

## Document Citation

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From Shirley Clarke's *Paris Parks*

Courtesy of the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research

**DECEMBER 4 (Thursday)**  
**Albright-Knox Art Gallery**  
**8:30 PM**

## SHIRLEY CLARKE

*Four Journeys into Mystic Time*  
 (1979) color/sound/60 minutes

*Dance in the Sun* (1953)  
 black & white/sound/6 minutes

*Bridges-Go-Round* (1958)  
 color/sound/3½ minutes

*Paris Parks* (1954)  
 color/sound/10 minutes

Shirley Clarke began as a dancer, working with Martha Graham, Hanya Holm and Anna Sokolow. She made her first film, *Dance in the Sun*, in 1953 because, she writes, "I had gotten to see many dance films and thought they were pretty awful. I figured that it should be easy to become the greatest dance film maker in the world." Seven short prize-winning films followed, including *Bridges-Go-Round* and *Skyscraper*, which received an Academy Award nomination and a first prize at the Venice Film Festival.

In 1960, Clarke directed *The Connection*, for which she was awarded the Critics Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and Best New Director of the Year award at the Locarno Festival in Switzerland. Shot in 19 days on a single set in New York, Clarke's first feature film utilized a new means for financing low-budget independent feature production by enlisting over 200 small investors. Based on a play by Jack Gelber which focused on a group of heroin addicts waiting for their "connection," the film was seized by police because of its explicit depiction of the drug culture. Many highly acclaimed feature films followed, including *Love Letter to the World*, a film on Robert Frost which received an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary; *The Cool World*, which she wrote, directed and edited and which was the first film shot in Harlem and the first handheld 35mm film; and *Portrait of Jason*, the first feature-length film with only one actor on screen.

This evening's program is entirely devoted to Ms. Clarke's work with dance. Included in her presentation are *Dance in the Sun*, which cuts between a male dancer performing on stage and on the beach; *Bridges-Go-Round*, in which Clarke choreographs the cityscape of New York to a jazz score by Teo Macero; and *Paris Parks*, a favorite film of the late Henri Langlois, Director of the Cinematheque Francaise, which records the play of children in a Parisian park. Her most recent film, *Four Journeys into Mystic Time*, has been described as a "joyous, elegant and stylized dance film" (*Los Angeles Times*).

Shirley Clarke will present and discuss a selection of videotapes by her students at UCLA on Wednesday at 8:00 PM at Media Study/Buffalo and will lead a workshop entitled "Video/Dance" at Media Study on Friday evening from 8:00 to 10:00 PM and on Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For further information, call 847-2555.