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A Idade Da Terra**(The Age of the Earth)****(BRAZILIAN-COLOR)**Variety
9-17-80

Venice, Sept. 9.

Embrafilme, Glauber Rocha Comunicacoes Artisticas release and production. Features entire cast. Written and directed by Glauber Rocha. Camera (Color). Roberto Pires: editor. Carlos Cox, Raul Soares, Ricardo Miranda: music. Rogerio Duarte. Reviewed at Venice Film Fest. Sept. 1, '80. Running time. 158 MINS.

With: Mauricio Do Valle, Jeca Valadao, Norma Benguel: Tarcisio Meira, Antonio D'El Rey, Danuza Leao, Carlos Petrovich.

Glauber Rocha was the kingpin in the unusual Cinema Novo movement in Brazil in the late '60s and early '70s that made an impact at festivals with its romantic, allegorical, poetic fusion of political and social themes.

The movement died out some years ago and Rocha went back after several years of exile and making films abroad. Now he surfaces with a loud, didactic, surface mixture of his old themes which now seem repetitious and overdone rather than making the impact of yore.

Rocha still sometimes hits an unusual image and a frenetic interpretation of revolutionary zeal lost in social and political changes. It starts with exotically dressed Indians writhing in sexual freedom and song and then cuts to the Mardi Gras which may reflect the early tribal days of the country.

Then a political demagogue, his rival, exotic women representing eternal truths alternate in this grab-bag of visual ideas with one long explanation of the past Brazilian political changes by an historian in the exotic, modernistic capital of Brasilia which is a leitmotif in the film.

The excitement of his films on romantic bandits, "Antonio Das Mortes," "Black God and White Devil," or his dynamic political poem "Land in Trance," are just echoes in this overlong film which may have been worth fest outing on Rocha's past brilliance but not having the coherence for much theatrical interest outside Latino climes.

Rocha's visual inventiveness is there at times, though lost in this massive ferment of images, music and folk characters mingling in this overripe mosaic look at the past, present and future of this bustling country which lately has eased its repressive governmental tactics.

Film raised pros and cons but was worth festival outing on its sheer visual bravado and perhaps heralding the last gasp of that old cinema novo movement. Now it remains to be seen if Rocha can curb and refine his robust directorial flair to more modern and accessible themes or at least clarify his historical fragmented style. —Mosk.