

NEW YORK TIMES: CRITIC'S CHOICE/Film; Speaking to the Heart Without a Single Word

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

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The silent films of the experimental San Francisco filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky are about as close as movies can come to evoking the experience of lying on your back in the grass on a summer day, gazing through leaves at the clouds and letting your mind drift into the cosmos. On Sunday night at 8 Mr. Dorsky will make his first New York City appearance in 12 years, as part of the Walter Reade Theater's Image Innovators series, to present three relatively recent works from a career that has spanned 30 years.

"Triste," "Alaya" and "Variations" range from 18 to 24 minutes. Each is an exquisite meditation on the random beauty of the world visualized in sequences of images that have no logical connection beyond a subliminal emotional thread. Of the three, "Triste" is the most earthbound. Opening with a shot of branches swaying in the wind, it connects images as disparate as cigarette butts, a roast turning on a spit, driving at sunset, clouds seen through a spider's web, beach foam and the shadow of a train moving through a jungle of steel girders. These are among the dozens of images in a journey that evokes a private visual experience of the physical world that is beyond words.

Grander in mood and more thematically austere, "Alaya" is a flowing visual symphony of sand, wind and light. The perspective varies from magnified close-ups of sand pebbles blown by the wind in which each grain is a miniature rock colliding with other miniature rocks to long shots in which the same terrain becomes a shifting landscape of gleaming rivulets (like arid sea ripples).

In some lights they sparkle like fields of stars in a night sky. In others they are desert sands, whipped by the wind, cascading, shifting and overlapping in hypnotic patterns that suggest immutable laws of physics. This pure visual poetry lifts the mind toward thoughts of eternity and time and the solidity and evanescence of the material world.

"Variations," the most gorgeous of these films, is a collection of fleeting images so beautiful that you want to take them home and live with them. Sunlight reflected on rippling water, the sun darting behind clouds, two sleek cars pulling up side by side, a Safeway shopping bag voluptuously inflated by the breeze and tumbling along a sidewalk, a leashed dog eagerly waiting for its owner to return: these are a few of the film's pictures of perfect moments.

"Variations" takes a special delight in looking at the world through reflecting glass, or through rain-soaked windows that bleed the colors of the street into a paint box of shifting colors. The most breathtaking pictures (none last more than a few seconds) evoke a piercing sadness. Mr. Dorsky always knows exactly when to stop before what he has filmed threatens to turn into rainbow-colored kitsch. Everything he shows is in the

process of change. In his cinematic world, human consciousness at its most spiritually attuned is a sequence of fleeting moments, a long ecstatic series of goodbyes.

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE: Dorsky finds revelation in the mundane

Kenneth Baker, Chronicle Art Critic
Thursday, December 7, 2006

"Breathtaking," I thought, when I saw the closing sequence of San Francisco filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky's "Visitation" (2002). It fills the screen with slowly descending skeins of reflected light, shimmering from waves as they wash upon a beach, seemingly shot from a considerable height.

But "breath-giving" might say it better, because in his soundless films Dorsky frequently finds liberating visual equivalents for the rhythms of lungs and heart.

In "Song and Solitude" (2005-06), the newest work on Dorsky's Sunday program at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, one uninterrupted shot captures sunlight and shadow falling alternately upon a pair of dangling golden chains. The chains appear to hang just behind several people sitting at a restaurant table.

The sense of discovery in this simple observation, discovery of something revelatory within the mundane, pervades Dorsky's work.

It does not contribute to a narrative, nor does it build to some climactic summary statement. It simply recurs, rephrased in images of varying legibility and familiarity, incrementally gaining a power of attentive truth that can bring viewers to tears. More than any other diaristic filmmaker, Dorsky presents images of the sufficiency of life -- as a condition of plenitude matched with awareness -- that occur almost nowhere else in the arts of our time.

Dorsky's films frequently pose the challenge of discovering -- quickly, before a shot expires -- why he has incorporated a passage.

Sometimes that discovery follows a cut by a few seconds. In "The Visitation," we get a flashing glimpse of a man moving in dim light before a dark gray surface. Just before a cut ends the sequence, the viewer can spot the target of Dorsky's interest: a thin, mercurial arc of water trailing from a window washer's squeegee stroke.

