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EDITORIAL

Infamous last words! 'The MacGuffin' #27 proclaimed that another issue would soon follow. (Remember?!) In the event, we took our longest 'vacation' ever! Gentle reader, apologies, and it shouldn't happen again. Your fond Editor sought only to make for himself a 'well-balanced existence', then found to his dismay that the adage about more-is-less (and its corollary, less-is-more) applied. But now he humbly offers you 'MacGuffin' #28. May it give you pleasure and edification - of a Hitchcockian kind, naturally. Read on for details.

More than half of the issue consists of a review of just two books: Bill Krohn's 'Hitchcock At Work' and Steven L. DeRosa's 'Writing With Hitchcock'. The review speaks for itself, so comment here would be superfluous. Below, I'll mention some other books (and videos) that should have been reviewed this issue but must now be held over.

Hearty thanks to college lecturer Paul Fahey in California. Not only did Paul attend and then review for us the first-ever 'official' stage production based on Hitchcock's *Rope*, but he also interviewed its director, Jack Shouse, who made various insightful and illuminating comments, as recorded here.

John Charles Bennett is the son of distinguished actor-and-playwright-turned-screenwriter Charles Bennett (1899-1995) who arguably twice set Hitchcock on a career trajectory that would carry him to the pinnacle of his profession. CB's meaty melodrama 'Blackmail' was turned by Hitchcock (and screenwriter Benn Levy) into the most famous of the director's films of the twenties; a few years later, CB wrote or contributed to five of Hitchcock's 'golden' thrillers of the thirties, starting with *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. (CB wrote the original story of *TMWKT*M and parts of the final screenplay, though he got no on-screen credit for helping with the adaptation; on *Young and Innocent* he left to begin his Hollywood career before finishing the script which was taken over by Alma Reville and Hitchcock himself.) By courtesy of John Bennett, the 'MacGuffin' website carries an excerpt from CB's 'Memoirs', including part of the murder scene from 'Blackmail' - many of whose details were retained by Hitchcock's 1929 film. What this issue contains is a previously unpublished list of the scripts that CB then wrote, or in some cases probably only contemplated writing, for British International Pictures. Compiled by John Bennett from his father's notebooks, it has obvious historical interest.

We thank our 'resident' film critics for their ten-best lists published this issue. The lists span two years this time (separate lists for each year, naturally). We also extend gratitude to those of our readers who were in touch about various matters by email and/or letter. Our popular 'Letters' page returns below.

Back to apology mode. Books received since our last issue are: Richard Allen & Sam Ishii-Gonzalès (eds), 'Alfred Hitchcock: Centenary Essays' (BFI Publishing); Susan Smith, 'Hitchcock: Suspense, Humour and Tone' (BFI); Charles Barr, 'Vertigo' (BFI Film Classics); John Belton (ed.), 'Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*' (Cambridge Film Handbooks); and Paul Jensen, 'Hitchcock Becomes "Hitchcock": The British Years' (Midnight Marquee Press). All of these have been reviewed and discussed on our website, or elsewhere on the Web, but none could be reviewed here. Possibly next time. The same goes for a couple of VHS tapes received. One is available, I understand, from Midnight Marquee Press Inc., 9721 Britanay Lane Baltimore, MD 21234 (410-665-1198; <www.Midmar.com>), and consists of a panel discussion chaired by Paul M. Jensen in which the panelists are Patricia Hitchcock O'Connell, Janet Leigh, and Dorothy Herrmann (daughter of composer Bernard Herrmann). Good, solid stuff, and delightful people. The other tape, called 'Alfred Hitchcock', comes from Creative Arts Television Archive, P.O. Box 739, Kent, CT 06757 (<catarchive@aol.com>). It contains two interviews with Hitchcock, the first conducted by Ingrid Bergman's daughter, Pia Lindstrom, and frequently charming: Hitch had known Pia since she was a baby (though by the time of the interview she was news correspondent with WCVS-TV). Among the highlights: Hitchcock recalls a moment of real fear he experienced when travelling at night by car with Alma on a narrow road in the former Yugoslavia, 8,000 feet above a valley. Suddenly a bus loomed ahead ... The second interview is conducted in knowledgeable fashion by the late film historian, William Everson. One item of interest: Hitchcock describes part of the opening of *The Lodger* in which the

camera pans from the murdered girl to a reflection in the Thames of the sign 'Tonight Golden Curls', then back up the Embankment to a milling crowd of onlookers. This makes the film's opening sound more than ever like the opening of *Frenzy*, and suggests that Ivor Montagu, hired by the producers to 'tighten' the film, may have cut felicitous material as well as 'extraneous' footage. (The pan to the river is not seen in extant prints.)

Now, several other books on Hitchcock have appeared in the past year or so. There's a near-complete listing on our website, but certainly one of the most exciting of these books is 'Hitchcock and Art: Fatal Coincidences', whose English publication coincided with the 'Hitchcock & Art' exhibition held at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and later transferred to Paris. ((I thank Pierre Poirier for obtaining me a copy of the English edition.) Another stimulating book is 'The Hitchcock Murders' (Faber) by Peter Conrad of Oxford University. We'll have more to say about both books next time.

Finally, in view of our intention next time to publish detailed analyses of Hitchcock's first film, *The Pleasure Garden* (1925), and his last film, *Family Plot* (1976), let me commend to readers the Hitchcock-centred website of Al Chafin in Florida. Al has for sale many rare videos, DVDs, scripts, etc. Among the videos are two versions of *The Pleasure Garden* (they correspond to the BFI and the Rohauer versions). The website's URL (address) is:
< www.Hitch2001.com >.

To everyone, good viewing - Ken.

LETTERS

Hitchcock's London

Gary Giblin, Indiana, USA

Hello Ken. I'm finally back from London and just wanted to share a few highlights - and 'lowlights' - with you. The bad news first - the alley where the *Frenzy* Matrimonial Agency was located has been obliterated by an office block. What a shock it was to discover that! But the delights - oh, the delights ... First, a few small ones: discovering Brenda's mews flat from *Frenzy*, and Cooper's mews flat and Mrs Gill's Georgian home from *Stage Fright*. Time has literally stood still for these London gems. Then there were the four buildings/sites that doubled as the embassy in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (56). Before the trip, I had spoken with [Hitchcock's longtime art director] Henry Bumstead and asked if he recalled exactly where the exterior was shot. Only that it was near Albert Hall, he told me, something that the daily continuity sheets suggested, but, oddly, did not specify. Well, by sheer dumb luck, I turned into the right street on my first attempt. Sadly, the building itself is gone, but the stucco terrace across the street, again, has scarcely changed since the day Hitchcock committed it to film. Perhaps the greatest joys came at the Albert Hall and the Savoy. Both extended me the utmost in courtesy and time, allowing me to prowl all over their respective floors, upper, lower and in between, to identify the spots that Hitchcock had filmed (or replicated). In the former, we were able to identify the precise spot where the embassy staff gathered in the 'corridor'; in the latter, we were able to match the view out the McKennas' third floor room to a T, even though the hotel scenes were, of course, shot in Hollywood. I also took some time to go outside London, to the Elstree Studio complex, where a plaque honoring Hitchcock is scheduled to go up very soon, and to the estate that appeared as 'Moat House' in *Easy Virtue*. I hope fans will forgive me for including these and a few other non-London locations in the book. I also included visits to English Heritage and the Westminster Archive Centre, to view records, directories and other documents pertinent to a search for old locations; and to the BFI, to screen copies of *The Pleasure Garden* and *Downhill*, and to review scripts and pressbooks. As expected, the scripts revealed a number of items that never made it to the finished films, including the actual London address of the dentist in the first *Man Who Knew Too Much*, missing dialogue from the opening of *Rich and Strange*, and the original scene of Brodie's meeting with R in *Secret Agent* - set on a steamer! For literary buffs like yourself, I even included visits to places like Greenwich Observatory and the old Russian Embassy, both from Conrad's 'The Secret Agent'. Now, of course, it's back to the real work - finishing the manuscript ...

[Editor's note. Gary Giblin's forthcoming 'Hitchcock's London' promises to be rich in not just background and factual information about the London that Hitchcock knew - and lovingly filmed - but also packed with insights into the films and the creative mind of their director. Publisher is Daleon, New Jersey]

The Hitchcock Annual

Sidney Gottlieb, English Department, Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT 06432, USA

Dear Ken. Thanks for your continuing efforts running down stories for me. I've had very good luck on abebooks.com, and am in the midst of a buying frenzy, picking up all sorts of things I've had on my wish list for years - 'Enter Sir John', 'The Farmer's Wife', etc.

Subscription information for the 'Hitchcock Annual': \$12 for single copies plus postage for individuals; \$10 per issue for individual subscribers (postage included within the U.S.); outside add \$3 for surface mail. \$25 per issue for institutions. Inquire [to the above address] about availability of back issues and offprints of individual articles. Hope you can drum up some business for us!

[Editor's note. Professor Gottlieb's email address is <spgottlieb@aol.com>. The 'Hitchcock Annual', 2001-2, is now out. It includes "A Screenwriter's Forum", with participants Evan Hunter, Arthur Laurents, and Joseph Stefano; Richard Allen on "*The Lodger* and the Origins of Hitchcock's Aesthetic"; James Vest on "Hitchcock and French Criticism"; "Gus Van Sant vs Hitchcock: A *Psycho* Dossier", with contributions from Paula Marantz Cohen, Adrian Martin, Steven Jay Schneider, Sam Isshi-Gonzalès, and Constantine Verevis; and book reviews by Marshall Deutelbaum, Charles L.P. Silet, Sid Gottlieb, and others.]

