

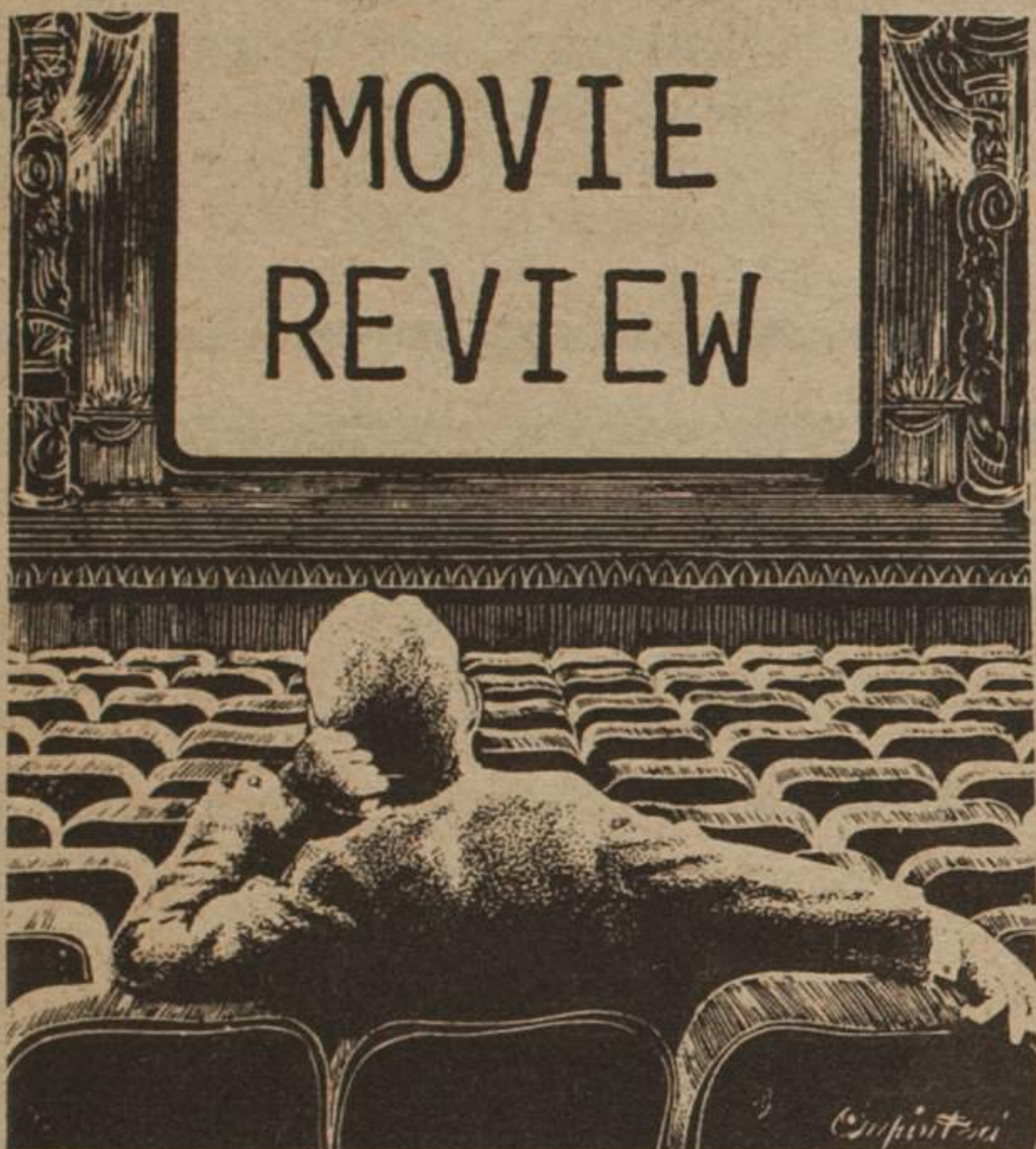
# Bo Picks Favorite February Flicks

by Bo Smith

Editor's note:

Bo Smith, author of this movie review has been instrumental in the selection of films for SUA's film series.

