

EIAK EAKIA

French 1926 silent b/w approx. 20 min

Produced, directed, and photographed by Man Ray. "A series of Fragments, a cinepoem with a certain optical sequence make up a whole that still remains a fragment. Just as one can much better appreciate the abstract beauty in a fragment of a classic work than in its entirety, so this film tries to indicate the essentials in contemporary cinematography. It is not an 'abstract' film or a story-teller; its reasons for being are its inventions of light-forms and movements, while the more objective parts interrupt the monotony of abstract inventions or serve as punctuation. Anyone who can sit through an hour's projection of a film in which 60% of the action passes in and out of doorways and in inaudible conversations, is asked to give 20 minutes of attention to a more or less logical sequence of ideas without any pretention of revolutionizing the film industry." (Man Ray, in Close-Up, 8/'27)

PHANTASMAGORIA

American 195? silent b/w approx. 5 min

This film, enlarged from 8mm, is 'experimental' in the most literal sense of the word. Curtis Opliger photographed ball bearings rolling down inclines, across mysterious plains, through peg forrests, in general pursuit of bearings. The film can (should) be considered simply an exercise.

BERLIN: DIE SYMPHONIE EINER GROSSSTADT

German 1927 b/w 75 min

Production	Fox-Europa
Supervision	Karl Freund
Source	Carl Mayer
Direction	Walther Ruttmann
Photography	Kuntze, Baberski, Schaffer

"...documentary may be said to have had its real beginnings with Flaherty's NANOOK OF THE NORTH in America (1920), Dziga Vertov's experiments in Russia (1923), Cavalcanti's RIEN QUE LES HEURES in France (1926), Ruttmann's BERLIN in Germany (1927) and Grierson's DRIFTERS in Britain (1929)." (P. Rotha)

This film (BERLIN:) was devised by Carl Mayer. "Mayer was tiring of the restriction and artificiality of the studios." (Rotha) He conceived the idea of a City Symphony. Like Mayer, Carl Freund was tiring of the studio. He wanted to show everything that the camera could receive. Hiding cameras in suitcases and shooting from moving cars (and thru walls) he assembled material. Walter Ruttmann, who up to then had made several abstract films, edited the immense amount of material collected by Freund and several other photographers.

Ruttmann's BERLIN is a cross section of a Berlin working day. "The day began with a processional of workers, the factories got under way, the streets filled: the city's forenoon became a hurly-burly of tangled pedestrians and street cars. There was respite for food: a various respite with contrast of rich and poor. The city started work again, and a shower of rain in the afternoon became a considerable event. The city stopped work and, in further more hectic processional of pubs and cabarets and dancing legs and illuminated sky-signs, finished its day." (Grierson on Documentary)

"What is said in Ruttmann's BERLIN... is said entirely by the technique of camerawork, not by the film-maker himself as a man speaking thru the camera.... Though it is true in all art that how the work is done is of crucial importance, expression which involves human values needs unique qualities of experience if the final achievement is to be lasting. Ruttmann's BERLIN is no more now than an interesting exercise in technique; it has no more significance than well-devised scales practised on a piano." (R. Manvell)

"Ruttmann emphasizes pure patterns of movement. Machine parts in motion are shot and cut in such a manner that they turn into dynamic displays of an almost abstract character.... The editing also resorts to striking analogies between movements or forms. Human legs walking on the pavement are followed by the legs of a cow; a sleeping man on a bench is associated with a sleeping elephant." (S/Kracauer... From Caligari To Hitler)