In other sequences, we get more time to see what transpires: the filmmaker creating a kind of balance between the content and process of observation, as in a passage from "Threnody" (2004) that views distant, rustling golden foliage through a foreground screen

of bare branches. The focal distance slowly changes in this shot, shifting the image from one level to another of abstraction and of implicit engagement with life.

Bay Area viewers will recognize the equipment of San Francisco civic life in sequences shot through the glass walls of bus shelters, their frosted glass striations providing a ready-made device for scrambling our reading of image space.

Foreground and background, information in reflections and events seen straight through the lens jostle for primacy as we watch certain passages of the films. A heightened consciousness of the material in hand results, and of the levels of unthought decision making involved in viewing more conventional films.

NEW YORK TIMES: FILM FESTIVAL REVIEW; The Avant-Garde Lens, Heavenly and Harrowing

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

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Is there a more beautiful cinematic image than a plastic shopping bag gently blown by the wind across a stretch of pavement? Strangely enough, no. One of dozens of images of light, shadow and passive movement in Nathaniel Dorsky's silent film "Variations," the shopping bag rustled by a light breeze is a transfixingly lovely evocation of randomness and evanescence in the everyday. In Mr. Dorsky's film, the second in a trilogy, the camera also catches reflections of trees on water, dissolving colors on rainy streets reflected in store windows, tree shadows dappling a chessboard and dozens of other exquisite visions of transient beauty in the everyday world.

Movies like "Variations" (the most visually compelling film in the avant-garde programs being presented by the New York Film Festival today and tomorrow at the Walter Reade Theater) are what experimental filmmaking is all about. For a moment, you are offered the sensation of seeing the world for the first time. Depending on the filmmaker's temperament and esthetic, that vision can be everything from idyllic ("Variations") to sinister.

Several of the more cerebral films in these programs would try anyone's patience. However, the ratio of the engaging to the impenetrable this year tilts decisively toward the engaging. Digital technology is explored in Martin Arnold's "Alone: Life Wastes Andy Hardy," in which frames of an Andy Hardy film starring Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland and Fay Holden are played and replayed backward and forward to suggest a tormented Oedipal relationship lurking beneath the placid surface of the Hardy family life.

Scott Stark's "Noema" uses similar techniques to deconstruct a swatch of hard-core pornography involving several couples. But instead of finding a hidden psychological subtext, he finds a psychological and erotic blankness in couplings that are never completed.

The longest film (half an hour) among the two programs of shorts, Peggy Ahwesh's "Nocturne," is a psychosexual nightmare filmed in grainy pixelvision that deepens its noirish horror-movie atmosphere. Fantasy and memory blur together in this portrait of a relationship in which a woman imagines killing, then burying her abusive lover.

Finally, there is "Emily Died," the latest chapter of Anne Robertson's anguished, harshly self-revealing Super 8 video diary, in which the filmmaker and narrator, who has a history of mental illness, reflects on the sudden death of her 3-year-old niece. Harrowing in its redundancy and in the strident desperation of Ms. Robertson's tone, "Emily Died" is a claustrophobic but unforgettable journey into the tormented psyche of a woman whose mixture of narcissism and embarrassingly unguarded candor would give Anne Sexton a run for her money.

Variations and Theme: Nathaniel Dorsky's Variations

Sarah Markgraf

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(c) 1999

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Some viewers will see the beauty of the photography in the individual shots of Nathaniel Dorsky's most recent film *Variations* (1998). Certainly there are many individual shots that are quite pleasing to the eye, from a longshot of delicately glittering water to a close-up of translucent textured leaves to a mid-shot of a precariously elevated traffic signal moving gently in the wind. The more profound aspect of the work, however, is in the way each shot relates to the next, the previous and the whole. A facile reading of this film is that it is a series of comely, well-composed fragments. Indeed fragmentation is all-but expected in experimental cinema. But the wondrous thing about Dorsky's *Variations* is how it is neither simply fragmentary nor simply structured. This may sound like a contradiction because it is one, and that is part of Dorsky's point as a filmmaker.

Indeed, the inspiration for the editing of this film seems to have come from Eastern poetry, long known for its penchant for contradictoriness. In *Haiku, Volume 1: Eastern Culture*, the author R.H. Blythe describes some of the characteristics of the state of mind of the Haiku poet: in addition to contradictoriness, there is selflessness, loneliness, grateful acceptance, wordlessness, non-intellectuality, humor, freedom, non-morality, simplicity, materiality, love, and courage. These qualities are highly evident in *Variations*, which appears to have been created with the very state of mind of the Haiku poet Blythe describes. But in addition to the beauty of the individual images Dorsky

presents--it is both an ancient (Basho the most important Haiku poet lived in the 17th Century) and a modern beauty (revealing the texture of modern life) that celebrates both the extraordinary in the ordinary and vice versa-- Dorsky's subtle editing is responsible for conveying this poetic spirit.

