

Dec 1 Aug 71

Born: 1908, Strasbourg, France.

Education: 1912 moved to Berlin. Schooling Abolished. 1927.
 1927-28. Berlin Handelschule (economics & political science)

Present Position: Special Lecturer, University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus.

Background: During high school worked as assistant to Hans Richter, leading "avant-garde" film-maker, helping with shooting, editing. After matriculation, offered apprenticeship by Walter Ruttmann in experiments with sound pictures, produced for Tri-Ergon Company and German Broadcasting System.

1928. Offered regular job as sound editor and directorial assistant by the Tobis Corporation. Worked with them until 1932, first as assistant to Walter Ruttmann, then on over 30 features as editor, for such directors as Carl Froelich, Alexis Granowsky, Max Reichman, and Richard Oswald. From 1929 mainly for G.W. Pabst.

1933-38. With Pabst in France, as editor. While in France edited for such directors as W. Tourjansky, Pierre Chenal, Jean de Limur and Max Ophüls.

1938. Directed a "League of Nations" sponsored full-length theatrical documentary "World in Arms".

~~1939-42. Served in the French Army in Morocco.~~

After discharge emigrated to U.S.A. After a short period as editor for Panamovox pictures, drafted into the U.S. Army and attached to the motion picture unit of the Signal Corps, at Astoria, New York. Worked as dubbing editor for foreign versions of U.S. Army training films.

On loan to Office of War Information, working with Carson Keady and Burgess Meredith.

1945. After ~~U.S.~~ discharge, settled in New York working on theatrical shorts, documentaries, public relations pictures and syndicated TV shows; sometimes as director, mostly as editor or supervising editor. Most recent assignment was the battle montages for the Sergei Bondarshuk directed "Waterloo".

Since 1929 have lead seminars on sound editing and directorial techniques and have trained hundreds of young aspiring film-makers (personal assistants).

Publications: Short technical articles in early German Union publications. Segment in the 1955 Cinemages, "6 talks on G.W. Pabst"

The following is a short list of films with which I was connected, and their producers or directors.

u
3
6
5
7
11

In Germany and France:

Vormittagsspuk	Hans Richter
Alles Dreht Sich...	Hans Richter
Teenende Meilen	Walter Ruttmann
Melody of the World	Walter Ruttmann
Das Lied Vom Leben	Alexis Granowsky
Die Koffer des Herrn O.F.	Alexis Granowsky
Westfront 18	G.W. Pabst
Die Dreigroschenoper	G.W. Pabst
Kameradschaft	G.W. Pabst
Atlantide	G.W. Pabst
Le drame de Shanghai	G.W. Pabst
L'Affaire LaFarge	Pierre Chenal
Widows' Island	Maurice Elvey
De Mayerling a Sarajevo	Hax Ophüls
Le Monde en Armes	Jean Oser

In the United States

Salute to France	Gerson Kanin & Burgess Meredith
13 theatrical shorts in "The World today" series	20th Century Fox

7 theatrical shorts about Art & Painters	20th Century Fox
---	------------------

2 theatrical shorts about Marriage customs in Asia	United Artists
(All these shorts directed by myself)	

16 travel documentaries for Pan American Airways and the governments of the Bahamas and Jamaica.

Over 50 documentaries and public relations pictures sponsored by the Ford Motor Company, Monsanto Chemicals, N.A.S.A., etc. produced mostly by Larry Madison Productions.

Syndicated TV shows

"The Vaillant Years" (Churchill)	A.B.C.
"F.O.R."	A.B.C.
"The Harry Truman Series"	Screen Gems

Some award winners among these pictures:

"The Light In the Window" - First prize, Venice Festival Academy Award 1953, for best short.

"The American Cowboy"
"Out of the North"
"The Petrified River"
"As Tall as the Mountains"
"Aluminium" (Aisac)
"A Child Went Forth"

Oser Citarone
17-3-7-9
20-9

R/ta Sheikow
Devere,

File: Oser

Read by Dr. Petrine

H

156
Set, H.

Your excellencies, President Archer and distinguished guests, amongst us sits a man whom we have all learned to love, respect and admire. He is a man who has dedicated his whole life to the Fine Arts. Too late in life he has taken the decision of communicating his life's work and experiences to our youth. Nevertheless he has brought to this University, to the community of Regina and to our province a spirit and a tradition which he made his for over forty years in his chosen field of aesthetics. In 1908 the bells of the Cathedral of Strasbourg in France must have rung with joy to announce to the world the birth of Jean Oser.

