

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 15
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM WILL PRESENT SECOND SERIES OF FILMS FROM BRAZIL "HOW TASTY WAS MY LITTLE FRENCHMAN" OPENS BRAZIL: CINEMA NOVO

"How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman," a new Brazilian film, described as a black comedy, will open the second Cinema Novo Brazil, Thursday evening, February 17, 8:00 p. m., at The Museum of Modern Art. The director, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, will be present to introduce his film, originally banned in his native country, and later rejected as an official entry at the Cannes Film Festival. It was shown outside of the regular competition despite its nudity and the indelicate subject of cannibalism. The main character is a Frenchman in the sixteenth century who lives among Brazilian Indians, and the film reconstructs the interaction of European colonists and native Brazilians from an Indian point of view.

Recently the ban on "How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman" was lifted in its native country, and it has become the most popular picture being shown in Brazil today, out-grossing all other films. Its director, dos Santos, is well known internationally for his first film, the highly acclaimed, serious, and now classic work, "Barren Lives," which tells of the poverty of a family in the arid North of Brazil.

Cinema Novo Brazil is the second group of Brazilian films to be presented here. In the fall of 1968 the Museum introduced American audiences to the burgeoning Brazilian talent and the movement among filmmakers to give personal expression to their socio-political ideas as well as to the fantasies and feelings characteristic of their own culture with its conflict of rituals, religion, economics, and power.

Altogether fourteen Brazilian films will now be shown. "Memories of Helen" explores the mind of a woman who wants to be liberated, who is attracted to another woman, and who also romanticizes the man-woman relationship. The director David Neves is a former film critic, whose first picture is an evocative mood story set against a traditional family background.

An early picture by Glauber Rocha, "Barravento," made when he was twenty years of age, will be part of this program, in addition to his widely acclaimed "cult" film "Antonio das Mortes," which is a partly autobiographical reflection with mystical, violent and sentimental attitudes. This political

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allegory contains mythology, tropicalism, folk ballads and choreography unfamiliar to the Western world. It is stylized, operatic and original in treatment.

"A Panoramic View of Brazilian Cinema" is a compilation of Brazilian films which places Cinema Nôvo in a national context and also includes a rare sequence of Carmen Miranda. An early film by Alberto Cavalcanti, "O Canto Do Mar," will also be shown. Cavalcanti, who was born in Brazil, returned to his native land in the fifties and helped pioneer Cinema Nôvo's search for a Latin American style. "O Canto do Mar," set against an authentic background, with Brazilian country singers and a centennial folk dance, has a melodramatic story that enabled it to reach a large audience.

"The Case of the Naves Brothers" relates one of the most telling instances of the abuse of police and judicial powers. Based on a true incident that occurred in the 40s, it describes how the Naves brothers were indicted for a crime they did not commit, to which they were forced to confess after sadistic treatment. The director is Luiz Sérgio Person. "Razor in the Flesh," which tells of one night in the life of an aging prostitute, is based on a popular stage play, and was directed by Bráz Chediak. "The Heirs," by Carlos Diegues, poet, journalist and literary critic, is the story of a political suicide, and the bankruptcy of a middle class family in Brazil. Its dialogue is used in a novel attempt to indicate how issues are not resolved.

Also in the program are "I Killed the Family and Went to the Movies"; and "The Priest and the Girl," called an elegiac film, set in Diamond City, with its remnants of past splendor, where a beautiful girl, alone and broken in spirit, seeks the love and comfort of the local priest. The final entries are "The Chronicle of the Murdered House," "At Midnight I'll Take Your Soul," and "The Gods and the Dead." The latter, by Ruy Guerra, is the struggle for possession of a cocoa plantation among adventurers, ruffians, poverty stricken men, gamblers and harlots -- even a circus. The action is said to develop into "a turmoil of treason, threats, violence, lace and mud." It received first prize at the Brazilian Cinema Festival.

The complete schedule follows:

Thursday, February 17 (2:00, 8:00) HOW TASTY WAS MY LITTLE FRENCHMAN. 1971. By Nelson Pereira dos Santos. English titles. 100 min.

Thursday, February 17 (5:30) THE HEIRS. 1969. By Carlos Diegues. English titles. 110 min. New Yorker Films.

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- Friday, February 18 (2:00, 5:30) MEMORIES OF HELEN. 1969. By David Neves. English titles. 81 min. New Yorker Films.
- Saturday, February 19 (3:00) BARRAVENTO. 1962. By Glauber Rocha. English titles. 80 min. New Yorker Films.
- Saturday, February 19 (5:30) A PANORAMIC VIEW OF BRAZILIAN CINEMA. 1968. Produced and compiled by Jurandyr Passos Noronha, Antonio Moniz Vianna, Julio Heilbron. English titles and English commentary. 140 min.
- Sunday, February 20 (3:00, 5:30) KILLED THE FAMILY AND WENT TO THE MOVIES. 1970. By Julio Bressane. English titles. 80 min. New Yorker Films.
- Monday, February 21 (Noon) RAZOR IN THE FLESH. 1969. By Bráz Chediak. English titles. 93 min. Europix International Ltd.
- Wednesday, February 23 (2:00) THE BRAVE WARRIOR. 1969. By Gustavo Dahl. English titles. 80 min. New Yorker Films.
- Wednesday, February 23 (5:30) RAZOR IN THE FLESH (see Monday, February 21).
- Thursday, February 24 (2:00, 8:00) THE PRIEST AND THE GIRL. 1966. By Joaquim Pedro de Andrade. English titles. 105 min. New Yorker Films.
- Thursday, February 24 (5:30) THE GODS AND THE DEAD. 1970. By Ruy Guerra. English titles. 120min.
- Friday, February 25 (2:00, 5:30) AT MIDNIGHT I' LL TAKE YOUR SOUL. 1965-66. By José Mojica Marins. English titles. ca. 90 min.
- Saturday, February 26 (3:00, 5:30) THE CASE OF THE NAVES BROTHERS. 1967. By Luiz Sérgio Person. English titles. 93 min. Europix International Ltd.
- Sunday, February 27 (3:00) To be announced.
- Sunday, February 27 (5:30) O CANTO DO MAR. 1953-54. By Alberto Cavalcanti. No titles. 75 min.
- Monday, February 28 (Noon) THE GODS AND THE DEAD (see February 24).
- Wednesday, March 1 (2:00) ANTONIO DAS MORTES. 1969. By Glauber Rocha. 100 min. Grove Press.
- Wednesday, March 1 (5:30) To be announced.

Additional information available from Lillian Gerard, Film Coordinator, and Mark Segal, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Tel: (212) 956-7296.