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PO Box 57, Drouin, Victoria, Australia.
Satura is available for trade or comment. Other circumstances must
be extraordinary. Weak-minded and unimaginative Australians may
send 6 5d. stamps for 5 issues. After about three issues I become
impatient, and you will receive my "Farewell to former patrons" form
letter. Kindly advice ignored. Circulation around 50//////////

LETTERS OF COMMENT- Lee Harding Comments On Satura 2.

What an awful lot of cock you file under the name of fanzine. I mean this SATURA thing. One's first reaction is "why bother reading the damn thing?" The second becomes even more pertinent - why bother publishing such bilge? Let's see: Page 1 ... 8 lines of editorial address and mumbleumble, followed by a space of fully one inch and another 12 lines of feeble excuses and verbal drivel. Then the inevitably uninspired interlineation followed by six more incomprehensible lines and a fancy Japanese quote for the intelligentsia (hi, Bob) ((I hope you didn't mind my correction of your spelling at this point)) Two more artful quotes..... and there we are on page 2. Erk!

And page three? So this is worth commenting on? Oh, and let us not forget the little explanatory paragraph at the bottom of the page.. and accompanying squiggle. Page 4 has a pitcher of some sort. Awfu;. Page 5 is excuses and some nattering about other people's fanzines. Page six says goodbye in almost as many words. And then of course there's that cunningly-planted quote designed to drag me into the whole filthy mess - and I refuse.

So you haven't received any comments on the first issue? Judging by what we have to hand I doubt if you'll receive any from this issue either, or the next. It remains a constant source of bewilderment that such a pretentious intellectual twit like yourself manages to turn out such uninteresting slop. In fact I am beginning to wonder if you are just a bloody big fake.

Dear Sir: this is my first letter to a fanzine and....

I mean, hang it all, it's a poor wretched fane who wails that nobody will write articles for him. The hell with THEM! Write 'em yourself... or be damned (an unpleasant vocation).

I have typed this letter on paper the colour of my disgust and indignation. Offended me? Sir, you have offended yourself!

Which reminds me, how are the petunias up your way?

Lee X.

I've always said you were not Cosmic-minded, Lee. But I did manage to get a loc out of you, didn't I? I thought I might do better with a short fanzine which took less effort to produce. I dislike hard work for zero return, which is what I've been getting with WCB in SAPS (Not Zero, but pretty close). The hell with you, sir. I have no time to write - except when I have to sit down in front of a stencil and do it. And even if I had this supposed time, just what would I

(continued last page)

THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH - MOSTLY ABOUT POETRY.

Haiku does not, like waka, aim at beauty. Like the music of Bach, it aims at significance, and some special kind of beauty is found hovering near. The real nature of each thing, and more so, of all things, is a poetical one. It is because Christ was a poet that men followed and still follow him, not Socrates. Socrates showed us our ignorance. Haiku shows us what we knew all the time, but did not know we knew; it shows us that we are poets insofar as we live at all. (R.H. Blyth)

Arise with poetry; stand with propriety; grow with music. (Confucius)

Strong wine, fat meat, peppery things, very sweet things, these have not real taste; real taste is plain and simple. Supernatural, extraordinary feats do not characterize a real man; a real man is quite ordinary in behaviour.

Poetry aims at the description in common language of beautiful scenery. The sublime is contained in the ordinary, the hardest in the easiest. What is self-conscious and ulterior is far from the truth; what is mindless is near. (Kôjisei)

Religion, poetry, have to do with the actual goings-on of the universe. False religion, which is nothing more than magic disguised, twists the past, present and future, builds them nearer to the heart's desire. False poetry does the same thing, though with less disastrous results. It also is a world of escape, a world of literature, but not of life.

The fact is, as Bernard Shaw pointed out once, that we cannot persuade ourselves to love the unlovely, the inimical, those who injure us, whether they be things or persons. Here Christianity and Buddhism both fail. But what we can do is to empty our minds of self-love by the realization of a fact, the fact that there is no self to love, no lover to love. No one is praising us, no one is blaming, no one killing, no one killed. It is only countless Buddhas all bowing to one another, men and creatures and things all praising God with one accord. (R.H. Blyth)

Words about words
are about words
but words
are about the rest of the world.