Having spent his early life studying Economics and Political Science in Germany, Jean was offered his first appointment in the film industry in 1928 where he co-operated with such Directors as Walter Ruttmann, Carl Froelich, Alexis Granowsky, Max Reichman, Richard Oswald and G.W. Pabst.

With Pabst he went to France and there he worked as a Film Editor for such directors as W. Tourjansky, Pierre Chenal, Jean de Limur and Max Ophuls.

5

The League of Nations in 1938 in the hope of preventing an imminent world conflict appointed Jean to direct a full length documentary "World in Arms" and for those amongst us who have known Jean and who love him, what better person and more peaceful one could have been chosen for such a humane task. But as every able man in

2.

those days of war also Jean was drafted and served in North Africa with the French Army and in 1942 was sent to the United States where the United States Army drafted him within their own ranks to direct motion pictures for army training and information.

Since 1945 Jean's motion pictures activity, which are known to all of those who enjoy the art of film, was prolific and amongst them many received international recognition. Perhaps his best known film is the "Light in the Window" which won the first prize at the 1953 Venice Festival Academy Award.

But tonight my task is not to read the curriculum vitae of Jean Oser, my task is an extremely pleasant one and one that I consider a personal honour. Jean Oser has spent his past forty years of life in the advancement and in the preservation of the Fine Arts of Film as the purist of aesthetic expressions. For Jean film has become a way of life which has reached the highest pinnacle of intellectual and spiritual endeavour, for this he is a Fine Artist.

It is in recognition of his work as a Fine Artist in film that the Italian government has chosen to award to Jean tonight the Gold Medal of the Arts of Venice. This medal was originally coined to recognize those individuals who

3.

had acted to help preserve the artistic heritage of the City of Venice. It has recently developed and been extended also to individuals who have dedicated their lives to the preservation and to the advancement of the Arts.

Your excellency Vice Ambassador of the Italian Republic, your honor Dr. Germano, it is my distinct honour to introduce to you Jean Oser, Professor of the University of Regina.

Professor Oser it is our pleasure to present to
you in the name of the people of Italy this
Gold Medal of the Arts of Venice in recognition
of and in gratitude for your international
contribution to the Fine Arts of film.



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN REGINA CAMPUS

Department of Music

presents

Mr. J. Oser

Lecture on Film and Music

Film and Music - A necessary partnership

Friday November 5, 1971

7:30 p.m.

Recital Hall

Pusk,

Mr. Oser's lecture will cover the development of music in films from the very beginning of the medium. He will illustrate his discussion with early films and there will also be a showing of the well-known film "The Third Man". He has worked with well-known composers in developing music for films such as Jacques Ilbert.

The Jean Oser Film Workshops

Jean Oser was born in Strasbourg on the Rhine River in 1908. He was educated in Berlin where he began working with the legendary Dadaist film maker, Hans Richter, acting in such avant-garde classics as Ghosts Before Breakfast (1926). He worked as an apprentice sound editor with the Berlin firm, Tobis-Klangfilm in 1929. At that time he began a creative collaboration with the distinguished German cineast, G. W. Pabst and was editor of such landmark Pabst oeuvres as, The Threepenny Opera (1931), Comradeship (1932), and Don Quixote (1935). With the rise of Nazism, he exiled himself to Paris in 1933 and joined the French Foreign Legion at the outbreak of the war. Later, he worked for many years as a film maker in New York and in 1952, his documentary on the Dutch artist, Vermeer gained one of Hollywood's coveted Academy Awards. In 1970, he joined the Film Department at the University of Regina. He presently lectures on film studies at the University of Ottawa.

the films- (free admission)

THE THREEPENNY OPERA (1931)

June 10: Saskatoon, Public Library Auditorium, 7:30 PM

June 17: Regina, National Film Board Theatre, 7:00 PM

The Brecht/Weill up-dating of The Beggar's Opera was the smash hit of Berlin's musical theatre in 1928. The screen version, directed by Pabst and edited by Jean Oser was controversial from its outset. "There was a big fight with Brecht because he wanted to change many things." Upon its release, Brecht and Weill successfully launched a lawsuit against the production company. The film stars the great radical actor/musician Ernst Busch who sings the famous "Mack the Knife" theme song and Kurt Weill's wife, Lotte Lenya who later re-created her role of Jenny in the Broadway production of The Threepenny Opera in the 1950s.

