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Sunday, November 3

11:00 A.M.

CHRONICLE OF ANNA MAGDALENA BACH

(Chronik der Anna Magdalena Bach)

Germany

SF Fest '68

Source and Production: Franz Seitz Film (Munich); Gian Vittorio Baldi. **Direction:** Jean-Marie Straub. **Photography:** Ugo Piccone, Saverio Diamanti, Giovanni Canfarelli. **Script:** Jean-Marie Straub, Daniele Huillet. **Music:** Johann Sebastian Bach. **Leading Players:** Gustav Leonhardt, Christiane Lang.



A gentle, reflective film, almost motionless in terms of cinematic technique, describing through performance, the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. With occasional commentary spoken by Anna Magdalena (his second wife), we see the musicians (and a rather thin Herr Bach, bewigged and absorbed) arrive in the actual locations where the particular musical work was originally played. Then, we listen to the music. If this is not enough, then one must point out that it is the **music** of Bach that chiefly concerns the film maker here—not the character of the composer or his wife. Straub is one of Europe's most controversial directors, and one must admire his courage in what has been called "minimal" cinema—where an intellectual ideal totally controls the spectator's emotional reaction. His first film, **Nicht Versohnt**, baffled audiences who were unfamiliar with the ideals of postwar German fascism, or the inertia of the characters' guilts. In this second feature, it is possible for those who love Bach's music to immerse themselves in its glories without distraction, and for a time, feel the heart of his lyricism, as those original audiences must have done, centuries ago.

THE FESTIVAL AND THE SERGEANT



By Kenneth Hyman

**Warner Bros-Seven Arts Vice President
In charge of World Wide Productions**

I am pleased and proud that "The Sergeant" was selected by the San Francisco International Film Festival to open the program for this annual gathering of people who love motion pictures.

Film Festivals, wherever held in the world, have created a new climate in which films, that were once labeled "art films," can be accepted and made available to a new and vigorous movie going audience.

The term "art film" was born during the time when European producers, seeking to exhibit pictures in the United States that might run afoul of censorship, brought their pictures through our customs as art subjects. They were booked into small theatres and shown to small, selected audiences. But several things have changed. The censorship law has virtually ended. And the small, selected audiences have grown into a very large audience that is ready to accept a picture on its own terms.

It is true, however, that the commercial picture built the film industry, built the movie-going audience. The market for films became so vast that European producers found that they could introduce their experimental and offbeat films to audiences that were ready for films other than westerns and melodramas. And suddenly the films, formerly regarded as "art films" with a limited box office appeal, were in reality very much in demand in small communities as well as the larger cities.

This is a healthy situation for all picture production. It liberates our creator not only in form but in content. It opens up story themes that were once considered "taboo." And it is attracting audiences, who had not found what they wanted on the screen in the past, to once again "go to the movies." "The Sergeant" is a picture that could not have been made before. But, in this new and vibrant climate, with Rod Steiger, winner of this year's Academy Award for the best actor, we feel that "The Sergeant" will be emotionally stirring to people at all levels.

If we are now on the threshold of an era where audiences are eager to accept a screen subject on its artistic merit, then we can all be proud that we are a part of this time when the words "art" and "commercial" are the same thing.