painting of the Lewins' thirtieth anniversary dinner party.



82. Albert Lewin in his New York apartment, early 1960s.

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83. Jean Renoir admiring Paul Delvaux's painting, The Summons (1944), in Albert Lewin's New York City apartment in the early 1960s (photo by A.P. Raisbeck).

Photo Acknowledgements: University of Southern California Cinema-Television Library (figs. 20, 26, 33, 44, 45, 58, 61, 77, 79-83); The Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive (figs. 49, 52, 54-56, 59, 62, 64, 65, 69, 70, 73, 74, 76).

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II. Writings about Albert Lewin, general
III. Writings about Albert Lewin's six directorial films
A. The Moon and Sixpence
B. The Picture of Dorian Gray
C. The Private Affairs of Bel Ami
D. Pandora and the Flying Dutchman
E. Saadia and The Living Idol
IV. General

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