And even words about words about words
will not reach you
without that part of the world
which isn't words.

(Stefan Themerson)

The great man is one who has never lost the heart of a child. (Mencius)

LETTERS IN EXILE PART THREE BY 703

(previous installments appeared in the wild colonial boy)

At long last I managed to hold a ping-pong (it wasn't table tennis) bat in my hand, and to pamper myself in a game. One of the Profs. had just moved into his new house, and I was invited there for a nice night's entertainment. Of course there was a basement (known in these troubled times by the more popular term "fallout shelter"), or, as we colonials would say, "cellar", and, being of sound German stock with a concatenate desire for physical fitness, there was a bar ... and a ping-pong table.

Enter (with noise and energy and barely-concealed animal vitality) the son, the scion, of the family. "Hah!" (this in clenched Teutonic tones) "Hah! Now English pig I beat you, ya?! Forget the war ... now I win! Ya? Ya!" A bold leap to one end of the table, where he crouches - bouncing eagerly from time to time, and yelling. "Come, now ... we play. Ya? three over for serve ... eins zwei drei ... hah! I serve! Ya? (heh! heh!) ... Ready, feeble Australian?...." And then the 6-foot frame uncurls and unleashes a fury of smouldering energy. "Hah! I take the point! and again! Oooff! and again, ya? Fight, dog, fight!

Before you could say "Deutscheland uber alles" the score was 15-9 in his favour. So, naturally, I bridged this deficit and went on to win. And again. And again. Ho-hum! that will teach the Americans (pseudo or otherwise) to beat us at tennis (table or otherwise) ...ya?

All in all, though, I enjoyed the games: a formidable opponent, but not (need I, hah hah, say it?) as terrifyingly oppressive as you ... ah no ... that could never be.* Still, if I get enough practice with Wolf I may keep in such a reasonable shape as to still prevent you from beating me.

That disposes, more or less, with the trivial chit-chat, and leaves the rest of this letter free for the main business. Which, since this will be my last letter for this ('63) year, must naturally be a listing of the best films of the past 12 months. A rather strange list since I've seen films this year in two continents and four major cities ... a few will be passe in many parts of the world, a few not yet seen in Melbourne. But who really cares?

A word about "best". There can be no arguing with a list of "most enjoyable" films (which I will also give you) as such a list can only be, ultimately, defensible on personal choice and reason and taste. And, as we all know, de gustibus...etc. A word like "best" is more open to dispute, mainly because its definition must usually say that "best" implies a something, a quality, which is undefinable ... and

*oppressive yes - skilful no.

defies analysis. Nothing daunted, though, I'll bore you a while by trying to clarify what I mean by "best".

All films have some goal they set themselves (whether to make money, merely to entertain, to drive some point home ...) and consequently must be judged in terms of this goal and how well they have attained it. Common to all good films, though, must be a good technique: and here one needs only to examine other fields. No great author, or musician, or painter (to quote this truth again, and risk degrading it to a truism) did not have a good technique. They may not have had the greatest techniques, but they at least were very highly proficient in their fields. (Need I say that the converse is paralogical? Technique, alone, does not make a master).

Thus, a good film has good technique, a technique which should help it attain its self-imposed goals. What else? It must entertain that is, it must hold together, and hold together not only itself (cohere, be consistent, unified) but also the audience to itself. One must be interested and involved in the performance, whether superficially (as in a light comedy or a musical or a "rattlin' good yarn") or deeply, emotionally or cerebrally.

Technique and entertainment. And heart. That is, an essence which remains after the technique has been analysed and the origins of the "entertainment" have been discovered. That this essence must be present is completely obvious: for if it were not, then analyses could be so complete that any imbecile could apply the mechanical rules so formulated, and relating to composition, movement, editing, music, timing, etc., to produce works indistinguishable from the prototype. But, as we all know, a fake da Vinci, or Crivelli, or Tintoretto is (given publicity) picked up at once. (Fake Pollocks or Appels or Mortensons are another matter. But then, they are not Art, or even good paintings).