While comparisons between *Variations* and certain kinds of poetry seem natural, there is, of course, a cinematic context from which this work emerges. One could make an interesting comparison between Dorsky's *Variations* and Peter Kubelka's films, for example, which are often cited as examples of masterful editing. In films like *Schwechater* (1958), Kubelka creates montage through rhythmic, percussive hits which seem much more violent than Dorsky's cuts. While both films involve disconnected images, the sense of Kubelka as an auteur, and as an ego is much more present in this work than in Dorsky's. In *Variations* we have less the sense that Dorsky is controlling the film as auteur; rather, he is allowing the shots themselves to construct the film with his help as their consort but not their master. Dorsky is present in his absence of ego--another seeming contradiction. By not bending the different shots into a shape by sheer force of will, he is communing with the shots and finding out what they themselves are suggesting. For example, in a recent interview he described the method by which he ended *Variations*: there was a shot that could not be followed by any other shot, a shot of a tree. After trying different possibilities, Dorsky noticed that no matter which shot he tried, none would work after this one. He realized that this must be the last shot. Similarly, he began *Variations* with a shot that was impossible to place after another shot. The shot is of a man. This is perhaps why *Variations* is strangely artless at the same time as it is startlingly vivid. Cuts that seem to be without pomp and circumstance are revealed as moments of intense seeing. Here the aesthetic fragmentation as an expression of alienation does not exist, we have instead another kind of form emerging, one that affirms that it is a good thing to go on living in this world.

In traditional expository form, specific examples and details are subordinated to one central claim. Thus there is a hierarchy implied between an abstract statement and the material that supports it. In contrast to this, *Variations*' specific images are not subsumed by a main intellectual statement. For example, most shots in this film contain one subject which is not repeated. It could then be tempting to conceptualize a formal scheme that states that each shot must contain a different subject--the kinds of predictable patterns that Dorsky calls 'the conceptual coloring book' approach found in many structural films. However in *Variations* there are three consecutive, very similar shots containing virtually the same gesture of foam moving in from shallow water to a smooth sandy shore. Dorsky's film resists any simple intellectual scheme.

As in many other experimental works, loneliness is an important feeling in *Variations*. Indeed, the title *Triste* (1996), Dorsky's most recent previous work, may refer more directly to this mood. Nonetheless, if we look at a progression in Dorsky's cinema from *Pneuma* (a film whose images are non-images, merely mesmerizing emulsions at various degrees of magnification) and *Alaya* (an unbelievably riveting film in which sand is revealed in much the same way), and then *Triste* and *Variations* (where a variety of different images from the world reveal themselves to presence), we can see movement

from a more inward, private gaze to a more outward public one. All of these works convey loneliness in a sense, but the kind of loneliness in *Variations* seems different and more complicated. Once again, the Zen mind provides some context: in Zen loneliness refers to the "interpenetration of all things," the opposite of the Western idea of loneliness as isolation. And in *Variations*, somehow despite the rapidly changing subjects, which we are accustomed to creating alienation, there is an almost inexplicable sense of faith conveyed that all of these different parts represent the same whole. We begin to pick up visual patterns such as the direction of the wind across different shots, the re-emergence of common subjects such as insects, fabric textures, written language, water. As a result, the relationship between the individual shots and their connection to a wholeness in the film suggests both separation and universality, concepts most of us have trouble integrating.

Variations shows us glimpses of the world through an infinite eye. We see the forms of the world in their beautiful material immediacy: a cigarette on the floor, the brightness of white geese in the water, a shadowy chess board, a dog intently waiting for its owner with an expression of pure desire. But beyond the immediacy, the abstract poetic connections between shots suggests commonality of form--everything has a form--and in this sense all things are united. But we can and do still enjoy the pleasure of the visual differences, a pleasure that is in turn enhanced by the existence of similarity. Our act of seeing and our realization of a playful interchange between similarity and difference seems more vital to our viewing of *Variations* than the notion of either self-expression or personal projection. And yet, in contrast to this point, we still have a sense of Dorsky as a filmmaker; we can recognize Dorsky's work as distinct from others. In watching *Pneuma*, *Variations* and *Alaya* together we find that the internal rhythms are similar, regardless of what is on screen. Indeed, like many artists, Dorsky conveys a sense of his films working together as an overall emerging oeuvre.