COMRADESHIP (1932)

June 13: Saskatoon, Public Library Auditorium, 7:30 PM

June 17: Regina, National Film Board Theatre, 9:00 PM

Telling the true story of a coal mine disaster in Jean Oser's childhood home of the Alsace-Lorraine border region between France and Germany, this was Pabst's follow up to his Threepenny Opera success. It also featured Ernst Busch. Filmed on a lavish budget and critically acclaimed, it was not as financially successful as The Threepenny Opera. Due to political pressures, there were two versions of the film with two different endings.

WESTFRONT 1918 (1929)

June 14: Saskatoon, Public Library Auditorium, 7:30 PM

June 25: Regina, Museum of Natural History Auditorium, 1:00 PM (NATIONAL FILM DAY)

Pabst's moving and powerful anti-war statement was one of Germany's first "talking pictures". Jean Oser created all the sound effects for this film which were largely responsible for its dramatic impact.

JUNE 10 ~ 25. 1983

the workshops-

SASKATOON-

June 10, 11, 1:00 PM- 16 mm film editing
Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative Studio, 702 Avenue L North

June 13, 1:00 PM- Super 8 mm film editing
Saskatoon Photographers Gallery, 326 2nd Avenue South

June 14, 1:00 PM- TBA

REGINA-

June 19, 1:00 PM- Introduction to film editing
Saskatoon Filmpool Co-operative, 2108 Rae Street

June 20 - 24, all day- 16 mm film editing: individual consultation on works in progress
Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative, 2108 Rae Street

REGISTRATION-

\$10.00 - Filmpool and Photographers Gallery members
\$15.00 - non members

for further information and pre registration, contact:

Ian Reid - 242-0190 (Saskatoon)

Photographers Gallery - 244-8018 (Saskatoon)

Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative - 527-8818 (Regina)

NOTE-

Special thanks to Dr. Helmut Liede and Brigitte Kleer of the Goethe Institute Toronto and Mark Langer of the Carlton University Film Department for their co-operation and assistance in arranging the film screenings. There will be several "surprise" screenings during the workshop period. These will be announced as the films are confirmed.

CO-SPONSORS-

Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative
Goethe Institute Toronto
Saskatoon Public Library
Saskatoon Photographers Gallery
Canada Council
Saskatchewan Arts Board
National Film Board

1782

Doc

Final Report: The Jean Oser Film Workshops-

The Jean Oser Film Workshops took place between June 10 and 25, 1983 in Saskatoon and Regina, attracting film makers and cinophiles from across the province. The workshops were presented by the Saskatchewan Filmpool Co-operative and co-sponsored by the Goethe Institute Toronto, the Canada Council Film Section, the Saskatchewan Arts Board, the Saskatoon Public Library, the Saskatoon Photographers Gallery and the National Film Board.

JOS

Jean Oser is a film maker and educator with some fifty five years experience in the field. He began his career as a film editor in Germany in the late 1920s and was involved with several of the most important and significant films of that era. He lived in Saskatchewan for many years and taught film studies at the University of Regina. He was instrumental in the initial outreach which lead to the founding of the Filmpool in 1977. He is considered a father figure to the present generation of Saskatchewan film people.

The workshops had two main thrusts. There were five evenings and one afternoon of free public film screenings as part of the Filmpool's ongoing extension program. Running in co-ordination with the screenings, there were ten days of master editing workshops for film makers.

Many of the important films that Jean was involved with throughout the years were given public screenings. Some of the films: Ghosts Before Breakfast (1928) by Hans Richter, Westfront 1918 (1929), The Threepenny Opera (1930) and Comradeship (1931) directed by G.W. Pabst. These films highlight the great cinematic leap from silent to talking pictures and Jean Oser's historic role in this process. As well, they illustrate some of the key artistic movements and philosophies of the early part of the century, such as dadaism, surrealism, expressionism, humanism, epic theatre and so on. Some of the greatest creative energies of an era were involved in these films: Berthold Brecht, Kirt Weill, Lotte Lenya, Ernst Busch, Fritz Wagner to name but a few, not the least of which was Jean Oser. Working in the new medium of talking pictures, he had to essentially invent the techniques as he went along.