Only connect?

Leslie Shepard, Co. Dublin, Irish Republic

Dear Ken. Yes - I love that anecdote about director Rex Ingram [real name: Reginald Hitchcock] telling the up-and-coming Hitchcock that he should also change his name [to make it more memorable]! My friend the film historian Liam O'Leary who died a few years ago quotes it in his biography of Ingram.

And, yes, you are right to chase up writers who don't give proper acknowledgement. I once supplied basic information on names and dates of a series of broadside ballad printers [on which Leslie is an authority - Ed.] to an individual who gave a lecture on the subject to the prestigious Bibliographical Society. After it had been applauded, I told him that my contribution should have been mentioned. He said, 'Oh, I forgot!' There are many writers who are like sponges who soak up other people's work and forget to mention it!

Meeting Pat Hitchcock

Nick Anez, Lincoln, Rhode Island, USA

After *Kaleidoscope* was rejected by Universal, I wonder why Hitchcock didn't film it cheaply on his own as he did with *Psycho*.

That reminds me of something Patricia Hitchcock told me when I met her at the Classic Film Festival in Arlington. I asked her if it was true that her father lost interest in *No Bail for the Judge* after Audrey Hepburn withdrew and why he didn't simply hire another actress as he did on other projects such as *Vertigo*. (I personally would have preferred Dana Wynter.) She admitted to being uncertain of the details but she did say emphatically that her father would never have cancelled a project he believed in because of the unavailability of an actor and that there must have been another reason, perhaps dissatisfaction with the script.

BLOOPERS

On page 27 last time, footnotes 48 and 49 were inadvertently reversed.

On page 28 last time, in 'Odd Spot', we said that Alfred and Alma Hitchcock regularly attended cinematographer Gary Graver's repertory cinema 'in San Francisco'. That should have been 'in Los Angeles'.

‘ALFRED HITCHCOCK’S *ROPE*’: A DIRECTOR AND HIS CAST UNCOVER RUPERT’S TRUE SEXUAL IDENTITY

By Paul Alan Fahey

Actors love having a departure point and a basis from which to operate because the acting process is not human unless you decide who these people are and what their relationships are to one another.

- Jack Shouse, Director, ‘Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rope*’

This past August, the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts, PCPA, a unique collaboration of students, stage professionals and community college instructors at Allan Hancock College, presented a theatrical version of the Alfred Hitchcock film classic, *Rope*. The date of the PCPA production of ‘Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rope*’ coincided with the fifty-third anniversary of the film’s release in 1948. This event was hailed as a world premiere, and in many ways, it was.

For the first time, the artistic director emeritus, Jack Shouse, would stage the original screenplay commissioned by Hitchcock and written by Arthur Laurents. The screenplay was based on the Leopold-Loeb murder case of the 1920s and an original 1929 play by Patrick Hamilton. This production of *Rope* would offer a different interpretation of the central character, Rupert Cadell, played by Jimmy Stewart in the Hitchcock film. Mr. Shouse and his cast, in researching the screenplay and developing backstories for the play’s characters, decided early on that a key factor in Rupert’s past would be his affair with Brandon, the cool, mastermind of David Kentley’s murder.

How a Stage Production of Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rope* Came About

The genesis of this production occurred five years ago when Mr. Shouse viewed the film for the first time. ‘I was intrigued by it after learning that Hitchcock had wanted to film [the] play, coupled with my fascination of many years regarding the Leopold-Loeb murder case ... No wonder Hitchcock selected this story for a film adaptation considering his fascination with the dark side of the human psyche ... There is not one word, one sentence, that doesn’t reveal something about the characters and what their choices are, moment to moment. None of it is arbitrary; it’s all there for a reason.’¹

Mr. Shouse was fortunate to have a friend in Patricia Hitchcock O’Connell, Hitchcock’s daughter, who is a board member of the PCPA Foundation. Within two years, she had managed to obtain the world premiere rights from the Patrick Hamilton estate to produce the screenplay as a theatrical play. Since the agreement between O’Connell and the estate requires that this version of ‘Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rope*’ be presented in a teaching environment, it is not likely to be produced in a professional theater.²

Background on Hitchcock’s Film

Rope was the first film produced by Hitchcock’s independent company, Transatlantic Pictures; it was also the Master’s first film in color. Ken Mogg (1999) offers a summary of the film’s plot. ‘One afternoon, in an elegant upstairs New York apartment, a Harvard undergraduate named David Kentley is strangled to death with a piece of rope by two killers scarcely older than he is. They are playboy-type Brandon (John Dall) and his partner, an aspiring concert-pianist, Phillip (Farley Granger), both influenced by the “Superman” ideas of Nietzsche. They put the body in a chest. Then, to crown their demonstration of “superiority”, they hold a party in the same room. Those attending include some of David’s family and friends and the publisher Rupert Cadell (James Stewart) who had been Brandon and Phillip’s housemaster at prep school. He knows the pair well, and has influenced their thinking. He soon feels that something is amiss, especially when at the end of the party he is handed the wrong hat and in it sees the initials “D.K.” Returning shortly afterwards, he confronts the pair. There is a struggle. Then Rupert flings open the chest. Horrified, and saying that his teachings have been tragically misunderstood, he steps to the window and fires three shots into the air. Soon a police siren is heard approaching.’³

The Ten-Minute Takes

Rope is famous for being shot by Hitchcock in a series of ten-minute takes. In Hitchcock’s words, ‘I tried to give it a flowing camera movemen ... I tried to do it as if I were giving the audience all opera glasses to follow the action on the stage, but basically it was on stage.’⁴ Logistically, this technique was very difficult to accomplish, as it required the

actors to learn long speeches, which caused them great anxiety about muffing their lines and thus spoiling a reel of film. This process also required Hitchcock to pre-plan an amazing amount of 'choreography.' Furniture and walls that were once there, suddenly disappeared from view as the camera continued filming and following the actors around the room. Most reports of the film's length clock it in at 80-81 minutes. Dan Auiler felt 'that Hitchcock cheated a bit on the last cut - reel nine is only five minutes long and reel ten is only two minutes long, while the other eight reels are the typical nine to eleven minutes long.'⁵

What the Critics Said About the Film

Rope, considered by many Hitchcock admirers to be one of his most important films, has generated much interest as well as conflicting criticism. Perry called it "a brave failure."⁶ John Russell Taylor found the film 'strangely flat and ponderous, all played at a uniform pace which kills most of the excitement and suspense built into the subject-matter.'⁷ Arthur Laurents, the screenwriter of *Rope*, felt the series of ten-minute takes 'often looks obvious and rather crude on the screen, but the stunt was very difficult to pull off - precisely why it intrigued Hitchcock. It did add one value to telling the story: screen time is actual time.'⁸ At one point in the filming, Jimmy Stewart asked Hitch 'why he was bothering to film it at all; why not just put up bleachers in the studio and sell tickets to live audiences?'⁹ Lindsay Anderson called *Rope* 'a debilitated version of the Patrick Hamilton play, which abandons all the resources of cutting and lighting on the pretext of an experiment in technique.'¹⁰

By contrast, Robin Wood emphasized the brilliant depiction of the two central characters, Brandon and Phillip, played by John Dall and Farley Granger, and saw their ambiguous relationship 'as a working-out of suppressed homosexual tensions.'¹¹ Eric Rohmer and Claude Chabrol considered *Rope* one of the director's more formal works and praised Hitch for his use of color to express the characters' emotional states. They also drew parallels between Brandon, the more psychopathic and dominant of the two central characters, Uncle Charlie in *Shadow of a Doubt*, and Bruno Anthony in *Strangers on a Train*.¹² Ken Mogg noted that 'the famous "ten-minute take" gives the impression that the film is one continuous shot - which becomes a metaphor for Brandon and Phillip's entrapment and lack of perspective'.¹³

Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope* at PCPA

I had the opportunity to see the play very near the end of its run. The actors were letter-perfect in their roles. I had recently viewed the film and remarked to my companion that the stage decoration and setting were remarkably like the film's New York penthouse apartment. Throughout the play, the lighting was used to great effect to underscore the passage of time, to focus the audience on an important prop or character in the room, to heighten the suspense and to convey emotion. There was no intermission, and the play was approximately one hour and twenty minutes, nearly the exact running time of the film.

Though I am not a theater critic nor an expert in all that is Hitchcock, I thought it was a wonderful production in all respects, and considering the audiences' positive reaction and the standing ovation the actors received at the play's end, 'Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope*' appears to have been one of the most successful productions of the past season.

Michael Phillips reviewed the play in 'The Los Angeles Times' and gave it a moderate thumbs up. Reading between the lines, it was clear that Mr. Phillips was not a fan of the film and went on to state that 'the results aren't bad. In play form, screenwriter Arthur Laurents' *Rope* - which is what we have here, not Hitchcock's - amounts to a fairly absorbing, nicely staged exercise. If it's not riveting, well, neither was the movie.'¹⁴

The local press had nothing but praise for the production. Britt Fekete hailed the Arthur Laurents screenplay, the vigorous acting and called the evening 'a solid overall experience.'¹⁵ Ryan Miller's comments focused on the set design that contained the story in an upscale apartment that seemed more cramped by the end. He also complimented the simplicity of the 1940s costume design and the lighting that directs the audience's attention as effectively as Hitchcock's camera. He ended his commentary with a final compliment to the director, Jack Shouse, and to PCPA in adapting the screenplay for the stage. 'Ultimately, however, *Rope* is an exploration of the twisted, darker side of the human mind. Brandon says the only criminal act he and Phillip can be guilty of is one of making a mistake. In adapting Hitchcock's film for stage, Shouse and PCPA are innocent of that crime.'¹⁶

An Interview with the Director, Jack Shouse

On October 29, 2001, I had the opportunity to sit down and chat with Jack Shouse about 'Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope*'.