There is wordlessness to *Variations*. The film is silent, yes, but, more importantly, it is not readily or completely translatable into verbal experience. Stan Brakhage is often cited for his argument that perception can be understood apart from cognition. He argues that this direct perception, which is not caught in the net of concepts, could lead to more meaningful experiences of the world or even of art. The notion is relevant to Dorsky's film: the essential nature of *Variations* is visual. In an era when the existence of 'essence' or something 'absolute' is usually met with suspicion (at best), Dorsky brings a good name back to universality.

Variations is an example of avant-garde cinema in its maturity. Most avant-garde cinema needs to defend itself--often quite aggressively--as marginal to mainstream cinema. Often we find a celebration of this marginality within the films. Using scratches, edge numbers, punch holes, and end flares, for example, is the earmark, the veritable membership card, of what is considered stylistically avant garde. We can still see these effects used in current art films as young filmmakers continue to defend their marginalization. Many of these films gleefully destroy works from the dominant cinema in irony-laden techniques that are often described as either nihilistic or nostalgic. In contrast, in *Variations* Dorsky conveys the feeling that he does not need to be 'reactive to parental forces,' or, in other

vocabulary, to be caught in an Oedipal struggle with Hollywood. Of course a film like Variations is itself marginal anyway. Just about any silent, 16mm, non-narrative film is marginal. However, Dorsky's film expresses no resentment about being so. It is marginal simply as one by-product of its freedom and originality. In this way his work is not avant-garde in the common sense. In Variations Dorsky shows other filmmakers a way for the avant-garde cinema--a relatively young artistic project, yet one that seems to have aged all-too-rapidly--to be viable in the next century. During a decade in which rebellion and sub-culture has been commodified and mass marketed to such a degree that so-called alternative culture is hegemonic, works in the non-hegemonic, experimental tradition must also change. If the avant garde is wrapped up in certain unchangeable, emblematic trappings, then there is probably no reason for it to continue. The main difference between Variations and most other avant-garde films is that one is not waiting for it to be over. The film is utterly absorbing from beginning to end.

Variations is a healthy film spiritually absent of neurosis, anxiety, cleverness, dogma, or competitiveness. Three years ago in an interview, Dorsky articulated his search for 'a revolutionary film language which is completely open, anarchistic, sort of a utopian montage, in that there is no axe to grind except the human heart of mystery.' (Powers 27). Indeed, Variations speaks this courageous language.

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NATHANIEL DORSKY ON...

by Michael Guillen

from: <http://theeveningclass.blogspot.com/2009/08/nathaniel-dorsky-on.html>

With the calendar for the San Francisco Cinematheque Fall program officially announced, I'm reminded of the great job Executive Director Jonathan Marlow has done in breathing life into the institution and how he has singlehandedly trained my focus towards experimental cinema. I'll get back from the Toronto International just in time to catch the San Francisco Cinematheque's season opener: Jose Antonio Sistiaga's rarely-screened *ere erera baleibu icik subua aruaren*. In the months following, I look forward to programs on Tom Chomont, Robert Beavers, Chick Strand, and the Kuchar Brothers. Anticipating same has likewise reminded me of my favorite event of San Francisco Cinematheque's last season: Nathaniel Dorsky speaking on his most recent films *Song & Solitude*, *Sarabande* and *Winter*.

On the Toxicity of Cinema

Film is such a wonderful way to directly relate with an audience. Its use as a vehicle for transmitting wisdom is so strong and so unused, and sort of deeply toxic as a whole. If you think of how toxic cinema is, then - like anything that has great potential for purity - it has an equal potential for poison. It's our responsibility to use it wisely.

On Editing

I try to make the films work. I'm not being facetious. I collect footage over a period of maybe half a year. I assume that - because I've collected it - that there's some kind of unifying factor. Then I just begin. I say, "This is where I'm beginning" and then I let the film echo out on its own. I let the film echo its own reality. On Winter, I edited for probably a month; but, that's not a fair way to [state] it because, while I'm shooting, I'm eliminating stuff I don't like. So in a way it's maybe a year process; but, then the actual editing might take a month to six weeks.

