





there were about four drawings a second or less, and many scenes had no backgrounds.

But what was there was beautiful, every line drawn by Kelly. The scenes that were colored, and had full backgrounds were stunning. Kelly had a perfectly lovely color sense which he didn't get half enough chance to demonstrate in his newspaper work. The movement gave the whole a serene, even melancholy rhythm.

This well suits Kelly's plot. The swamp is filling with smog. The animals go to investigate, and find pigs burning trash in the dump. But the animals are to blame, for it is their trash overflowing the dump and filling the swamp. Kelly does a few pupdog gags to start, but most of the cartoon is in that same wryly contemplative mood as his last years on Pogo. Though it doesn't seem too effective as message, We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us was still my favorite piece of animation of last year.

There were other films on the program, of course. Eli Noyes did Sandman, in which little sand figures danced and swirled to the playing of Charlie Chin and other New York bluegrass musicians. Squiggle by Dan Bailey mixed scratch drawing with live action as a squiggle grows, assumes self-consciousness and eats the people who keep looking in on it. Rocky Raccoon by Charles Jepson and James Hoberson was a crude and lively version of the Lennon Standard. Everyman's Home is His Capsule was a series of transformations, hands turning into birds into camels, done by Thomas Spence. There was even a visualization of American Pie drawn and compiled from other film-makers' material by Fred Mogubgub.

Overall, the humorous material, based on clever ideas, were more striking and less boring than the serious, abstract films (most of which I haven't described.)

Later that same day, I saw Fantastic Planet (La Planete Sauvage). It is an animated science fiction movie, based on a novel by Stephan Wul, and made by a joint Czech-French team. (I told someone I didn't care for it much, and she told me, in shocked tone, "But it's Czech!" It is part of a certain worldview, now, that the Czech is incapable of making a bad movie or that the right-thinking viewer should be incapable of disliking a Czech movie.)

Giant blue people called Draags have brought to their planet tiny creatures called Homs as pets. The hero is one of these Homs who escapes captivity and joins a wild band. The wild band is considered a nuisance, is almost exterminated, but escapes. It joins other bands, the hero teaches everyone to use Draag technology and a war is mounted against the giants.

For relaxation the Draags meditate. They concentrate on a globe, and from their heads issue a small replica of themselves encased in a sphere. The sphere floats off into the sky while empty giant bodies lie before the globes. (I am reporting what we see on the screen.) I thought at first that this was a clever way of representing what meditation is. But the Homs fly to the neighboring planet, finding giant, headless statues. On the necks come to rest the giants' meditation spheres and alien spheres, and the giant statues begin to dance. When the Homs begin to blow up the statues, all the visible minds floating about find themselves disoriented and stranded. The Draag government decides that the Homs must be human after all (on the principle that a nuisance is an animal but an active danger is a human, at least until it stops being an active danger.)

The animation is rather limited and the drawing and movement is stiff and stilted, looking rather like Barbarella would if that strip were animated. The characterization is also minimal. The main purpose of the film seems to be that all creatures have equal rights, and they get those rights by causing harm to those in power. A lot of mileage is gotten out of the ways in which the giants treat men like animals, but little attention is paid to the giants as an alien society. Except for the









From the above complaint you have no doubt gathered that a film is being shot nearby and that people are milling about the scene like flies on the carcass of a dead horse. I don't know who they expected to see. One woman was muttering, "Gregory Peck, Gregory Peck." But when I finally got into Chock Full and lined up at the take-out counter, I saw that instead it was Robert Morse, Robert Morse. Or rather it was the short fellow who starred in How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. Perhaps I have the name wrong. Samuel F. B. Morse? No, he was a painter who invented something. I found that most of the people on the take-out line weren't there to take anything out but merely to take home grand memories of having seen said unprepossessing star. The management had finally to request that they refrain from licking the glass in their ecstasy, as the moisture would streak when dry. The last laugh rested with Gregory Peck, Gregory Peck, who was probably sleeping off a bender in Hollywood while enjoying free publicity amongst a large crowd who just gaped on, unable to see that it wasn't he. I thought it might be a lark to circulate through the onlookers, muttering, "Francis X. Bushman, Francis X. Bushman."

But not having had my morning coffee always curtails my sense of humor; so I elbowed my way home in a surly and disagreeable fashion and returned to the Wilson to sip my coffee-to-go in the silence of my room. It was then that I received your letter, which made me wish that I had bought more coffee. I thought that I had brought up a sister but after eighteen years must admit that all my time and effort has been lavished on a collector of old parentheses. There are forty-three of them in your letter, twenty-two left and twenty-one right. After your death, I, as your executor, your husband having years before tripped over an old discarded right parenthesis and cascaded down a long flight of steps to his doom, will place the following advertisement in the New York Times:

The estate of Suzanne Victoria Tompkins Abernathy will auction off the great actress's famed collection of mounted antique parentheses this coming Friday at the Wentworth Galleries on Madison Avenue, beginning at one-thirty in the afternoon. These parentheses include specimens from ancient Egypt and Mycenae, as well as several dug out of the ruins at Pompeii and smuggled into the U.S. under conditions which caused the Italian government to send a curt note to the State Department. (The objections were later withdrawn when it was learned that Mrs. Abernathy was herself part Italian. The parenthesis in which I frame this side-note, but the way, was purchased in a thrift shop on Eighth Avenue and has no value whatever.) Of the vintage specimens in this collection, special attention will be focused on the infamous Borgia Brackets -- with which, it is said, Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexandre VI, strangled an enemy of the family during a feast held in honor of His Holyness. Bidders are informed that only ready cash will be accepted, as the executor is particularly rapacious and bent on side-tracking as much of the proceeds as he possibly can. After all, a ninety-six-year-old man beset by creditors needs help.

Perhaps the right parenthesis over which your husband tripped was the one you left out of your last letter. That's food for thought, I'll warrant.

As to the points raised in the letter:

1. I am perfectly willing to believe that Robert McCallum can act. Christ fed the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, and the director surely lives who can goad McCallum to do the same. Excuse me: David McCallum, David McCallum. I shun films like The Greatest Story Ever Told, and so have not had a chance to see for myself. -- What role did Heud did he play? My mind conjures up vague images of a young mental patient: but they are vague, and exceedingly unmemorable.