First, about my taste: I'm partial toward films that can be called "independent" or "experimental." Independent meaning films that are not backed by big corporate bucks out to expand producers' capital supplies, and experimental meaning films that use film form innovatively, especially to the extent that the audience is made more responsible for taking an active role, often by use of devices that intentionally expose the illusionistic nature of films. Films that do little more than turn a play into a film, i.e. theatrical films, and films, either fictional or documentary, that require the audience to passively consume a story or a "correct" line of reasoning, rarely work for me.



With these biases stated, here are some suggestions for the month of February. First, in the area of documentary film, on Feb. 7, Panama: *The Fifth Frontier*, and on the following Tuesday, Feb. 14, three films on women in prison: *We're Alive*, *Time Has No Sympathy*, and *Like a Rose*. Both of these Tuesday programs are scheduled for 7:30 in the Forum Room of the Union and will be followed by discussions. Three other documentary films that also deserve note are *Portrait of Jason*, a film in which a Black, homosexual, entertainer/prostitute tells his story, on Thursday, Feb. 9; *Gay USA*, on Sunday, Feb. 19; and *Emile* (Rush for Judgement, Weather Underground, Year of the Pig, Point of Order) de Antonio's film on Eugene McCarthy's presidential candidacy in '68, *America is Hard To See*, on Tuesday, February 21. All three are at 7:30. The first two are in the Ballroom, while the latter is in the Forum Room.

In the area of avant-garde film, I most strongly recommend catching filmmaker Chick Strand on Friday, Feb. 24. Ms. Strand, a Mexican-American who has been a leading force in the West Coast Independent Film Movement for over 15 years, will be showing all her films and will also be present to answer questions. The time,

8:00; the place, the Forum Room; and I suggest getting there early 'cuz it's FREE.

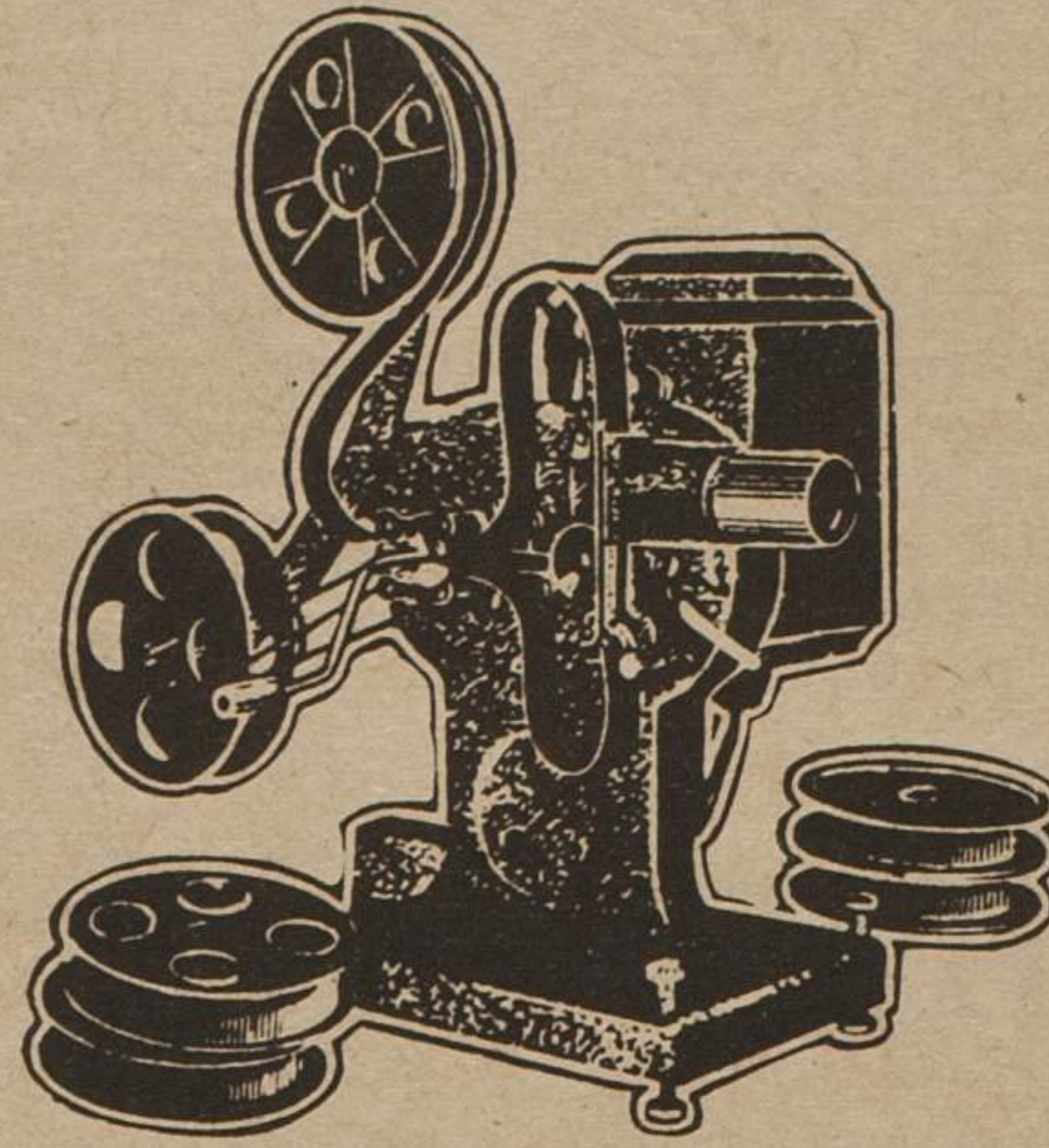
Most of Chick Strand's films are anthropological in nature and chiefly focus on Mexican life situations. However, as a warning, don't expect tv documentaries. These films are highly personal, stylistically innovative, and are often labelled "lyrical." If that doesn't say anything to you (I'm not sure what it says to me), just go with an open perspective expecting to see something different, something more than another slick and hollow piece of corporate produced, mass culture entertainment.