On Having Opinions About Films

You know how we're all socialized? Where you have to be most socialized is with film opinions. There's no way to lose a friend more easily. I'm serious. When someone takes something from a film and you don't have their experience, they wonder if you can be their friend. So normally if someone asks me if I've seen a film, I've learned to say, "I hear it's good." That's the safest thing to do because you never know. But then I thought, "If I write a book [Devotional Cinema], I can actually say what I really feel."

On Winter in San Francisco

I've shown Winter about nine times this Autumn and I always have to explain what a San Francisco winter is like. Here, winter has nothing to do with sleigh riding. It's a whole other thing. I thought, "Nobody's really made a film about our winter." It's a slow dissolve from Autumn into Spring. The first year that I saw the sycamore trees holding onto their brown leaves at the same time that the plum blossoms were coming out in the first week of February, I thought, "What is this mess?" It took me 20 years to like it.

On Not Knowing When A Film Will Work

In my apartment where I live in the Richmond there are two boys above me who are in the San Francisco ballet. I would see them on stage and, you know, everyone's envious of people in ballet; I am. I'd see them in those great outfits under those powerful spotlights. Then an hour later, I'd see them down by the garbage cans taking out their garbage. I asked one of them, "How does that feel to dance?" He said, "Well, frankly, when I dance well it feels great. When I haven't danced well, it feels terrible." It's the same kind of feeling making films. It's wonderful to share them with an audience when they're well-projected. It's the same thing with putting on a CD. When you put on a CD or a record and it's a good night, the music really works that night. It's the same thing with film. If you have a program, you never know which films will be magical that night.

On Shooting in B&W vs. Color

When I first started, the first few 16mm films I made when I was 17 or 18 or 19 were black and white. At 18, I made a film in B&W and got an honorable mention in the Kodak teenage movie contest and the generous present from Eastman Kodak was two rolls of 8mm Kodachrome. Can you believe it? But there are many films I make where there are black and white images in them. Winter has one black and white image. All the films you're seeing tonight were shot in Kodachrome, which no longer exists. I just finished my last roll of Kodachrome shooting for this next film I'm making. This is a very particular experience of seeing Kodachrome made through internegative and I got very fascinated - I know the film seems quite dark - with the darker end of Kodachrome. Every film has a scale. From the middle on down is where I felt the soul was in Kodachrome. I'm fascinated with this lower end of Kodachrome; the spirit of it. If I only had any kind of funding, I'd have a chance to make something that comes from a color negative, which would be a whole other palette. I'm always changing mediums. It's a response to a whole other area of the visual world. I'm looking forward to that. Kodachrome doesn't represent things well. You have to turn it into something. A color negative has greater representationality.

On Shooting Outdoors

Eighty percent of my films are shot within walking distance of my front door. I love freedom deeply and to me freedom is being able to walk out your front door, not get in an automobile, and just walk. It sounds so simple but it means a great deal to me. It's kind of like when you bring a dog to the beach and you unclip it and it goes wild. That's how I feel. I'm unclipped. I can just wander. The simplicity of freedom is wonderful.

On Developing the Skill to Translate Reality Onto Film

The skill you develop as a filmmaker is translated onto the screen. So how do you make the screen something as vital as the world that you see? Many many filmmakers in the mediocre realm take pictures of things that they see but their films are reductive of reality. So the thing is how can you take the screen and ignite it and have it have the same kind of original sense of what you're filming? As a filmmaker, you start to understand things that are translatable, especially about film stock. Kodachrome has a terrible regular blue sky and it has terrible whites and other things like that. So you move away from that towards what it can do. Your skill as a maker is that you begin to know what is translatable. Sometimes I see something and I approach it with my camera and I don't push the button because I realize I can't translate it.

On Shooting At the Twilight Hour

Even the most traditional Hollywood filmmakers, someone like John Ford for example, would shoot early in the morning and in the afternoon and would take three or four off during the middle of the day for obvious reasons, especially as he was a great outdoor photographer and shadows were important for him. It's not so much the time of day as the

kind of day. I have a very bad reaction to days with a high white sky. I don't enjoy it. I don't even like to go outside. I don't like to shoot when the sky is white.

