

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
January 1991

JON JOST: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT

January 18 - February 18, 1990

Independent filmmaker Jon Jost is the subject of a month-long retrospective at The Museum of Modern Art opening on January 18, 1991. The exhibition presents eleven features and nineteen shorts conceived, directed, and edited by the filmmaker between 1963 and 1990. Jost's work is characterized by its unusual approaches to narrative, insights into American social and political issues, and enthusiasm for the cinematic image. JON JOST: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT continues through February 18.

The filmmaker introduces the New York premiere of *All The Vermeers in New York* (1990) on Friday, January 18, at 6:00 p.m. The film, produced for American Playhouse, is a love story set in the New York worlds of art and finance.

A remarkably prolific filmmaker, Jost is known for his ability to work quickly on extremely limited budgets. He generally works without scripts, often relying on his actors to improvise dialogue. In both his documentaries and features, Jost attempts to challenge and stimulate his audiences through unusually long takes, special effects, and inventive storytelling.

Recurring in his work are such concerns as emotional conditioning by society, conflicts between the sexes, the impact of the Vietnam War on his generation, the military-industrial complex, consumerism, and the function of art in a capitalist system. *Plain Talk and Common Sense (uncommon senses)* (1988) is a ten-part documentary focusing on America as institution and myth.

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Speaking Directly: Some American Notes (1973) is an autobiographical rumination on life in America in the 1960s and 1970s.

Other films included in the series are *Angel City* (1976), a meditation on the Hollywood detective genre; *Last Chants for a Slow Dance (Dead End)* (1977), a chilling and desolate road movie set in Montana; *Bell Diamond* (1987), the story of a Vietnam veteran whose wife leaves him after seven years; *Rembrandt Laughing* (1988), a concise account of a year in the lives of a group of friends in San Francisco, and the New York premiere of *Sure Fire* (1990), a dark tale about patriarchy set in a remote town in Utah.

Jon Jost was born in Chicago in 1943 of a military family and grew up in Georgia, Kansas, Japan, Italy, Germany, and Virginia. He is a self-taught filmmaker who began making films in 1963. In 1965 Jost served a two-year prison term for refusing to serve in the army. Upon his release, he helped to start the Chicago branch of Newsreel, the New Left film production and distribution group. For twenty-seven years Jost has been making films outside of mainstream cinema and has exhibited widely at museums, film archives, and international festivals.

JON JOST: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT has been organized by Laurence Kardish, curator, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art.

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No. 128

For further information or film stills, contact Sarah Eaton, Film Press Representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.

JON JOST: AMERICAN INDEPENDENT

Exhibition Schedule

All films directed by Jon Jost.

Friday, January 18

- 3:00 p.m. *Speaking Directly: Some American Notes.* 1973.
110 mins
- 6:00 p.m. *All the Vermeers in New York.* 1990.
With Emmanuelle Chaulet, Katherine Bean, Stephen Lack
86 mins. Filmmaker present

Saturday, January 19

- 2:30 p.m. *All the Vermeers in New York*
See January 18
- 5:00 p.m. *Speaking Directly: Some American Notes*
See January 18

Sunday, January 20

- 2:30 p.m. *Angel City.* 1976.
With Bob Glaudini, Winifred Golden, Roger Ruffin
74 mins
- 5:00 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 1
Portrait. 1963. silent.
Leah. 1967.
A Man Is More Than The Sum of His Parts/A Woman Is. 1971.
(entire program 83 mins.)

Monday, January 21

- 2:30 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 1
See January 20
- 6:00 p.m. *Last Chants for a Slow Dance (Dead End).* 1977.
With Tom Blair, Steve Voorheis, Jessica St. John
90 mins

Friday, January 25

- 3:00 p.m. *Last Chants for a Slow Dance (Dead End)*
See January 21
- 6:00 p.m. *Angel City*
See January 20

Saturday, January 26

- 2:30 p.m. *Chameleon.* 1978.
With Bob Glaudini, Kathleen McKay, Ellen Blake
90 mins
- 5:00 p.m. *Stagefright.* 1981.
With Shaun Lawton, Anton Rattinger, Barbara Beutler
75 mins

Sunday, January 27

- 2:30 p.m. *Slow Moves.* 1983.
With Roxanne Rogers, Marshall Gaddis, Debbie Krant
95 mins
- 5:00 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 2
Repetition. 1963. silent.
Judith. 1965. silent.
Flower. 1970. silent.
Traps. 1967.
(entire program 83 mins)

Friday, February 1

- 3:00 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 2
See January 27
- 6:00 p.m. *Slow Moves.*
See January 27

Saturday, February 2

- 2:30 p.m. *Rembrandt Laughing.* 1988.
With Jon A. English, Barbara Hammes, Nathaniel Dorsky
100 mins.
- 5:00 p.m. *Bell Diamond.* 1987.
With Marshall Gaddis, Sarah Wyss, Terrilyn Williams
96 mins.

Sunday, February 3

- 2:30 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 3
City. 1964. silent.
April 24. 1968.
Chalma. 1964. silent.
X2: Two Dances by Nancy Karp. 1980.
 (entire program, 85 mins)
- 5:00 p.m. *Plain Talk & Common Sense (uncommon senses)*. 1988.
 110 mins.

Friday, February 8

- 3:00 p.m. *Plain Talk & Uncommon Sense (uncommon senses)*
 See February 3
- 6:00 p.m. *Chameleon*.
 See January 26

Saturday, February 9

- 2:30 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 4
Canyon. 1970. silent.
13 Fragments & 3 Narratives from Life. 1968.
Fall Creek. 1970.
Lampenfieber. 1980.
 Abbreviated version of *Stagefright*.
 (80 mins. entire program)
- 5:00 p.m. *Nightshift*. 1980.
 Robina Rose London. Camerawork by Jon Jost. With Anne Rees-Mogg,
 Heathcote Williams. 75 mins

Sunday, February 10

- 2:30 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 5
Beauty Sells Best. 1978.
Primaries/A Turning Point in Lunatic China/1,2,3, Four. 1971.
Godard 80. 1980.
Susannah's Film. 1969.
 (68 mins. entire program)
- 5:00 p.m. *Bell Diamond*
 See January 2

Monday, February 11

3:00 p.m. *Stagefright*
See January 26

Friday, February 15

3:00 p.m. *Nightshift*
See February 9

6:00 p.m. *Sure Fire*. 1990.
With Tom Blair, Kristi Hager, Robert Ernst. 86 mins.

Saturday, February 16

2:30 p.m. *Sure Fire*
See February 15

5:00 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 5
See February 10

Sunday, February 17

5:00 p.m. *Rembrandt Laughing*
See February 2

Monday, February 18

2:30 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 3
See February 3

5:00 p.m. Short Films by Jon Jost, Program 4
See February 9

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