

## AN HOMAGE TO HANS RICHTER: THE ARTIST AS FILMMAKER

Hans Richter, internationally renowned avant-garde filmmaker, distinguished as an artist, sculptor, writer, historian, and teacher, who died one year ago at the age of 88, will be given a tribute on March 21, at 6:00 p.m. when The Museum of Modern Art holds AN HOMAGE TO HANS RICHTER: THE ARTIST AS FILMMAKER. Brian O'Doherty, Director of Media Arts of the National Endowment for the Arts, will introduce the program, which will include a showing of "Forty Years of Experiment," an anthology of ten of Richter's experimental films, featuring a portion on the making of "Dreams that Money Can Buy." This tribute for the friends and admirers of Richter will be open to the public.

Max Ernst has said of Richter, "his contribution to the technique and poetic possibilities of the cinema are inestimable. They remain an inexhaustible source of inspiration." And Edward Steichen has described Richter's film "Rhythm" as having the "simplicity and grandeur of the Parthenon." Such praise is best summed up by the film scholar and historian Herman Weinberg, who calls Richter "the high priest of the experimental film. His antecedents were the Chinese scroll paintings of a thousand years ago, and the transcendental Egyptian artists before them."

One of the original members of the Dada movement, founded in Zurich in 1916, Richter wrote the definitive work, "Dada, Art, and Anti-Art," on this revolutionary movement which he saw spread to New York in the form of Pop Art, Conceptual Art, and New Realism.

Richter was first a painter, and after experimenting with scrolls, became interested in expressing rhythm on film. It has been said that he came to film by accident, although he maintained a continuity of purpose in all his work, starting with his first avant-garde film "Rhythm" made in Berlin in 1921,

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after which he declared, "What film needs is not so much an audience as artists."

Much of the new approach and fresh vision in today's cinema is due in part to the stimulus derived from the pioneering films, writings, and teaching of Hans Richter, who from 1943 to 1956 was Director of the Institute of Film Techniques at the City College of New York, one of the earliest film courses to be given. "His contribution to film as an art form," writes art historian Frank Ponzi, "has been immeasurable and his significance as an avant-garde film innovator has grown with each new generation of filmmakers."

Richter's own films include "Inflation" made in Berlin, "Chess: The Passionate Pastime;" "Dadascope;" and "8x8," a chess sonata for film with Jean Arp, Jacqueline Matisse, Marcel Duchamp, Yves Tanguy, and Alexander Calder among others. The latter film will be shown at the Museum on April 4 and 5, together with "Give Chance a Chance," an intimate interview with Richter. "Ghosts Before Breakfast" and "Alexander Calder: From the Circus to the Moon" are also scheduled to be shown on April 11 and 12.

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March 1977

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