The screenings were very popular and successful, attracting a total audience of approximately 350 for three nights of viewing at the Saskatoon Public Library on June 10, 13 and 14 and two evenings at the National Film Board Theatre in Regina on June 17 and 18. In both Saskatoon and Regina, a post screening reception was hosted. Refreshments were served and everyone had the opportunity to meet in a convivial and informal atmosphere.

There were seventeen film makers registered for the editing workshops. In Saskatoon, there were three afternoons of study, June 10, 11 and 14 at our new editing facility, "Filmpool North". In attendance were veteran film people from the Saskatoon community as well as several enthusiastic neophytes. There was much stimulating exchange of experiences, ideas and theories. Jean generously brought along many titles from his own

film collection, some works which he had edited himself plus others. These films were played and played again as we began to grasp concepts of montage, movement, pacing, colour, juxtaposition. . .

On June 13, a special session on super 8 film making was held at the Saskatoon Photographers Gallery. Gallery members shared some of the work they have been doing and Jean presented a super 8 film produced by his students at the University of Ottawa.

The workshops were picked up again on June 19 and for the following five days at Filmpool headquarters in Regina. Here, the emphasis was on individual sessions and consultations with film makers working in the studio. The sessions began at noon each day and continued into the evening. Each session was of a two hour duration. Many works in progress were run through the Steenbeck with Jean offering positive criticism and enthusiastic advice. The variety and originality of the work was striking- comedy, drama, animation, documentary, personal and experimental. Jean was extremely impressed with the quality of work being done at the Filmpool and after fifteen days, I was impressed with Jean's unflinching energy.

Throughout the entire workshop period, there were many midnite screenings and surprise screenings of titles pulled from the Regina and Saskatoon Public Library Film Departments and the NFB film libraries.

To wrap up the workshops and to celebrate National Film Day, June 25, Hidden Cinema hosted a special screening of historic archival films introduced by Jean at the Auditorium of the Provincial Museum of Natural

History. Among the golden oldies unspooled, were works by pioneer cineasts Méliès, Lumière, Porter and Edison. This retrospective ended at the year 1926 with the screenings of Entr'acte (Intermission) by René Clair, a surreal, dream like romp through Paris of the roaring twenties and Du Musst Zur Kipho (You Must Go to the Film/Photo Exposition) by Guido Seeber, often considered the first commercial but, filled with all sorts of camera tricks, is much more than that.

SAX.
As a fitting climax to the workshops, a world premiere presentation- the specially composed piano score by University of Regina professor, Bill Levant for Richter's Vormittagsspuk (Ghosts Before Breakfast). The film, shot in Berlin back in 1926; the music recorded many years later in Darke Hall, Regina.

BEN.
Living halfway between the production centres of eastern and western Canada, the Saskatchewan film maker is constantly working under a feeling of extreme isolation. Adding this to the isolation experienced by all film makers alone in the editing studio during post production, we find ourselves in something of a double bind situation. This is why the visit from the wise, energetic, enthusiastic, out going Jean Oser was akin to the break of dawn after a long, dark night. His frank criticism and his insightful observations were able to relieve many creative and technical impasses. Jean's sharing of his vast knowledge and experience made us aware of the historic and international continuity of our present endeavours.

Through the public screenings and extensive media coverage which his visit generated, Jean was able to play an important public relations role. He never missed an opportunity to lobby on behalf of the Filmpool

and to hype our activities.

When one thinks of the arts in Saskatchewan, painting, sculpture and literature come quickly to mind. With continued support and backup, film, the synthesis of all the arts, will play no less a role in the very near future.

On behalf of the Filmpool, I would like to thank everyone who participated in and supported the Jean Oser workshops. I would especially like to thank a number of individuals who's participation was essential to the workshops' considerable success:

-Francoyse Picard, the "saint" of the co-operative film movement, who saw the need for the entire workshop program and is giving it 100% support through her offices at the Canada Council Film Section.

-Dr. Helmut Liede and Brigitte Kleer of the Goethe Institute Toronto. Through their excellent research and liason work, we were able to obtain a number of prestigious, rare and precious archival films directly from Germany.

-Mark Langer who so generously gave us access to the excellent film library at Carlton University.

-Francis Bergeles of the Saskatoon Public Library who's commitment and energy were responsible for the success of the Saskatoon workshops and screenings.

-Cindy Ives, Paul Marchand and their staff at the National Film Board who were, as usual co-operative and enthusiastic.