PF: What changes did you make in the original script?

JS: The only changes I made were based on casting realities for this production. For example, one line refers to Kenneth being mistaken for David and the line has to do with a tall, blond man. Kenneth and David were brunettes. So I just got rid of 'blond'. In the film, Mr. Kentley was played by a much older man in his seventies. The man who played him in our production was in his forties. So I got rid of some references to his being older. Only those two lines were changed, so it was basically the screenplay as a stage play.

PF: Are there hidden gay messages in the script, especially those hinting at a previous sexual relationship between Rupert and Brandon? For example, the chicken strangling.

JS: I don't know that the chicken strangling has anything to do with sexual preference. I think Brandon told Phillip to kill the chicken. In the play, Brandon makes Phillip kill David. So I think it's a power issue, and that there's a proclivity on the part of Phillip to do what he's told. This is a source of personal resentment - a self esteem issue, and he (Phillip) is remorseful from the beginning, immediately after the murder. Brandon has none of that in him. He is amoral and is clearly arrogant in a Greek-hubris kind of way. I don't think the chickens are related to homosexuality. I do think that Brandon takes delight in throwing everyone off center, off balance. He really tortures Phillip at different moments, and the chicken incident is one of them. I don't think Phillip would ever have acted on his own. He needed Brandon to control him.

PF: What changes did you make in stage direction?

JS: In the film, the camera clearly shows you what you are meant to see as an audience member, moment to moment. There's continuous presence of a number of characters in most of the script, but you don't know what the other characters who are off camera are doing. The fun and challenge, in the play version, was to investigate the stimulus-response those other people have moment to moment because they are there on stage. Consequently, a greater three-dimensionality is possible with the characters.

PF: How did you use the lighting to help draw the audience's attention to important stage props and characters?

JS: There were certain moments I wanted to make sure were a tribute to the vision of Hitchcock and Laurents. We can use lighting to focus the audience on any part of the stage at any given time. For example, the scene with the maid, Mrs. Wilson, clearing the chest had focus on her and this activity while other conversations were going on around her but were not lit as brightly.

PF: Tell me why you think the screenplay works even better as a play.

JS: We do something before we begin a show called 'table talk'. The director and actors sit around and psychoanalyze the characters and their relationships to each other. Any play is about a given moment in time when the play begins. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. But the people have lived; they're products of their environment. So we talked a lot about the Phillip-Brandon-Rupert relationship as well as all the other characters' relationships. Actors love having a departure point and a basis from which to operate because the acting process is not human unless you decide who these people are and what their relationships are to one another. It's not about what people do. It's about why they do it. Language is only one way people communicate with each other. People will often say something based on their personal relationships and backgrounds that are in code. These unspoken agreements manifest themselves in a certain choice of language. So we decided what those moments were before the play began. We agreed Brandon definitely had sex with Rupert, and that Rupert was the dominant one in the relationship and Brandon, the submissive. In Phillip and Brandon's relationship, Brandon is the dominant person and Phillip the submissive one. We also thought Rupert and Phillip probably 'got it on' at least once. Those were common agreements. Therefore, an actor will look at each line and decide what the character wants moment to moment. Acting's really about stimulus-response. You decide what your character wants from the other characters, how they respond and what they want in return. Acting is like a tennis match. It's sending something the way you intend to send it. You take action, and the serve is returned, based on the way that other person chooses to send it, which is ultimately based on what he or she wants.

PF: To be honest, I didn't catch any of the subtle references to the Rupert-Brandon relationship when I saw the play and neither did anyone in my party. I remember asking a colleague the day after the play if she caught any hint of an affair between teacher and pupil, and she said, 'You're kidding, right?'

JS: Context and past history are agreements that have to be made if the play is to be realistic. We never underlined any of the homosexuality because that's who these characters are, given the set of circumstances. We made a number of

agreements in terms of what the intentions were behind certain lines and this was totally open to our subjective decision-making process. I also don't think we invented any. I think they are there in the script.

PF: Let's talk about some of them.

JS: Right after the murder, Phillip says that Brandon scares him as he did when he met him that first day in prep school. Phillip says he shouldn't really be talking like that, 'It's rather foolish,' and Brandon says, 'Yes it is.' We took this to imply they knew each other's story.

They talk about Rupert being 'too fastidious.' We decided that meant he's about as closeted as he can be.

Kenneth has a line about Brandon spending long nights at his master's feet. This line informed us that Kenneth knew what was going on. Brandon was out and didn't come home nights. Kenneth knew Brandon was with Rupert.

When Rupert arrives at the party, and Brandon is pouring a glass of champagne for him, Rupert says, 'You always do stutter when you're excited.' We agreed this meant Brandon's close physical proximity to Rupert was going to get him excited.

When Rupert comes back near the end of the play on the pretense of picking up his cigarette case, Brandon asks him if he'd like a drink. 'A short one?' And Rupert replies, 'No. I'd prefer a long one ... if you don't mind.'

PF: But there's no such thing.

JS: Right. The expression is a short or a tall one.

PF: Any more?

JS: Near the end of the play, Rupert asks Brandon if it's okay if he stays for the drink. 'I thought you two might be tired,' he says, and we thought it implied they might be going to bed together.

Earlier in the play when Rupert comes into the apartment and Phillip's at the piano, he tells him, 'Your touch has improved,' which totally throws Phillip off center. He's here, buckle up.

At one point Rupert is talking to Brandon about Mrs. Wilson, 'I may marry her,' and this is an opportunity for Phillip and Brandon to respond nonverbally to each other, Oh, yeah. Right!

PF: I keep going back to Arthur Laurents' autobiography. Is he the key to understanding the characters in *Rope*?

JS: Absolutely. His life's energy was spent with other men. The specific context and the moment of time in which he was living, in terms of secrecy and when information could be shared about homosexuality, are very important to understanding the play.

PF: There must be so much of the dialogue that is in code.

JS: Exactly. They are bright and take delight in speaking the unspoken. That's just part of the game, being in the club.

PF: Were you aware of a life-versus death theme in the screenplay and in the film?

JS: The whole point of the story is that society can not tolerate people who act on the assumption that they have the power of life and death over another person. That's Nietzsche. There's a reference to Hitler in the play. Brandon says Hitler was insane, but he (Brandon) isn't. He's brighter. He's better. He's smarter. Ultimately this is a morality play that's also very Greek in which excessive ego and pride bring total destruction to the person and everyone else around him. In that sense, I think Laurents is a great playwright.

PF: On this life-death scale, where would you place the subsidiary characters such as Mr. Kentley? Where would Rupert fit in?

JS: Kentley is invited because he's David's father and that's Brandon being as wicked as he can be. I'm reminded of Melville and 'Billy Budd'. Evil can not tolerate goodness and has to act on that impulse. The other characters reveal the extent to which Brandon is manipulative and evil. And Laurents definitely thinks he's evil. Rupert does as well. Rupert's

horror and discovery is that they have acted on a philosophy, but there's a difference between philosophy and ethics. Rupert has ethics. In the end, Brandon sees Rupert as weak because he did not take action on his beliefs as Brandon had.

PF: What does the screenplay say about the recent war? Is the film too lenient or too generous to Brandon and Phillip by suggesting their crime is no worse than that of a state that sends innocent young men to fight and be killed in war?

JS: We're left at the end of the piece with Rupert saying, 'You're going to die, Brandon,' and that's about as ungenerous as you can get.

PF: What did your friend, Pat Hitchcock, think of the production and your interesting take on the Rupert-Brandon-Phillip relationship?

JS: When I talked about the project with her three years ago, I said I'd love to do it because I didn't think what was addressed in the script was in the film. Pat said I was absolutely right. I said, 'They're all gay, aren't they, Pat?' And she just laughed and said, 'Of course they are, Jack.' Pat also said for her father, it wasn't that they were murderers or that they were homosexuals. What intrigued him most was that they were both. Hitch made no value judgments about any of it. The dark side of human nature fascinated him.

I also think *Rope* is very timely. Near the play's end, Rupert says, 'You are going to die.' That mentality says people who murder and kill must be murdered and killed. And what does that mean now in our world in terms of what's going on? The most horrible moment was our first technical rehearsal, three days after September 11th. The curtains opened and revealed the skyline with two buildings that looked like the World Trade Center, but of course, they weren't. The audience was silent. As the play progressed, the thought of laughing at someone being murdered and being present in the chest was not funny, but within a week and a half, people felt they had permission to distance themselves from the immediate real-life context and enjoy the play.