On the Difference Between Painting, Photography and Filmmaking

A painter can re-examine the same thing 10 times and can even hang his paintings in the same room. Somehow it works. Somehow you have the freedom. Film doesn't quite work the same. Maybe I'm being overly defensive. I'm more inspired by painters than photographers. Still photography is almost more different from filmmaking than painting. Painting is closer to filmmaking than still photography.

On What Advice He Can Offer

Advice? Enjoy yourself! The great experimental filmmaker George Kuchar said to me once, "Look, if you're going to spend your own money to make your own films, you might as well have a great time." Honestly, what I find - being a stubborn kind of individualist - is that when people have the freedom to make anything they can make, when they have the funding, they make something so socialized. There seems to be a great fear in this day and age of touching your own originality. Maybe it's the obsession with schooling where everything is based on third or fourth generation instead of someone touching on their original sense of presence. I would encourage that: trust your original sense of presence.

On the Importance of Finishing Films

What I find is that any idea that I have doesn't help me. I'm not bright enough in a certain way to think out a film. Also, I don't like school. I'm not a school type person. The idea of thinking up a film and then filling it in is like going to school. Instead of getting a B+, I'll get all these Cs. It's like filling in a coloring book. I'd rather not. It doesn't help me to think. I try to, believe me. I'll go, "What would be a great idea for the next film? What would be a title?" I'm endlessly like this. It doesn't do any good. For the next film all I can do is begin. I used to try to think out, "Okay, what is this going to be? It's got to be different; everybody's sick of what I'm doing." But what I realized is that - every time you begin - it's like Heraclitus: you're not who you were. You're always beginning from a new place. Especially if you finish the film. You want advice? Finish what you do. It doesn't matter if it's not perfect. Every time you finish something, you go through a small rite of passage and you're really different, every time. Don't not finish something because it's not perfect. Finish it. I had a lot of trouble finishing films when I was young because I would keep changing them. There was one film that took me 10-12 years to finish.

On What Makes An Artist Who They Are

If you've seen my early films, you'd probably think I haven't evolved at all. It's kind of embarrassing. Isn't it odd how we all are who we are? You go to a museum and you say, "There's a Corot. There's a Cezanne." Why? Why is everyone who they are? It's such an odd thing.

On Making the Screen Become Alive

Because my films don't have characters, and because the screen isn't a stage and my films are not in the third person where people have problems that they resolve or not, the screen itself is the character. In a sense, my films are really for the audience. You're the center of the film. You've probably noticed that? The films are for you. They're about you. Therefore, you have to become fully present. I was taught very early that it's important that the whole screen itself become alive. The plasticity of the screen. The screen isn't just a dead window or a dead hole into a view. The screen itself can blossom. An alive screen is probably the most wonderful thing. Have you even seen the black and white films of Antonioni? Just look at those films!

On Projecting Footage During the Work Process

I project all the time. One thing I can't share with an audience - which is frustrating - is what it's like to see this stuff in its original Kodachrome projected in my home before I cut it down. I cannot make an editing decision on any of my films without projecting it on a screen.

On Silence and Sound in Film

The first three films I made when I was 20-21 were sound films and at the time (1963-64) being in the American avant-garde was a wonderful period of time. Avant-garde films were never shown in universities. They were sometimes shown in museums, though you'd probably have to go to a midnight show. There were several avant-garde filmmakers who were working without sound and I fell in love with it. At first I didn't like it. It was difficult. It was like having sugar in your coffee and then not having sugar. But then I grew to like it because there's something profound about using one sense. Using two senses is good for theatre. Obviously, I love sound films with characters - though silent films also have characters - but, it seems sound is best for character films where the screen is a stage. But my own take is that though there are some films within the avant-garde canon that are sound films and are some of my favorites- on a whole, sound doesn't work in avant-garde films. First of all, 16mm sound is terrible- seriously, the quality of it- and, I don't know, there's just something about the simplicity of the silence. It allows you to articulate. Everyone's making sound films so they don't need any more. I make my living as an editor so I work with sound films all the time and I've worked on some very nice sound films so I know how to work with sound.

On His Next Project

All I can say is that I had the privilege of teaching on the East Coast all Autumn, so I shot. I hadn't shot a film on the East Coast since my early twenties. I have a film now that may be one in two sections: the East Coast and the West Coast. It just happened because I shot in both places but the vibration is so different that I thought, "I don't want to mix them. It's so intriguing how different they are." It may not turn out that way but it's some

kind of film in two sections. I need a title. My friend Diane tells me she has a whole box of titles, which for a small fee.”

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