A similar open mind set is important for all of the films shown Thursday nights, the night that's set aside for films that warrant both the "independent" and "experimental" tags. These are films that aren't peddled by commercial theatres out to turn a profit. Instead, they are most often shown by non-profit operations that often receive outside support, like art museums and university film programs (KU's doesn't), and therefore unfortunately don't often reach the mainflow of working people. But that doesn't mean they're not good, or not worth your time. In fact, to me it suggests the opposite.

On February's four Thursdays the following films will be shown: Yvonne Rainer's *Lives of Performers* on Feb. 16; 6 films by the grand ol' wise and witty poet of San Francisco, James Broughton (*The Bed*) on Feb. 23; and, as has already been mentioned, *Portrait of Jason*, by Shirley Clark, a leading figure in independent film since the '50's, on the 9th. I exhort you to try some of these films out.

*La Salamandre*, by Alain Tanner (Jonah Who will Be 25...) As a general rule the Swiss seem to make buoyant films that leave you floating for hours after you've left your seat. In part this may be due to the strong bond that develops between you and the characters. In any case, they're highly enjoyable and have a less reactionary political approach than their U.S. counterparts.

Also in the way of narrative film, on the weekend of the 10th and 11th, 2 films, *Stroszek* (a film that takes Bruno S - Kaspar Hauser - to America), and *Chinese Roulette*, by the whiz kid German filmmakers Werner Herzog (*Aguirre*) and Rainer Werner Fassbinder (*Merchandise of Love*), will be shown in Woodruff.



Also in the area of experimental films, i.e., your basic, made-up-story-movie, I'm most looking forward to *Terre em Transe*, by leading Brazilian filmmaker, Glauber Rocha, and the Swiss film

Actually the entire semester's schedule is pretty amazing. The SUA Office at the Union has calendar schedules and notes of all films. My primary advice is to check out those films with the names that aren't so familiar, those that haven't got the big dollars pushing them at you from every angle. For remember, in this land today, widespread familiarity isn't the best indication of quality. And secondly, get into being more conscious of what it is you're actively supporting when you step inside a movie theater.

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