A Final Word About Arthur Laurents

Jack Shouse and his cast at PCPA are not alone in their contention that Rupert is a homosexual. In his recent autobiography, 'Original Story By', Arthur Laurents is very clear about the relationships between his main characters in the screenplay. 'The three central characters in *Rope* are homosexual. Brandon and Phillip are lovers who carry the Nietzschean philosophy learned from their former prep school teacher, Rupert, to its outer limit: a murder committed to prove superiority. Rupert is a good friend and probably an ex-lover of Brandon's; his is the most interesting role.'¹⁷ Laurents mentions that Hitchcock initially wanted Cary Grant for the role of Rupert and Montgomery Clift for Brandon along with Farley Granger for the weaker part of Phillip. Laurents thought this was 'dream casting,' but he was not surprised when Grant and Clift declined. Hitchcock told him that both actors felt uncomfortable due to their own ambiguous sexuality and their concerns about their screen images.¹⁸

Laurents felt the final casting of Jimmy Stewart closed all doors to completely understanding Rupert's true sexuality and his relationship to Brandon and Phillip. 'Stewart is interesting as the detective on the case but not as Rupert. That he was friends with two boys who were lovers makes no sense at all. Being gay, being any minority, is a bond, and Stewart has none in the picture except with an old maid who is literally the maid.'¹⁹

In a similar vein, Robin Wood, in discussing the moral and social climate of the times, noted that *Rope* could not openly mention homosexuality. 'The film is noticeably reticent on the subject of Rupert's own sexuality (he is a bachelor). If it cannot tell us explicitly that Brandon and Phillip are homosexual, it conspicuously abstains from telling us that Rupert isn't - apart from the fact that he is played by James Stewart, which of course carries its weight.'²⁰

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Notes

1. 'Prelude', Summer 2001, PCPA Theaterfest playbill, p. 20. At the same time, another stage production of 'Rope', this time Patrick Hamilton's original play, opened Off-Off Broadway in New York on September 6, 2001, and closed on September 29th. The play was presented with an intermission, and Michael Criscuolo, a reviewer for nytheatre.com, felt the insertion of an intermission, intended to build and prolong the suspense, did just the opposite by interrupting the play's momentum. (www.nytheatre.com/nytheatre/rope.htm)

2. "Hitchcock Without the Camera," by Philip Brandes, 'The Los Angeles Times', Sunday, August 19, 2001.
 3. 'The Alfred Hitchcock Story', by Ken Mogg. (1999). Titan Books: London, p. 104.
 4. "*Rear Window*, by Alfred Hitchcock". In 'Focus on Hitchcock', edited by A.J. LaValley. (1972). Prentice-Hall, Inc.: New Jersey, p. 41.
 5. 'Hitchcock's Notebooks', by Dan Auiler. (1999). Avon Books, Inc.: New York, pp. 483-484.
 6. 'The Films of Alfred Hitchcock', by George Perry (1965). Studio Vista Limited: London, p. 99. Perry also felt 'the ten minute take did not work. It was a limiting use of the medium, and parts of the film are unbearably tedious,' p. 93.
 7. 'Hitch: The Life and Times of Alfred Hitchcock', by John Russell Taylor. (1978). Pantheon Books: New York. p. 208.
 8. 'Original Story By: A Memoir of Broadway and Hollywood', by Arthur Laurents (2000). Alfred A. Knopf: New York.
 9. John Russell Taylor, p. 207.
 10. "Alfred Hitchcock" by Lindsay Anderson. In 'Focus on Hitchcock', p. 57.
 11. "Why Should We Take Hitchcock Seriously?" by Robin Wood. In 'Focus on Hitchcock', p. 80.
 12. 'Hitchcock: The First Forty-Four Films', by Eric Rohmer and Claude Chabrol. (1980). Frederick Ungar Publishing Company: New York, p. 73.
 13. Ken Mogg, p. 104.
 14. "Rope Comes Full Circle - Back to the Stage," by Michael Phillips. 'The Los Angeles Times', Wednesday, August 29, 2001.
 15. "*Rope* Makes World Premiere: PCPA Production A Creepy Retelling of the Hitchcock Classic," by Britt Fekete, 'Santa Maria Times', Thursday, September 20, 2001.
 16. "The Perfect Murder," by Ryan Miller. 'New Times', September 6, 2001
 17. Laurents. See # 8, p. 130-131. By the time Laurents was working with Hitchcock on *Rope*, he was not only struggling to come to terms with his own sexuality, but he was having an affair and living with Farley Granger, the actor who played Phillip in the film.
 18. Laurents goes on to explain that *Rope* would have been an entirely different picture with Cary and Monty in those pivotal roles. 'As compelling and fascinating as it should have been, the lesson, once again and always, was the enormous importance of casting,' p. 131.
 19. Laurents, p. 131.
 20. 'Hitchcock's Films Revisited' by Robin Wood. (1989). Columbia University Press: New York, p. 356. Wood also implies that the film might have been quite different with Cary Grant as Rupert.
- As an interesting side note: in most of the reviews and discussions of the film, credit is given to Hume Cronyn for his adaptation of the Patrick Hamilton play. I wondered about the extent of his contributions. Laurents is unclear as well. 'I was never shown what Hume did. I suspect, since he and Hitchcock were old friends, that he was used to help work out the details of Hitchcock's innovative plan to shoot *Rope* without any conventional cutting', p. 127. P.A.F.
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Best films of 2000 and 2001

Last issue we ran 10-best lists for 1998 and 1999, compiled by three distinguished Australian critics.

Re-capping, 1998 had no outright winner. The following films received two mentions out of a possible three: *The Truman Show* (Peter Weir), *As Good As It Gets* (James L. Brooks), *The Sweet Hereafter* (Atom Egoyan), *Welcome to Sarajevo* (Michael Winterbottom), *Primary Colors* (Mike Nichols), and *Hana-bi* (Takeshi Kitano).

By contrast, 1999 was *clearly* the year of *Eyes Wide Shut* (Stanley Kubrick) which received three-out-of-three mentions. Runners-up with two mentions each were: *Touch of Evil* (re-release of the 1958 Orson Welles film), *The Sixth Sense* (M. Night Shyamalan), and *The Thin Red Line* (Terence Malick).

Which brings us to our critics' lists for 2000. For once, we had not three but four critics (and hence four lists). Those participating were Adrian Martin (film critic, author of several books on film, and film reviewer for the Melbourne 'Age'), Tom Ryan (film academic, and film critic for the 'Sunday Age', Melbourne), Fiona Vilella (Editor of 'Senses of Cinema', the Melbourne-based film website with an international following), and Evan Williams (a doyen of Australian film reviewers, writing each week in 'The Australian'). Note that in the 2000 lists, the French film *Beau Travail* receives two mentions - then receives another mention in the 2001 lists: presumably, its release-date put it on the borderline of the two years. It may, therefore, be considered to have received three 'votes'. Other films thrice-mentioned in the 2000 list: *All About My Mother* (Spain), *The Insider* (USA), and *The Straight Story* (USA). No film was mentioned four times.

2000:

Tom's list (first-release films)

1. All About My Mother (Pedro Almodovar, Spain)
2. Wonderland (Michael Winterbottom, UK)
3. Conte D'Automne (Eric Rohmer, France)
4. Mr Death: The Rise and Fall of ... (Errol Morris, USA)
5. Topsy-Turvy (Mike Leigh, UK)
6. American Beauty (Sam Mendes, USA)
7. The Insider (Michael Mann, USA)
8. The Straight Story (David Lynch, USA)
9. The Talented Mr Ripley (Anthony Minghella, USA)
10. Titus (Julie Taymor, USA/UK)

Adrian's list ('from all sources')

1. The Shanghai Gesture (Josef von Sternberg, USA, 1941)
2. The Wind Will Carry Us (Abbas Kiarostami, Iran)
3. Beau Travail (Claire Denis, France)
4. The River (Tsai Ming-liang, Taiwan)
5. The Insider
6. All About My Mother
7. Another Day in Paradise (Larry Clark, USA)
8. Gohatto (Nagisa Oshima, Japan)
9. Mr Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr
10. The Straight Story
11. There's Something About Mary (Bobby & Peter Farrelly, USA)
12. Little Dieter Needs to Fly (Werner Herzog, Germany, 1996)

Evan's list

1. Topsy-Turvy
2. American Beauty
3. Kikujiro (Takeshi Kitano, Japan)
4. Bringing Out the Dead (Martin Scorsese, USA)
5. Gladiator (Ridley Scott, USA)
6. The Colour of Paradise (Majid Majidi, Iran)
7. La Veuve de Saint-Pierre (Patrice Leconte, France)
8. The Road Home (Zhang Yimou, China)
9. Romance (Catherine Breillat, France)
10. Felicia's Journey (Atom Egoyan, Canada/UK)

Fiona's list

1. Beau Travail
2. The Straight Story
3. Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai (Jim Jarmusch)
4. The Wind Will Carry Us
5. All About My Mother
6. Bringing Out the Dead
7. Conte D'Automne
8. Romance
9. Erin Brokovich (Steve Soderburgh, USA)
10. The Insider

(Tom Ryan's special Numb Bum Awards for the year's worst films were awarded to the following, in alphabetical order: *Groove*, *The Cider House Rules*, *Hanging Up*, *The Legend of 1900*, *Maybe Baby*, *The Muse*, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, and *Stigmata*.)

2001:

We're back to three critics this time. (The editor sends hearty thanks to Evan Williams for being one of our 'founding' critics over several years.) The film that stands out here is the Belgium film *Rosetta*, mentioned by all three of our critics. Adrian Martin summed it up thus: '*Rosetta*, by the Dardenne brothers, took a modest, "realist" subject - a working-class, teenage girl (incarnated unforgettably by Emilie Dequenne) desperate to get and keep a job - and suffused

it with unparalleled physical and emotional intensity. If one mark of a great movie is that it plunges us into a total experience - no matter how disconcerting or unfamiliar that experience may be - then *Rosetta* is among the greatest of works.' The following films are mentioned twice below: *The House of Mirth* (UK) and *A.I.: Artificial Intelligence* (USA).