O.K. Technique, entertainment and heart. Now comes the successful attainment of the goals ... and the value of those goals. If a film is to amuse or titillate or provide escape or excitement, it must deliver what it promises or it cannot be a good film. This, of course, presupposes a sliding scale of values, an arbitrary standard to be set by the film itself, by its intentions. Intentions? Well, unfortunately here we have subjectivity popping up to confront us: the intentions of some films are hazy and ambiguous, and here the word "good" may take as many meanings as there are individuals. There are however valid and nonvalid intentions, those worthwhile and those worthless. This value judgment on the intentions is not as arbitrary and as subjective as it may sound, for I believe that (if one wants to express it this way) merely because we are human beings, because we all share the same kind of brain, because this organ (and indeed all our organs, barring mishap) is constructed for each of us from the same plan, because of this similarity in the seat of reason and thought, there will be some "natural" modes of behaviour, certain "right" moralities, "valid" standards for homo sapiens.

But the human animal is such a fine instrument and his "humanity" is so delicately balanced that almost any slight perturbation of his psyche will serve to distort these natural functions and to create a multiplicity of new, false, ones. (Perhaps I may formulate a pseudo-scientific rule? The energy required to unbalance a person's interior state varies directly as their present imbalance. That is, it is easy to distort a child's sense of values and to twist its mind, but it becomes increasingly difficult the more debased the creature becomes. A madman must spend vast quantities of energy to retain his delusions, while the "average" person (the man in the street) typifies the most common compromise between imbalance and the energy needed to retain that imbalance. Naturally, as more and more energy impinges on him (TV, films, THE BOMB etc), the "normal" man becomes more and more "insane" from the point of view of the "true" human being. Society is now in the Kali Yuga and degeneracy becomes the norm. The unstable equilibrium of the "natural" man can, of course, be converted into the most stable position of all, a conversion which depends on the intelligence of the person ("intelligence" from "intellect" in the sense of Meister Eckhart, the Sufis, Aquinas, etc) - as witness, say, Buddha, Christ, Lao Tzu, Plato, Plotinus and so on). But this is too much of a digression. Back to films.

A good film then has technique, entertainment, heart and a valid set of values. Films which embody these virtues to a greater extent are the "better" films. And now for the 1963 list. Firstly the "best", then the "most entertaining" (ie. enjoyable without being pretensions to a higher standard).

1. Undoubtedly by far and away the best was LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD. In fact the only really outstanding film I saw this year.

2. LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

3. BILLY BUDD
TOM JONES

4. JULES ET JIM

5. THE MIRACLE WORKER

6. HOW THE WEST WAS WON

And that's all.... none of the rest (save revivals) were worth considering for the list ... maybe WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS and REACH FOR GLORY. Films I'd seen before but which otherwise would have made the list were

1. THE UNFORGIVEN (the best Western ever made)

2. BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

3. THE DAMNED

4. WEST SIDE STORY

5. NORTH BY NORTHWEST - the best fusion of sight and sound in any film. I refer especially to the incredible integration of Bernard Henman's score and Ernest Lehman's script. (MOVIE can quote me, should they want to).

Now for the most entertaining films.

1. HOW THE WEST WAS WON
LAWRENCE OF ARABIA

2. DR. NO

3. SUSAN SLADE

4. THE VIPS

5. MCLINTOCK

Worst film of the year (or almost any year) : CLEOPATRA*

Silliest film of the year. KINGS OF THE SUN

Most misleading title: SODOM AND GOMORRAH

Most disappointing (but good tries): IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD
LORD OF THE FLIES

I haven't reviewed some of the films mentioned, so I'll do so now
(are you still reading this drivel?)

