

challenge old ideas in some way, they had better write for media reaching a smaller, more receptive audience. One difficulty, then, of the psychiatric film designed to entertain is that it must establish its assumptions, giving them the force of old ideas. A way of doing this is to couch them in a familiar form, such as the common melodrama with its accustomed opposition of good and evil, and its happy outcome. But the results are inevitably dubious, if for no other reason than that the theories and findings of science are not certainties, and may not be proposed as comforting axioms. The film psychoanalyst usually sermonizes in the same kind of masquerade as does the 'doctor' in the cigarette or toothpaste advertisement. He either simplifies to the point of falsehood, or juggles the coloured balls of a jargon to mystify the onlookers.

The Lonely Night does not start out to 'entertain' in the popular sense. It teaches, and the audience learns. There is a story that is absorbing, although it does not follow conventional fictional patterns. The film is simple, yet subtle, holding much to interest even those sophisticated enough to raise questions or qualifications. It is popular, yet not popularized; comprehensible without debasement. It engrosses, hence its demands upon the audience are met with interest and participation. This can be a definition of 'entertainment', too.

Heard and Seen

CANNES: TEN MARKS FOR TRYING

The programme for the sixteen days of this year's Cannes Festival, the seventeenth of the series, was considerably more uneven than it has been for several years past and this, it seemed to me, made it more than usually interesting for the serious student of cinema. With three or four exceptions the great names were absent, and the number of predictable smash hits was surprisingly limited when one first looked at the complete list of entries. But as the brilliantly sunny days passed, it became increasingly evident how stimulating was the great proportion of work by very young or inexperienced directors, and one

became used to seeing nervous young men sitting behind the microphone at the post-performance press conferences, waiting to be thrown to the wolves. So nervous were some of them, in fact, that even the journalistic wolves relented sufficiently to temper their bite to the shorn lambs.

Apart from one or two quite outstanding pictures like Jacques Demy's *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, which in the event won the Grand Prix outright and shared the Catholic prize, or Pietro Germi's *Seduced and Abandoned*—not at all what you might expect from its title—you could almost divide the entries into films with very interesting ideas made by directors with insufficient experience to make the most of their material; and films made by experienced directors trying to put over insufficient material by means of accomplished technique.

For once, I found myself wholly on the side of the first category, many of which provided extremely rewarding viewing. One that I liked almost the best, though I was in a minority here, was a Swedish film made by a young man called Bo Widerberg; *Kvarteret Korpen* was translated as *Raven's End*, the name of an industrial quarter outside Stockholm. It was a very touching, warm-hearted story set in the mid-thirties, about a boy, the mother he loves and admires, the drunken unsuccessful father he loves and despises, and the way in which he has to break away from them, the girl who is carrying his child and the whole squalid environment if ever he is to become a man at all. This sounds conventional enough: what gives it a special interest is the fact that the personal story is played out against the emergence of the Swedish socialist party under the shadow of Hitler and the Spanish Civil War; and also the poetic, documentary camera-work which gives the whole setting an added depth. Thommy Berggren as the boy, Keve Hjelm as the ravaged father and Emy Storm as the indomitable mother are wonderfully real and it seemed to me that the film had something true to say about the two-way action of family life. Moreover Mr Widerberg won my heart at the press conference, when asked why he had rejected the Bergman tradition, by saying 'Well, after all, one *has* to kill the father, Freud tells us'.

The film to which we of the Catholic jury gave the other half of our prize was just such another 'ten for trying' work, though admittedly it drew far wider recognition, winning two other prizes in addition to ours. This was a Brazilian film directed by Nelson Pereira dos Santos, called *Vidas Secas*, which was uneven, tragic, very socially conscious and extremely beautiful visually. We thought that its qualities of endurance and confidence ought to be signalled out, and as one watched the unhappy family, who were its protagonists, drifting across the drought-ridden areas of north-east Brazil, in search of a life which they felt might at least provide them with the minimum of human dignity, it did seem a real achievement to turn so bleak a story into something like a triumphant affirmation.

In sharp contrast was the film from the Argentine, *Primero Yo*, which was glossy in the extreme. A rich, selfish and glamorous playboy—polo, girls, yachts and motor racing—is enraged to find himself faced with the responsi-

bilities of fatherhood towards a teenage son newly come from England, and so destroys the boy's faith in everything that he finally opts out of life altogether. Full of clichés, both visual and thematic, this still seemed to me the kind of film which might lead its director, Fernando Ayala, to do something notable one day. Certainly, compared with the massive, boring blunder of the screen version of Dürrenmatt's *The Visit*, made in West Germany, directed by Bernhard Wicki and starring Ingrid Bergman and Anthony Quinn (no less) it did seem a marvel of freshness. The Czech film, *Krik*, was an awful warning as to what happens when a young director gets an over-dose of Truffaut before experience has immunised him, but it was a disarming picture for all that, with its charming insouciant young couple having their first baby—and wanting it—and looking at what had led up to this in flashback. The Czechs have always known about cinema, even at their most Marxist, and this was certainly a *moving* picture.

Another young man's movie came from the Spaniard, Manuel Summers, and was called *La Nina de Luto*. Witty, outrageous, black and yet gay at the same time, it finished in near-tragedy; the picture of small-town life, social, religious and jazzy at once, painted a grim account of how outworn traditions—here the rigidity of family mourning—can totally wreck lives. One laughed a lot and then felt slightly guilty at having done so; the colour was a delight from start to finish.

But without a doubt the picture that gained by far the most publicity for the neophytes was the first feature film of a young American television director, Larry Peerce, whose impact was out of all proportion to its technical merits except, perhaps, for one sequence of tentative lovers in a public garden lit by lamp-standards. *One Potato, Two Potato*—the title bothered the French almost as much as *The Pumpkin Eater*—was a remarkably courageous excursion into the dangerous minefield of race relations in rural America. A young divorced American girl with a small daughter moves to a new job in a new town, makes new friends and eventually marries a charming, dignified coloured personnel assistant in the factory. They are ideally happy, have another child and then the first husband re-appears, horrified to find his child in a coloured environment. He brings a court case and the judge, though admitting that the home is ideal, nevertheless reluctantly gives the unreliable white father custody. The consequent heart-break for all involved is movingly presented, and the film had a ten-minute ovation at its close. The young director and his wife were visibly in tears at the tribute, and it is heartening for us to learn that the world distribution rights have been bought by British Lion. This is not a good film, by technical standards, but it is certainly an important one, and it is for the opportunity to see this type of picture, from countries all over the world, that many of us still feel that Cannes is *the* festival above all others. 1964 was no exception, as this brief survey will have shown.

MARYVONNE BUTCHER