Tom's list

1. Beau Travail (Claire Denis, France)
2. Kippur (Amos Gitai, Israel/France)
3. Moulin Rouge (Bazz Luhrmann, Australia)
4. (equal) Rosetta (Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne, Belgium)
4. (equal) The Gleaners and I (Agnes Varda, France)
5. Crazy (Heddy Honingmann, Holland)
6. Le Gout des Autres (Agnes Jaoui, France)
7. The Claim (Michael Winterbottom, UK)
8. Princess Mononoke (Hayao Miyazaki, Japan)
9. Amores Perros (Alejandro González Iñárritu, Mexico)
10. ABC Africa (Abbas Kiarostami, Iran)

Adrian's list

1. Rosetta
2. Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (Ang Lee, China, etc.)
3. The House of Mirth
4. The Exorcist: Director's Cut (William Friedkin, orig. 1973)
5. A.I.: Artificial Intelligence
6. Dr T and the Women (Robert Altman, USA)
7. Monkeybone (Henry Selick, USA)
8. The Goddess of 1967 (Clara Law, Australia)
9. Duets (Bruce Paltrow, Canada/USA)

Fiona's list

1. The House of Mirth (Terence Davies, UK)
2. A.I.: Artificial Intelligence (S. Spielberg, USA)
3. The Circle (Jafar Panahi, Iran/Italy)
4. Rosetta
5. 'R Xmas (Abel Ferrara, USA/France)
6. La Ville est Tranquille (Robert Guédiguian, France)
7. Saint-Cyr (Patricia Mazuy, France)
8. You Can Count On Me (Kenny Lonergan, USA)
9. (equal) Peppermint Candy (L. Chang-dong, Japan)
9. (equal) Platform (Jia Zhangke, Hong Kong, etc.)
10. (equal) Yi Yi (Edward Yang, Taiwan/Japan)
10. (equal) The Piano Teacher (M. Haneke, Austria)

(Adrian Martin's selection of the five worst films of the year, headed by one from Australia, is as follows: *The Monkey's Mask*, *Quills*, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, *The Blair Witch Project 2*, and *Requiem For a Dream*.)

BOOK REVIEW

By Ken Mogg

DeRosa, Steven: 'Writing with Hitchcock: The Collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and John Michael Hayes' (Faber and Faber, New York and London, 2001; 334 pp; pb)

Krohn, Bill: 'Hitchcock at Work' (Phaidon Press, London, 2000; 288 pp; hb)

Experience tells. Easily the most astute book on Hitchcock to appear in recent years is veteran Bill Krohn's 'Hitchcock at Work', the English version of 'Hitchcock au travail' (1999). Its only real competitor for the attention of the serious Hitchcock aficionado or scholar is the sumptuous volume 'Hitchcock and Art: Fatal Coincidences' (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 2000), edited by Dominique Païni and Guy Cogeval. Below those books I would rank two from Faber: Peter Conrad's 'The Hitchcock Murders' (2000) and Steven DeRosa's 'Writing with Hitchcock; also the collection called 'Alfred Hitchcock: Centenary Essays' (1999), edited for the BFI by Richard Allen and S. Ishii-Gonzalès. For purposes of the present review, I intend to focus on just two of these books: those by Krohn and DeRosa.

Bill Krohn has been Hollywood correspondent for 'Cahiers du Cinéma' since 1978; he also helped assemble (with Richard Wilson and Myron Meisel) *It's All True* (1993), resurrecting much of the 'lost' footage of the abandoned three-part documentary that Orson Welles was shooting in Brazil in 1942 while, back in Hollywood, RKO were hacking up *The Magnificent Ambersons*. In short, Krohn knows the ins and outs of Hollywood better than most, something to which he brings a cultured eye (he has an Arts background) and vigorous writing skills. His 'Hitchcock au travail' understandably won an award for the best large-format film book of its year.

Steven DeRosa is considerably younger than Krohn, and it shows. Nonetheless, he too holds university degrees (in Art and Media Studies), and appears to be familiar with the film industry from the inside, being a 'screenwriter and film archivist' (to quote the somewhat guarded blurb on the back cover of his book). As for his writing skills in general, they are evident enough - if, at this stage, less supple and trenchant than Krohn's. I also think, to put it politely, that DeRosa still has a few of the finer points of scholarship to learn. My review is both about scholarship and an attempt to expound some of the findings and key ideas of these two books.

* * *

Perhaps the best chapter in Krohn is the one called "Reinventing a Classic: *The Man Who Knew Too Much*" which, *inter alia*, makes this excellent scholar's point (pp. 160-61):

According to Leonard Leff ['Hitchcock and Selznick', 1987, p. 192] it was [Angus] MacPhail who, many years before, had given Hitchcock the word 'MacGuffin', used to designate whatever the characters in a thriller are chasing after. The word comes from a joke about a device called a MacGuffin for hunting lions in Scotland, where there are no lions - the moral being that the essence of the MacGuffin is to be nothing. Who better than MacPhail, then, [in a memo to Hitchcock] to have renamed the Killer (although the name the character bears in the script is never spoken and remained a joke between the collaborators): 'Rien'.

Krohn is referring, of course, to the would-be assassin played with splendid menace by Continental actor Reggie Nalder. Note Krohn's careful attribution of the character's name-change to Angus MacPhail, the sourcing of the information about the MacGuffin to Leonard Leff,¹ and the modifying parenthesis. As I say, Krohn is the complete scholar.

Not so, DeRosa! He makes roughly the same point as Krohn, thus (p. 269): 'It is later revealed that this man is the assassin, whose name in the script is Rien, which is apt since "*rien*" is the French word for "nothing" and the whole business of the assassination is the film's MacGuffin.' Yet DeRosa both fudges who should get the credit for altering the character's name and neglects to mention that anyway the point had already been made a year or two earlier by Krohn. Sadly, this instance of DeRosa's 'scholarship' is all too typical, as we'll see.

I'll try to be scrupulously fair about this. The reader should know that MacPhail was invited by his old friend, Hitchcock, to write the initial rough treatment for a remake of Hitchcock's 1934 classic, the original *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, after it became apparent that screenwriter Hayes would be unavailable for some weeks finishing *The Captain's Table* (which was eventually scrapped anyway - the film of Richard Gordon's hearty novel was finally made in England two years later, by Rank). As a result, Paramount put MacPhail on an eight-week guarantee (DeRosa, p. 155), and he and Hitchcock started work together at the end of January, 1955. Now let me quote from Dan Auiler's 'Hitchcock's Notebooks' (US edition, 1999, p. 176): 'The script [of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*] would eventually be penned by John Michael Hayes, but the principal construction took place during February with Angus MacPhail.' On the evidence of 'Notebooks' (pp. 176-97), that claim is incontrovertible - and in fact neither Krohn (especially) nor DeRosa says otherwise. Nonetheless, towards the end of the film's production, Hayes appealed to the Writers' Guild of America to stop MacPhail from receiving *any* screenplay credit - and was successful. (I am told that the WGA is notorious for many poor rulings in cases like this.)²

No doubt out of loyalty to Hayes, who provided in interviews much of the material for 'Writing with Hitchcock', DeRosa is as diplomatic as possible about this whole sorry business. Apparently a prolonged bout of neuralgia in March 1955 prevented MacPhail from making a substantial contribution to the three-way script conferences held between himself, Hitchcock and Hayes after the latter came on board; and for the same reason MacPhail never actually wrote out the treatment (as opposed to many pages of astute and even brilliant notes) for which he had been officially hired. DeRosa can reasonably conclude (p. 201): 'Had MacPhail written the treatment as he was hired to, he might have earned an "Adaptation by" credit and might even have been entitled to share in the screenplay credit ... [In the event,] the credit arbitration committee [could] reach but one conclusion: that Angus MacPhail contributed to the construction of the screenplay, but that the screenplay was [exclusively] that of John Michael Hayes.'

Morally, I have little quarrel with DeRosa's presentation of this particular matter. If Bill Krohn brings a keener *aesthetic* eye to the relative contributions made by MacPhail and Hayes to *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, that is a separate issue - to which I now turn. I will need to quote from Krohn at this point. He notes that it took Hayes less than a month to present Hitchcock with an incomplete first draft titled 'Into Thin Air' (the likely connection with the notion of the MacGuffin is something that neither Krohn *nor* DeRosa comments on!).³ He then observes (p. 161):

To say that Hayes fleshed out the characters would be to slight his contribution. Up until this point there were no characters, only an increasingly refined structure for provoking suspense worked out by a couple of veteran plot wizards. Hayes brought Ben, Jo and Hank to life ...

Having said that, Krohn can point to the other side of the coin. Noting that some of Hayes's best ideas, such as the McKennas' family quarrels, tend in the script to be too melodramatic, Krohn describes how Hitchcock directed these scenes in such a way that their point was deliberately thrust to the periphery. Krohn's conclusion (p. 162) is more sophisticated than anything DeRosa manages:

Indeed, before [Hitchcock and Hayes's] break - which was provoked by Hayes's decision that 'as a matter of principle, and even of my career' he deserved sole screenplay credit, and his success at getting the Writers Guild to give it to him - Hitchcock might very well have applied to Hayes his remark to Truffaut about Evan Hunter, the screenwriter of *The Birds*: 'He's a real professional, but he doesn't have the obliqueness of Hitchcock.'⁴

* * *

Here are other instances of the differences in 'scholarship' shown by the two books under review. I see no need to apologise for the fact that, in each case, I have a personal interest in the matter. I pass on my insights for what they're worth.

