

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Antonio Gaudí</b>
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Source	<i>Village Voice</i>
Date	1986 Mar 11
Type	review
Language	English English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Antonio Gaudí, Teshigahara, Hiroshi, 1984

The Film Forum seems to be staging its own homage to Catalonia—or at least to Catalan artists. With *The Mystery of Picasso* currently haunting the Film Forum 2, Hiroshi Teshigahara's no less enigmatic *Antonio Gaudí* opens today next door. A tribute to the visionary architect whose apartment buildings, parks, and unfinished cathedral grace Barcelona, *Gaudí* is virtually wordless. One interview aside, such text as exists is superimposed in titles—the soundtrack is the province of music alternately trippy or cloying.

A master of boldly asymmetrical organic forms that suggest everything from

sand dunes and grottoes to Moorish palaces and Carvel stands, Gaudí was the great Other of modern architecture—the controlled extravagance of his conical, hivelike towers or the riotous details of his undulating interiors are about as far from less-is-more as you can get. Gaudí is often associated with art nouveau, but his deliquescing forms equally suggest those of that other Catalan genius Joan Miró, while his flamboyant use of tile or relief work offers surfaces so fantastically busy they might be termed lysergic reptilian gothic.

No stranger to texture himself, Teshigahara is best known as the director of the 1963 *Woman in the Dunes*. Retiring from filmmaking in the early '70s, he eventually became headmaster of an academy devoted to traditional flower arrangement. If the bouquet he tosses Gaudí seems a bit denatured, at least Teshigahara realizes that the architect seems far less oddball in the context of his hometown—a city filled with sinuous turrets, patterned sidewalks, and ornate grillework. (There's also a brief tour of a Pyrenees village filled with rounded, eccentric stone houses.) *Antonio Gaudí* is not particularly distinguished as a film, but it's a great promo for Barcelona.

By J. Hoberman

**NOMADS.** Directed and written by John McTiernan. Produced by George Pappas and Cassian Elwes. Released by Atlantic Releasing Corporation. Opening March 7.

**ANTONIO GAUDÍ.** Produced, directed, and edited by Hiroshi Teshigahara. At the Film Forum, through March 18.

**CONTACT ZONES; THREE ROOMS; BOGUSLAW SCHAEFFER.** Three films by Malgorzata Potocka. Produced by Film Polski. At the Millennium, March 7.