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Brazil

by Jaime Rodrigues

DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS, Brazilian cinema has become an industry, an organised medium of artistic expression. Almost every new film has reflected Brazilian life closely and truthfully. They are important social documents as well as culturally important films. Their style is direct, their dialogue terse, idiomatic and forceful, their emotional values strongly brought out, and their continuity, unless deliberately slowed down for some dramatic effect, is dynamic and thrustful.

Thanks to *Cinema Novo*, the Brazilian cinema has become more realistic and more conscious of social problems. Indifference has been replaced by a keen awareness that society is responsible for social, cultural, economical, and political underdevelopment, that it should do something about the situation. Among the directors who have ensured the success of *Cinema Novo*, Glauber Rocha (born 1938) is undoubtedly the most significant. His films are honest, intelligent, perceptive, and have a deep sense of current Brazilian life.

In 1968 the Brazilian cinema produced some 54 feature films, 11 of which were in colour. There are 3,234 cinemas in the country, which were visited by over 295 million spectators last year. Some 562 foreign films were imported into Brazil during 1968.

The Instituto Nacional do Cinema has been an important force in the revitalisation of Brazilian films too. One of its most successful and most widely praised measures was the introduction of the "standard ticket," which not only in-

creased the income of producers, exhibitors, and distributors, but also enlarged the collection of taxes because box-offices were under more efficient supervision. Parallel to this, and with the object of encouraging attendances at Brazilian films, a popular competition was started whereby prizes were distributed to all those who have kept a part of the ticket. The Instituto has also launched the INC Prize, granted annually to the best Brazilian films, and to technicians and players. A further important element in the reform has been the bonus of 10% on net income given to all domestic films, with another 15% on top being given to quality pictures, these awards being decided by a fifteen man jury. INC also promoted the Rio de Janeiro festival in 1969 with the help of the government of the state of Guanabara. The Instituto publishes *Filme Cultura*, and *Guia de Filmes*, a magazine that notes all films exhibited in Brazil, with credits, synopsis, and short review.

ANTONIO DAS MORTES

Script and Direction: Glauber Rocha. Photography (Eastmancolor): Alfonso Beato. Editing: Eduardo Escorel. Music: Marlos Nobre. Art Direction: Glauber Rocha. Players: Mauricio do Valle, Odete Lara, Othon Bastos, Hugo Carvana, Jofre Soares, Rosa Maria Penna. For Claude-Antoine/MAPA/Glauber Rocha.

GLAUBER ROCHA here returns to the themes of his earlier film *The Black God and the White Devil*, and fuses them into

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a powerful epic that can be considered as folklore, opera, and also political allegory. Antonio das Mortes is a mythical figure, a lonely hero in a dark coat and a slouch hat, with a shotgun that he never discards. Partly on government orders, but partly from religious conviction, he tracks down the Cangaceiros, the rebels in the central area of Brazil. He has destroyed nearly every one; but suddenly another Cangaceiro appears, and Antonio has to kill him in a ritualistic duel. Antonio realises that his victim is really a representative of the dispossessed country folk, and he joins their side against the landowners. At the end, having shaken off and killed his pursuers, he is seen vanishing down a modern highway, with the

lorries trundling past him. Thus, for Rocha, Antonio is very much a contemporary figure (there are even hints that he resembles Che Guevara).

The visual language of the film is remarkable, using the desolate and majestic landscape as a stage against which the incidents of the drama can unfold, and resorting to ballads and folksongs to develop contrasting points of view. Moments of absolute stillness are followed by passages of frenetic action or cruelty. *Antonio das Mortes* is not merely an essay in folklore. It is a reflection of the role that Brazilian legends, myths, and traditions play in the social and political self-awareness of the country today.

ULRICH GREGOR

recent and forthcoming films

AGNALDO, PERIGO A VISTA (Agnaldo and the Danger). Dir: Reynaldo Paes de Barros. Players: Agnaldo Rayol, Milton Ribeiro.

OS RAPTORES (The Kidnappers). Dir: Aurélio Teixeira. Players: Aurélio Teixeira, Darlene Glória.

O IMPOSSIVEL ACONTECE (The Impossible Happens). Dir: Adolfo Chadler. Players: Glória Menezes, Rubens de Falco.

DEU A LOUCA NO CANGACO (It's a Mad Cangaco). Dir: Nelson Teixeira Mendes. Players: Dedé Santana, Dino Santana.

O CANGACEIRO SANGUINARIO (The Bloody Killer). Dir: Oswaldo de Oliveira. Players: Maurício do Valle, John Herbert.

O REI DA PILANTRAGEM (The King of Trouble). Dir: Jacy Campos. Players: Paulo Silvino, Carlos Imperial.

NO PARAISO DAS SOLTEIRONAS (In the Paradise of

Unmarried Women). Dir: Amacio Mazzaropi. Players: Amacio Mazzaropi, Geni Prado.

A UM PULO DA MORTE (At the Side of Death). Dir: Victor Lima. Players: Jardel Filho, Antonio Patino.

AS ARMAS (The Guns). Dir: Astolfo Araujo. Players: Mario Benvenuti, Irene Stefania.

AGUIAS EM PATRULHA (Eagles on Patrol). Dir: Ary Fernandes. Players: Dirceu Conte, Augusto Machado de Campos.

OS MARGINAIS (The Delinquents). Dir: Moisés Kendler.

UM HOMEM E SUA JAULA (A Man and His Prison). Dir: Fernando Campos. Players: Hugo Carvana, Esmeralda de Barros.

OS PAQUERAS (The Peeping Tom). Dir: Reginaldo Farias. Players: Reginaldo Farias, Walter Foster.

TEMPO DE VIOLENCIA (Time of Violence). Players: Tonia Carrero, Raul Cortez.



Glauber Rocha's *ANTONIO DES MORTES*

... awarded the Prize for Best Direction at Cannes in 1969.