In 1996 I published on the World Wide Web my article "Out of Hitchcock's Filing Cabinet", revised from a paper delivered at the Melbourne Film Festival in 1988. (In the interim it was also published in the Australian journal 'Film Views'.) The article is still on the Web where, soon after it appeared, Steven DeRosa assuredly read it, as he and I often at that time corresponded by email and exchanged links for our respective websites. Among the matters considered in the article is where Hitchcock and Hayes may have got the idea (not found in the original film) for Jo's song at the embassy in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* that enables the McKennas to locate their kidnapped son. From an excellent 1973 monograph, 'Melodrama', by James L. Smith, in which 'happy endings' typical of 19th-century stage melodrama are enumerated, I quoted this gem (p. 36):

Lost children adopted by wealthy foster parents can be easily located by singing their favourite carol in the snowy street below.

If this wasn't a likely source for the ending contrived by Hayes and Hitchcock for their film, I couldn't at the time think of another or a better. Hitchcock, I told myself, may have long ago attended a play with just such an ending.⁵ So up on the Web went the quote. Some time later, friend and film critic Philip Kemp in London read my article in hardcopy and got in touch. There was, he said, another possible source for the idea. And then I learnt (or learnt again - it did sound familiar) the legend of how Richard I, known as Richard the Lionheart, returning from the Crusades, had been imprisoned by the King of Austria but was eventually rescued by his favourite troubador who went from castle to castle singing a song that had been composed by his master. When Richard heard the song, he joined in the refrain, thus signalling his whereabouts. Promptly I added this piece of information to the article on the Web, with the comment that Hitchcock (to judge from an audio-tape in my possession)⁶ must have once puzzled a group of USC students when he told them that the ruse of the song was taken from Shakespeare's 'Richard III!' (He certainly puzzled *me* for a long time with his remark!)

When Bill Krohn's 'Hitchcock at Work' came out, I was doubly gratified to read there (p. 158) a reference to the legend of Richard I and his troubador. Firstly, I was gratified because clearly Philip Kemp had been right: Krohn cites a memo from Hitchcock to Paramount which mentions how Angus MacPhail had suggested adapting the legend to their film.⁷ Secondly, I was gratified to find Krohn referring to Hitchcock's talk at USC (Hitchcock, wrote Krohn, 'was mixing up one of England's most infamous villains with one of its greatest heroes'). A footnote (p. 287) cited the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' website.

Later, I read DeRosa's book and this time had less reason to be gratified. The Richard I legend is described, yes (pp. 156-57), but there's no specific attribution of its use in the film to Angus MacPhail - Hitchcock's memo to Paramount goes unmentioned. Indeed, you might suppose that DeRosa didn't know of the memo, given a footnote (p. 313) which simply says: 'I am grateful to Bob Dell [from Pace University] for pointing this [the Richard I parallel] out to me.' As I say, no mention of Hitchcock's memo, nor, for that matter, of either the 'MacGuffin' website or Bill Krohn's book (which, remember, had preceded DeRosa's by easily a year).

Which may raise a further matter of some personal concern to me. In 1998 my octogenarian friend Leslie Shepard in Dublin wrote to me concerning Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (based on a story by Cornell Woolrich). Leslie had been an associate of noted film historian, the late Liam O'Leary. 'Do you know the H.G. Wells short story "Through a Window"?' Leslie asked. (I didn't.) Whereupon he proceeded to quote from memory the story's opening lines about a man sitting by his window overlooking the Thames, with his broken legs encased in plaster. By the time the story is finished, several other striking anticipations of the film *Rear Window* have occurred - suggesting to me (a) that Cornell Woolrich's 'Rear Window' took its inspiration from Wells, and (b) that Hitchcock, who had known Wells personally, had probably read the Wells story too and possibly been influenced by it when he decided to make his 1954 film. Some of this I wrote up in my book on Hitchcock (pp. 129-30) and had in fact discussed with Steven DeRosa beforehand (Steven wrote the excellent short survey of "Hitchcock and His Writers" for my book). Not surprisingly, then, the matter of the Wells story and its likely influence on Woolrich and/or Hitchcock turns up in 'Writing with Hitchcock', where it is mentioned more than once (e.g., pp. 13-14, 313) - but never with acknowledgment to either me (or my book) or Leslie Shepard ... At the very least, Steven old chap, your policy on acknowledgments seems inconsistent. If you thank Bob Dell (and no-one else) for pointing out to you the significance apropos Hitchcock of the legend of Richard I and his troubador, you should surely also thank either Ken Mogg or Leslie Shepard for tipping you off about the significance apropos Hitchcock of the H.G. Wells story called 'Through a Window'.

On this matter of 'scholarship', I need to give some further instances. Among my favourite Hitchcocks, and one of the four scripted by John Michael Hayes (sticking closely to the joyous short novel by Jack Trevor Story), is *The Trouble With Harry*. Apart from the moment near the end when the myopic Doctor stumbles from Jennifer's house, exclaiming, 'This is the first nightmare I've had in 25 years' - a moment more suited to radio comedy than an effective sight-gag - I find the film immaculate. That it's also a substantial one I tried to show in my essay first published in 'MacGuffin' #21, and then on the Web, called "The universal Hitchcock". The essay's argument, drawing on object-relations theory, that Harry is the film's MacGuffin, relates Harry to shared guilt derived from an infant's dependent relation on its mother. Interestingly, Robert Samuels's book, 'Hitchcock's Bi-Textuality' (1998, p. 63), makes very similar claims about the MacGuffin, using a Lacanian approach. In simpler terms, you could probably say that Harry represents Original Sin.⁸

DeRosa, too, analyses Hitchcock's film in his book, whose final chapter of 60 pages is called "The Screenplays - An Analysis". I'll make some general comments on that chapter in a moment; for now, my main concern, as I say, is with DeRosa's 'scholarship'. Again I happen to know that Steven read my essay on *Harry*: for a while, we had an enjoyable exchange of emails about the film, and Steven spoke of his pleasure at several times meeting with Hayes and of visiting locales where the film was shot. On one occasion he reported that he had just come from the site of the 'Wiggs Emporium' where he had seen the living image of 'Mrs Wiggs' herself! But I digress. I also recall Steven congratulating me for the point made in my essay about Jack Trevor Story's tramp who is heard 'mumbling something from Virgil'. 'No doubt the *Eclogues*', I had surmised, thinking of both works' Arcadian bent. 'Or the *Bucolics*', Steven had suggested. Well, the point ended up in DeRosa's book (p. 134) but it was now his alone. No mention of 'The MacGuffin' or its website (nor even of Bob Dell)!

Worse, DeRosa's analysis of the film makes particular play (pp. 262-63) with the film's theme of 'going home' and of how Harry himself returns to, and is associated with, Mother Earth. This was a leading theme of my essay, but, I'm sorry to report, that essay is *never* mentioned in DeRosa's book. On the other hand, the reader is told (p. 255) that Ed Sikov's essay on *Harry* in his 'Laughing Hysterically' (1994) is 'excellent' - though about the only overt use of it by DeRosa concerns Sikov's dubious reference to Deuteronomy (one of the books of Moses in the Old Testament) to explain why Harry ends up without shoes.⁹ In any event, such a reference is surely much less pertinent to Hitchcock's film than to Story's novel, given that the possibly Jewish name of Harry's (and Jennifer's) son, 'Abie', was changed by the filmmakers to 'Arnie' ...¹⁰

* * *

Of course, everyone is fallible, and from reading DeRosa's book I finally learnt about a couple of errors in mine. When 'The Alfred Hitchcock Story' came out, Steven (quite rightly) qualified his congratulations on it by saying to me that he had spotted slips. When I asked him what they were, he didn't reply. Well, as I say, I now know a couple of them. Trustingly, I had followed Doris Day's biography by A.E. Hotchner (Bantam edition, 1976, p. 193) in which Doris is quoted as saying that the difficult scene in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* where Ben sedates Jo before telling her that their son has been kidnapped was done in just one take. But in fact DeRosa's research showed him that Scenes 146A and 147E - the relevant ones - were shot eleven and ten times each, until Hitch was satisfied (DeRosa, p. 195).¹¹

Also, I wrote of *To Catch a Thief* in my book that Hitchcock had planned to open the film with a Mardi Gras parade in Nice (doubtless designed to announce the film's twin themes of 'masquerade' and 'life' - not dissimilar to those of *Harry*)¹² but had been prevented from doing so by a prolonged wet spell. DeRosa, though, found out that for budgetry

reasons, 'Hitchcock decided to drop the sequence more than a month before arriving in the South of France' (p. 307). The excuse of bad weather was probably just a publicist's fib.

Further, apropos DeRosa's chapter called "The Screenplays - An Analysis", I'm grateful to him for succinct observations like this list of what makes a shooting script Hitchcockian: 'the subjective camera technique, long sequences without dialogue, suspenseful set pieces, and the ironic use of framing and transition'. (p. 266)¹³ All of these things DeRosa finds in Hayes's screenplay for *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, and the chapter offers several such medium-level insights into the craft of both screenwriting and cinematic storytelling generally. On the other hand, it seldom pushes further. Robie's 'arc' as a character in *To Catch a Thief* develops late, we're told (p. 237), when he finally 'admits and accepts his dependence on others, particularly Francie'. Though DeRosa adds that Robie, even then, needs prompting, leading 'the reader and viewer to suspect he hasn't changed all that much, like Lisa at the end of *Rear Window*',¹⁴ there is no matching analysis of *Francie's* development as a character. After having been a spoilt, wilful young woman for whom 'words [were] just playthings',¹⁵ Francie claims to have suddenly matured. Yet the last scene contrives to suggest that in fact her wilful nature remains unchanged, and barely concealed.¹⁶ That is, she, too, is a very *Hitchcockian* character.