IT'S A MAD MAD MAD MAD WORLD: Well, I don't like slapstick, or car chases, or people screaming at each other, but even so I thought the film funnier than any US effort since AUNTIE MAME. It was just a pity that MAD⁴ WORLD had to run for 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours. By so doing the jokes were spread out even thinner than in PSYCHO (although if you found that film funny, then perhaps you'd be amused by the sight of Sid Caesar shrieking in agony - for all of, it seems, 5 minutes - while 1,000,000,000,000 volts of electricity convert him into a human torch). Besides, the whole film is built on greed, and 195 minutes of watching people claw, and scratch, and attempt arson, murder, and fraud becomes a little bit wearying. But this, of course, is my fault for having ideals and in believing that people are basically "good" and may even be improved. The woman next to me (typical, moronic, overdressed, middle-class, uncultured, loud, bigoted - in short, the average female (or male for that matter)) had

no such compunctions. "It just goes to show", she said, in grating American (almost as bad as nasal Australian) to her equally "average" friend, "that money is the root of all evil". Thus having shown her acceptance of greed and viciousness and treachery as attributes of the everyday world, she took another sticky caramel and settled back, waiting for intermission to end and for the film to plunge her back into a world of amusing mayhem. Well, she typifies the vast majority of the populace so that it's no wonder the film is such a success. A word of warning: it is not Cinerama but Super Panavision 70 - which is at least 30% smaller than Cinerama. Don't be fooled by the ads.

LORD OF THE FLIES. This is one of those films with no heart. Every last motion and camera angle and expression has been cerebrally calculated for maximum effect. It appears sincere, though, and it is not Brook's fault if the film remains merely a cold collection of tableaux and organized motions, a film which has a message and which somewhat insultingly spells it out in images of one symbol. In short it is a triumph of matter over misguided mind.

TOM JONES. I really can't describe this because it is so visual. It has more "whores", "bitches", "bastards" and lines like "she's your motherin' whore" and "If it's the Sophie Western I know, the whole regiment had her: and Bill King, he had her and then he had her aunt". There's more, much, much more bosom than in CLEOPATRA. All very funny, in very good taste (believe it or not). There's a deer hunt which is more exciting (and far more sickening and bloody) than BEN HUR. The colour is superb. And even incest is funny. See it.

KINGS OF THE SUN. Pooh! Yul Brynner, George Chakiris and Shirley Anne Field in a tired epic on the Toltecs - actually it fast devolves into just another Toltec and Indian film. A great pity, since the Mayans and Toltecs (and Aztecs) could have made a very fine movie fable. Not this time. Example: George C. has fled his land taking (apparently) the last of the Toltecs with him, and has daringly sailed from somewhere near Chichen Itza northward to find the land of the Ancient legends (Florida). Many agonizing miles of open water later, the promised land is spied and the boats painfully make their way toward the shore. Out upon the beach the remnants of the people collapse, a pitiful bunch of sunburned emaciated skeletons. The High Priest (Richard Basehart) turns to George. "Come, my son there's a lot to be done." Ugh!

UNDER THE YUM YUM TREE is mildly amusing, with some borderline jokes such as: Jack Lemmon complaining about his effect on women, "they use me as a tonic, refreshing without filling."

write? Nice little science fiction stories for Ted Carnell? Some people do, you know. Some of them are better than others of course, but maybe that's a case of the pot calling the kettle black. But let us keep this clean. You say that I have offended myself with that previous issue. I say to you that if I were to sit down at a typewriter and force myself to churn out a cruddy piece of fiction (supposing this to be possible) I should offend myself ten times over. To be bound to any task is worthless - it is only the voluntary actions which have any worth. From your own experience you should know that you cannot do this - just sit down and write. In addition to this you know very well that I'm under some strain at the moment, and also that real soon now I'll be publishing an interesting copy of this journal. By golly, sir, I've a mind to come up and give you a jolly old poke on the beazer.

And how are the cucumbers up your way, o florid one?

(PS, agent 703 wants a photo of the bearded Harding; what do I tell him?)

This issue is published in celebration of Insult Your Friends and Live Week.

NURSERY RHYME

Humpty-dumpty sat on the wall,
Humpty-dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't care less.

A CONCEALED SWIFTIE "I believe in that little French cartoon character who likes roast beef," said Tom ringingly.

AND NOW I shall go and see LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD, which has kindly consented to come to this fair town. Watch for an upsetting issue. Fanzines seem to be published already in the MARIENBAD fashion (pages upside down, repeated, unreadable) so I won't be able to give a special issue.

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SATURA

from

John Foyster

PO Box 57

Drouin

Victoria

Australia



ED Meskys
% Nutcalf

Box 336

Berkeley

California 94701

USA