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ABSURD

Absurd

Direction
Scenario
Camera
Editing
Production

Music
Cast
Running time
Information and distribution

Zaev Nirnberg
Zaev Nirnberg
Fred Tammes
Emile Bensdorp
Arti Koot for Connection Films, 1979
Misha Mengelberg
André van den Heuvel
23 min., black-and-white, 35 mm
Ervede

The city, its architecture, is the expression of a powerful environment which has powerless man in its grip. A human being can only function in this environment, if he adapts himself to it and behaves like all his fellowmen. This film, *Absurd*, is about the uniformity of people in an urbanized world of bricks and stone. The leading figure feels threatened by everything that surrounds him. He is always encountering 'himself' and becomes obsessed with himself as a result. Even when he is at work he is always looking at himself in the mirror. The mixture of anxiety and obsession surrounding one's own person dominates the entire film, which consists of repetitive, overlapping episodes in the working day of a flat-dweller. The penetrating, absurdist black-and-white images, made up of shots taken in a modern prison and in blocks of flats on the edge of Amsterdam, are intended to conjure up such a degree of tension that the death of the leading figure (through his own choice) at the end of the film is accepted as the logical end to modern man.

In all this, the director of the film, Zaev Nirnberg, makes use of all manner of extraordinary shots, achieved with the assistance of the special effects man, Hennie van den Akker. Not a word is spoken in the film, but the action is supported in sound by such leading jazz musicians as Han Bennink, Gilius van Bergeijk and Misha Mengelberg. (P.T.)