At the start of 'Writing with Hitchcock', the author suggests how certain traits of Hayes's screenplays for Hitchcock constitute their writer's special contribution. In particular, DeRosa singles out Stella in *Rear Window* as a blunt, earthy, straight-talking woman who 'is truly a Hayes character ... found over and over again in his work' (pp. 22-24). Up to a point, this may be true: we're told (p. 24) that the mother in *Torch Song* (1953) is the first such Hayes character, one also found in *To Catch a Thief* (Mrs Stevens), *The Trouble With Harry* (Mrs Wiggs), *Butterfield 8*, *Where Love Has Gone*, et al. Yet the evidence isn't wholly convincing. For a start, DeRosa himself notes (p. 41) that the role of Stella is 'almost a reprise of [Ritter's] previous appearances in Mitchell Leisen's *The Mating Season* [1951] and George Cukor's *The Model and the Marriage Broker* [1951]'. Is DeRosa implying that, in this matter, Hayes is just mimicking other writers? Then again, didn't Hitchcock's films already contain at least a variant of such a character? I'm thinking of the straight-talking young women in such films as *Young and Innocent*, *Shadow of a Doubt* (Charlie's sister, Ann) and *Strangers on a Train* (the Pat Hitchcock character)?

In any case, in 'MacGuffin' #24 (February 1998) I tried to show that the Stella character is something of an *archetype* - thus, in a sense, not created by any particular writer but *utilised* by writers such as Hayes. To illustrate my point, I noted how very similar to *Rear Window* in several respects (to the extent that it may have been a direct influence) is the crime novel 'The Daughter of Time' (1951) by Josephine Tey, whose 'A Shilling for Candles' had been filmed by Hitchcock as *Young and Innocent*. Among the similarities: a man laid up in bed or in a wheelchair after an accident; the man's boredom that leads him to solve a crime; a thick-skinned, straight-talking visitor, a middle-aged woman, who acts as the man's sounding-board and the story's Chorus (in 'The Daughter of Time' she is a charlady named Mrs Tinker); a fiancée who is a professional model or actress and who teams up with the older woman to help their mutual charge, i.e., the man, investigate the crime he seems to have unearthed ...¹⁷ Steven DeRosa read my article in 'The MacGuffin' (he told me) but chose to ignore the way it must surely modify any claim that blunt, straight-talking female characters are an invention or prerogative of John Michael Hayes.

I now come back to DeRosa's chapter "The Screenplays - An Analysis" to give one more instance of what I can only call a shallowness. If DeRosa had really grasped the beauty of Hayes's treatment of the 'going home' (to Mother) theme in *The Trouble With Harry*, and the choice of Shakespeare's 116th sonnet ('Love's not Time's fool') for Doctor Greenbow to quote,¹⁸ he would have noted how grimly honest it is that the film finally allows that the womb and then the tomb are the *only* two places where 'eternity' (timelessness) may be found - or anyway is simulated or parodied.¹⁹ In other words, he would have noted the foreshadowing of major themes of *Vertigo*, including that film's profoundly sardonic opposition of illusion and reality. Between the womb (a state of not knowing, or not *yet* knowing) and the tomb (a state of *non-knowing* or just *nothing*) is the world, in which *degrees* of knowing are always present. Norman O. Brown, in 'Life Against Death' (Sphere Books, 1968, p. 34), defined 'the basic theme of the universal history of mankind' as simply the 'infantile conflict between actual impotence and dreams of omnipotence' - which I take to be also the central theme of *Vertigo*²⁰ and which is another way of describing the essential restlessness that knowledge brings. (Given its title, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* should be included in the sequence of films I'm describing here, as should *The Wrong Man*, which is ultimately about 'something the characters can't comprehend ... that concerns the whole time/space/causality nexus of our understanding'.)²¹

But DeRosa draws no such connections. Nor does he emphasise the connection between love and a sense of eternity (a connection which another great English poet, Andrew Marvell, would mock as an illusion)²² and the attempts by any number of Hitchcock characters, especially the villains, to attain such a *rarefied* or *transcendent* state in other ways, thereby parodying 'true love'. Such characters include Uncle Charlie in *Shadow of a Doubt* (where the visual motif of waltzing couples may be shown to represent his yearning to return to the womb and its innocence), Doctor Murchison in *Spellbound* (who wants to stay director of the significantly-named 'Green Manors' *forever*), Brandon in *Rope* (whose

mock-Nietzschean sentiments the film suggests are anti-life, and who thinks that to commit a perfect murder would raise him to the status of artist), the tragic Scottie in *Vertigo* (who seemingly nearly breaks out of his metaphysical void to find a 'lasting' love), and Norman in *Psycho* (whose devotion to 'Mother' represents the ultimate narcissism).²³

When the bookish Dr Greenbow in *The Trouble With Harry* complains that 'this is the first nightmare I've had in 25 years', Hitchcock is mocking the false sense of 'eternity' that the Doctor's retreat from reality has given him. ('I wouldn't like to be operated on by Dr Greenbow', Sam murmurs significantly.) But such a retreat reminds us of the false 'Arcadia' in which the film's main characters have also immured themselves, until on the 'magical' day of Harry's death (even a MacGuffin has a function!) they all 'grow up' to a new sense of responsibility and limited, but gratifying, freedom. (Jennifer has her doubts about this, of course, but Sam tells her 'easy come, easy go' - which may well be the only sensible attitude to hold!) And Sam, the 'genius', may himself soon find his art taking on a new dimension and 'edge', you feel.

As I say, little of the *film's* dimensionality or edge is evoked by DeRosa, whose analysis falls back on formulaic observations about the characters' 'act of confessing' (p. 250ff) - the sort of thing that 'Cahiers' man Krohn probably heard in kindergarten! If that sounds, well, cruel, and maybe the author is addressing a new generation of readers for whom little of the book's content will be old hat, then so be it. I have already indicated that he writes well, in a teacherly sort of way, and am simply trying to 'place' his book with the readership it warrants. That readership isn't the general public - the book's content is somewhat esoteric, especially in its last third - but nor is it exactly required reading for all Hitchcock aficionados. Rather, it may interest the not-too-demanding general film buff and also win a deserved place on college bookshelves where screenwriting and/or Hitchcock courses are offered.

* * *

A thesis of Krohn's remarkable 'Hitchcock at Work' is that, contrary to a prevailing myth (part-fostered by Hitchcock himself), the director was not averse to improvisation during production, and accordingly many of his best scenes and effects were arrived at then. A couple of quotes may give the general idea. First, Hitchcock himself (p. 12): 'In my mind [it's about] ninety per cent worked out [beforehand].' And, second, Krohn on *Notorious* (p. 88): '[Several] details were added during production. The shooting thus became the next draft of the movie, rather than the reproduction of a plan already worked out on paper.'

The book deals mainly with Hitchcock's work in Hollywood, but his willingness to experiment outside of the script was apparent during the Silent Era. Krohn gives several instances, the most striking (p. 22) being that of *Downhill* (1927). At one London cinema, the film would stop for a few minutes while Ivor Novello, its star, performed onstage the next scene - anticipating, Krohn tells us, both the sound film and 3D!²⁴ (He might have noted further that this 'avant-garde' experiment had a thematic point: *Downhill* questions the very nature of reality and shows it to be a matter of worlds within worlds.²⁵ Novello's 'entr'acte' constitutes one more such world, one dependent for its significance on the film around it - a neat reversal of how a film is normally thought contingent on the 'real' world.)

With *Saboteur* (1942), Hitchcock was again happy to improvise when necessary. For example, humorist Dorothy Parker's 'additional dialogue' included colourful lines for the chirpy truck driver who gives Barry Kane a lift; noting how engaging a character the driver had become, 'Hitchcock decided to bring him back for an unscripted encore' (p. 43). This was the scene on the bridge where the driver helps Barry elude the police, an escape whose details were themselves left to the editing room for a final decision (after two different versions were shot).

Again, to return to *Notorious*, that film's first scene was written and originally filmed from Alicia's point of view inside the courtroom. But at some stage during production Hitchcock wrote in a memo that the scene wouldn't 'go over' (p. 94) unless it emphasised the photographers outside the courtroom (presumably they help establish the idea of Alicia's 'notoriety')²⁶, and so it was re-staged and re-shot.

Rear Window likewise benefitted from Hitchcock's readiness to depart from the shooting script, and to experiment with camera movements, angles, etc. (pp. 143-45). Another film where Hitchcock improvised was *Marnie* (1964). Deftly, Krohn first notes several shots whose unscripted choice of angle conceals Marnie's face, then observes how these all fit with the scripted shot of Marnie walking away from the camera with which the film begins. He concludes (p. 266):

This was a choice [Hitchcock] made not because Hedren would have been unable to play the scene (apparently she was capable of playing anything he asked, except cries of terror), nor because Marnie, or women in general, are a 'mystery', but for a technical reason: because the director who had spent his life filming his actors so that we can read the thoughts on their faces had understood that there are thoughts which cannot be photographed.

This rings true: Krohn has understood the film beautifully. (Of course, *Marnie* is also replete with shots of a different kind - what might be called the in-your-face kind. But in fact these complement the other shots, being reminders of the banality of everyday life on which the loveless Marnie would turn her back, as she has largely turned her back on us ...)