-Dan Thorburn and Doug Townsend who are always a pleasure to work with at the Photographers Gallery.

-Rosalie Bellafontaine and Eric Wood who, in spite of their numerous

other duties at the Filmpool, always had time to give help and advice.

Finally, let's hear it for all the film makers of Saskatchewan who struggle on with undaunted spirits, striving always for excellence!

Ian Reid

coordinator

19-10-83

As another year comes to a close, we as a membership must reflect on the successes and failures of the past year



1983

Jean Oser - Fifty Years of Film

Jean Oser is one of Canada's most distinguished film scholars. Born in Berlin in 1908, he began working in Germany's film industry during its "golden age", the 1920s and 30s. He played an active technical and creative role during the advent of the sound era. He was editor of such classic films as The Threepenny Opera, Comradeship, and Westfront 1918.

TH
SASX
With the rise of Nazism, he moved to France and later to New York where he continued his filmmaking activities. In 1952, his documentary on the Dutch painter Vermeer gained one of Hollywood's coveted Academy Awards. In 1970, he began teaching film studies at the University of Regina, where he inspired an entire generation of young Saskatchewan artists and filmmakers. He sat as a member of the Saskatchewan Arts Board for several years. He was instrumental in the mounting of the landmark Saskatchewan film Who Has Seen The Wind. He was also involved with Sask Media during its inception in 1976. He presently teaches film studies at the University of Ottawa.

Jean Oser has probably done more than any one person to create a film awareness in this province. His broad knowledge of the cinema and its relation to the other arts makes him a great living human resource to both novice and professional filmmaker alike. To him, film is neither industry nor commerce but art and culture. It is this approach which is needed to advance a sophisticated and innovative school of filmmaking in this country.

* SEE REVERSE

UNIV. of REGINA - FACULTY - OSER

Film pioneer to discuss work

Sheaf
64P Oct 22/76.

Jean Oser, a man associated with the film art and industry since its early days will show and discuss his films, GHOSTS BEFORE BREAKFAST and THE THREE PENNY OPERA, at the Saskatoon Public Library on the weekend of October 29th and 30th.

Jean, who began his film career as an editor in Germany in 1928 spent his first seven years in the industry working for the famous German director G. W. Pabst, editing such classics as KAMARADSCHAFT, THREE PENNY OPERA, DON QUIXOTE and GHOSTS BEFORE BREAKFAST with Paul Hindemith and Darius Mihaud. Before Hitler's Nazis took power, Jean left Germany and moved to New York. During World War II, he joined the United States Army as a director and editor.

After the war, and before he moved to Regina, Saskatchewan to teach, Oser worked on numerous documentary, promotional and public relations pictures. Most notable among these were the syndicated television shows THE VALIANT YEARS on Churchill, the Harry Truman series, and F.D.R. on Franklin Roosevelt. During this period, Jean directed a series of seven shorts for 20th Century Fox, one of which was THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW on the Dutch painter Jan Vermeer. In 1952 THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW took first prize at the Venice Film Festival, and in 1953, an Academy Award.

Jean Oser came to the University of Regina in 1970 to teach film but he did more than

teach—he started a movement. In the six short years that Jean has been in Saskatchewan his boundless energy and enthusiasm has been responsible for a tremendous upsurge of film awareness by various government departments, cultural groups and arts societies. Indeed, it was Jean's presence as a member of the Saskatchewan Arts Board which was instrumental in convincing the Board once and for all that film WAS in fact an ART!

In March 1975, Mr. Oser received the Venice Art Gold Medal for his outstanding contributions to international film.

He recently conducted the editing workshops associated with Alan King's WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND and is a consultant with the recently formed Sask. Media.

Saskatchewan is indeed fortunate to have a man of such stature in residence and we in Saskatoon are finally able to share his experience.

Screenings of GHOSTS BEFORE BREAKFAST, BALLET MECHANIQUE (a film by Leger), and the feature THE THREE PENNY OPERA, will take place at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, October 29th at the Saskatoon Public Library. On Saturday, from 10 a.m. on, Jean will share the experience of his life, work and associates in film. Both parts of this exciting weekend are free and open to all, however, the Saturday session will be limited in number, so register now. Anyone interested is asked to contact the Fine and Performing Arts Department of the Saskatoon Public Library, 652-7313.

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA