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RABBITS' MOON (LA LUNE DES LAPINS), 1950.

Conceived, directed and edited by Kenneth Anger.
Setting and costumes designed by Kenneth Anger.
Photographed by Tourjansky.
Cast: Jean Soubeyran (Pierrot), Claude Revenant (Harlequin),
Nadine Valence (Columbine).

15 minutes. Color. 16mm. Rental fee - \$20.

In 1950 Kenneth Anger attempted suicide in Paris. RABBITS' MOON is a transposed, highly poeticized transposition of that incident. It was shot in the studio belonging to director Jean-Pierre Melville which had been lent to Anger. After a few days of shooting, Melville unexpectedly reclaimed his studio, although the film was not completed. MOON remained a "lost" film for 20 years, until Anger finally edited it in 1970, then adding a musical score.

This disturbing fable takes place in an extraordinary tinselly forest, somewhat similar in texture to the fairy woodland in the Max Reinhardt-William Dieterle A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Warner Brothers 1935) in which Anger appeared as a child actor.

All of Anger's films are separate movements in one vast film, a large symphony, in which all kinds of rituals recur--as here with the stultifying return of zoom after zoom into the blinding full moon which looks down on the progress of Pierrot from romantic illusion to destruction. If Pierrot is Anger himself, then Pierrot's new toy, the Magick Lantern, is obviously the cinema. RABBITS' MOON is exquisitely beautiful claustrophobic psychodrama.

--Elliott Stein