

## Document Citation

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PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE  
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FOUR FILMS DIRECTED BY (WERNER HERZOG)

1. "Precautions Against Fanatics" (11 minutes)

- was directed by Herzog in 1969. This short is an elaborate on-camera practical joke involving German celebrities and a one-armed, self-appointed protector of race horses. It is a wry, precarious and highly comic work.

2. "Last Words" (12 minutes)

- are the last words of a man who refuses to speak, a Cretan hermit forcibly brought back to society: A landmark film in Herzog's development of new narrative forms.

3. "La Soufriere" (30 minutes)

"In August 1976, on the island of Guadeloupe, the volcano La Soufriere stirred and bellowed. Tremors and poison gas slid downhill to the harbor town and the population fled. A congregation of dogs and three men remained: but three others came to film them - Werner Herzog and his cameramen... Herzog's venture to the island was impulsive and dedicated; his dispassionate camera never disguises his romantic ecstasy with extremes...but La Soufriere subsided; there was not the overwhelming explosion that seismologists predicted and Herzog surely yearned for...the poet withdraws without his poem, but the movie is a record of an ardent journey, as revealing of Herzog as "Aguirre" or "Kaspar Hauser".  
-- David Thomson, 'The Real Paper'

4. "Heart of Glass" (95 minutes)

"Herzog's source of inspiration is the German Expressionist films of the twenties - movies, like F.W. Murnau's "Nosferatu" (Herzog just finished shooting a new version of "Nosferatu"), and Fritz Lang's Die Nibelungen, that spin out tales from legend and myth through eccentric, extravagant images...

*notes from Goethe Inst.*

"Heart of Glass" (continued)

"In a small German town in the early 1800's the foreman of a glass factory dies, and with him the formula for making a special ruby glass on which the town's prosperity is based. The factory's young owner becomes obsessed with rediscovering the formula. He ransacks the foreman's home, opens his grave, draws a virgin's blood (thought to be an essential ingredient) and finally summons a shepherd reputed to be prescient. But the shepherd can only foretell what is in fact taking place: the townspeople, as a single malignant organism, are going mad with hopelessness and anger.

"Herzog hypnotized many of the film's actors, to give their characters the sense of a trancelike monomania; and, for me at least "Heart of Glass" has a mesmerizing beauty. The ruby color so desperately sought dominates the film. You can see it in the burgher's robe, and even in his fiery bloodshot eyes. Only in the spectacular opening and closing sequences, with the shepherd alone with his herd on a mountaintop, and in a story he narrates about an expeditionary force sailing out into the unknown sea, does Herzog propose a tonal and moral option to the town's collective psychosis. For 95 minutes at least "Heart of Glass" made Cannes the answer to all your movie questions".  
-- Richard Corliss 'New Times'