My parenthesis just now, and another slightly earlier (on *Downhill*), both complement and confirm one or other of Krohn's findings. It is a beauty of his book that, time and again, I found myself able to do this - it didn't happen with DeRosa's book. Krohn's perceptions of individual films are intuitive in the best sense, using archived and other material as a departure-point to winkle out creative decisions that give the films their dynamics, not just their formal structures or themes. In short, Krohn gets closer than other writers to Hitchcock's *mind* 'at work', and stimulates the reader in ways that film-writing, I dare say, ideally always should.

One learns on p. 42 that *Saboteur*'s chief villain, Tobin (Otto Kruger), 'represents the "America Firsters", *isolationists* [my emphasis] whom Hitchcock characterized to Truffaut as "American fascists", a theme that acquired a new inflection when, on 12 December, he brought in the very left-wing Dorothy Parker ...' Several of her screenplay's 'anti-establishment zingers' eventually caught the attention of the Production Code office, such as the line given to the heroine's uncle - himself an 'isolationist' of a different sort, a hermit - about how the duty of a citizen may 'sometimes involve disregarding the law' (p. 43). Here I immediately thought of the scene in Ford's/Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940) where some of the labour-camp workers, whose complaints have been ignored by corrupt officials, take the law into their own hands to deal with paid trouble-makers.²⁷ But it was Krohn's use of the word 'isolationists' that ultimately resonated with me. I had previously noted (in my book, p. 83) how *Saboteur*'s early scenes 'tend to show a disunited country whose citizens are restless or lonely'. Now I saw how, anticipating *Lifeboat*, the film opposes one (inadvertent) type of 'isolationist' - the disorganised good guys - to another, the scheming villain who wants to keep things as they are in order to further his own ends. But at the film's climax, by means of melodrama, Hitchcock gives us a *sense* of disunity overcome.²⁸ Importantly, this theme would become almost standard in his films (e.g., *Under Capricorn*, *Rear Window*), albeit usually inflected towards ambiguity and 'open-ended pessimism'. The theme, with its inflections, typically makes such films seem very satisfying when viewed today. (Steven DeRosa quotes approvingly [p. xii] the suggestion by Thomas M. Leitch that 'a singular theme is at the heart of each of the Hitchcock-Hayes films: the individual becoming one with his community'. But obviously I'm not sure that isn't also true of other Hitchcock films such as *Saboteur* - nor, incidentally, that it's necessarily a mark of a film's superiority.)

Another paragraph by Krohn, on *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943), that I found both insightful and stimulating, begins by noting how Sally Benson's and Alma Reville's rewrite of Thornton Wilder's script fleshed out the children Ann and Roger 'by giving them their own monomanias to match Herb and Joe, whose conversations [now] became overtly homicidal' (p. 63).²⁹ Succinctly, the paragraph lists further script changes. Then it concludes: '[Benson and Reville added] the story of Uncle Charlie's mysterious childhood accident, while cutting a line in the great monologue Wilder wrote for Cotten about "fat, greedy women" which made obvious what we suspect anyway: that Charles is a gigolo driven by self-loathing to kill his wealthy clients.' Again and again Krohn's book shows Hitchcock cutting out overt explanation of character, thereby illustrating something Norman Lloyd has written, that Hitchcock liked to leave audiences a bit puzzled.³⁰

But the suggestion that Uncle Charlie is a gigolo 'driven by self-loathing' rang several bells for me. The analogy with serial-killer Earle Nelson, who was part-inspiration for the character played by Joseph Cotten,³¹ now became clearer: Nelson went on a murdering spree across the United States in 1926 and 1927, killing mainly landladies, and seems to have been a religious zealot (who thought his face was like Christ's) as if to distract himself from the shame and self-loathing he felt deep down. But of course the resemblance to the character played by Ivor Novello in *The Lodger* (1926) is also striking. I have always thought that Novello's character, as hinted at by a flashback that only *seems* to exonerate him of murder, may actually have killed his sister at her coming-out ball (i.e., she's another adolescent on the verge of becoming a sexual being, like young Charlie in *Shadow*), then taken to slaying a succession of look-alikes of his sister as if to justify his original act by projecting the guilt onto these hapless blondes. So he calls himself 'The Avenger'. Meanwhile, he too is shown to be driven by religious fervour, at one point being photographed with the shadow of a cross on his face.

Further, there's a link to the other Ivor Novello character in Hitchcock's work: the wrongfully expelled schoolboy Roddy in *Downhill* (1927). From the halcyon world of youth Roddy is suddenly plunged, like Manny in *The Wrong Man* (1956), into a harsher, 'real' world where mortality and criminality are rife. After being relieved of his inheritance by a two-timing actress to whom he is briefly married (in these early films, women are nominally blamed, like the Biblical Eve, for most of men's calamities),³² he is forced to take work as a gigolo in a Paris 'music hall'. This establishment is run by another woman, 'Madame, La Patronne, expert in human nature'. But soon Roddy quits in disgust and self-loathing, and we may sense a rough parallel between this unmotherly Madame and the 'merry widows' on whom the vengeful Uncle Charlie preys ...

Still in line with Krohn's main thesis, another instance of his stimulating insights concerns the many alternate takes for *Rear Window*. (His analysis here, on pp. 144-46, is again excellent where, you feel, DeRosa's would have been humdrum. The former is probably closer to the perceptive writing found in Leonard Leff's 'Hitchcock and Selznick' - but sharper, and without resort to rhetoric.) Especially good is the passage describing how the two opening pans around the courtyard came to be in the film, and how they ended up merged in a way that 'shows the courtyard dead and then suddenly alive, as if a second curtain had gone up ...' Is this, then, another instance of worlds-within-worlds? Certainly Krohn's opposition of 'dead' and 'alive' fits the way the film first associates Jeff's freedom to travel the world for 'Life' magazine with one kind of being 'alive', then subtly calls the notion in question while keeping a degree of ambiguity. Is Lisa (whose name, and indeed the soundtrack, links her to the Mona Lisa) a force for life - or death? Is she Jeff's good anima-figure who will lead him to a deeper self-realisation, or is she his nemesis? In this regard, it's fascinating to note with Krohn (p. 277) how J.M. Barrie's 'Mary Rose' (1919), a touchstone work for understanding Hitchcock, has as a theme the mother who may do her son an injury. Such a theme is surely present in *Strangers on a Train* and *Psycho*, for example. And given the emphasis in the second half of *Rear Window* on Lisa's emerging femininity, to the point where, in her simple floral dress, she finally *cradles* Jeff's head in her hands, is the theme not also present there? That is, has she not 'castrated' him by taking away his individuality (his job as a roving cameraman), while thereby doing the world's 'Will' - of which Schopenhauer was so suspicious?³³ And, apropos worlds-within-worlds, is what we see of the New York courtyard in *Rear Window* somehow representative of 'real life'? Or do its various stories and quests amount to *no more than* an illusion and a dream (as the soundtrack again is instrumental in suggesting)?³⁴

Of course, perhaps the *most* dream-like of Hitchcock's films is *Vertigo*. Krohn suggests (pp. 186-87) that Angus MacPhail played a crucial role here. Hitchcock had planned to have MacPhail and Maxwell Anderson write the *Vertigo* screenplay, as they had worked separately and effectively on *The Wrong Man*. Accordingly, while waiting for Anderson to produce his first draft, Hitchcock assigned MacPhail to preliminary work on another project, *Flamingo Feather*. Krohn succinctly describes Laurens van der Post's adventure story as 'set in South Africa and built around an African tribe's myth of a recurring dream with apocalyptic implications'. Sadly, MacPhail had taken to drink - not for the first time³⁵ - and now withdrew himself from all projects. Nonetheless a two-page outline exists in Hitchcock's handwriting, but filed under 'MacPhail', of a new, freer adaptation of 'D'entre les Morts'. It is this which became the basis of *Vertigo*'s next draft. And now the film-to-be had for the first time the structure of a recurring nightmare. Krohn understandably deduces MacPhail's influence. He cites the latter's awareness of mythology, and how MacPhail had recently said, for example, that 'the essence of Buchan, Haggard and others is the theme of the romantic, poetic quest, which goes right back to the Odyssey'.

Well, *Vertigo* has a scene set in the Argosy Book Store.³⁶ And 'Flamingo Feather' was described by one reviewer as a cross between (Haggard's) 'King Solomon's Mines' and (Buchan's) 'Prester John'. So I, for one, not only see what Krohn and MacPhail are getting at but have myself written a practically identical observation to MacPhail's in an article on *North by Northwest*.³⁷ (For his part, Krohn says on p. 187 that MacPhail's comment is indeed more relevant to *North by Northwest*.) Also, several of Krohn's points about *Vertigo* almost eerily match ones of mine, and vice versa. For example, after noting (p. 155) the Keatsian strain in Maxwell Anderson's 'unusable' title, *Darkling, I Listen*, and what it signals about Anderson's attempt to adapt Boileau and Narcejac's novel as faithfully as possible, Krohn links both novel and film to Gnosticism. I had suggested something similar in my essay "The Fragments of the Mirror" ('MacGuffin' #25) where I noted the novel's allusion to a fictional film title, *Jacob Boehme*. The mystic Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) was in several ways a Gnostic. The scholar H. Popper wrote of him: 'Feeling that God was far away, he saw around him a world in which evil flourished, which contained both "good and evil, love and anger ... and that it went well in this world for the wicked as with the virtuous".'³⁸ But by resolving "'to wrestle with the love and the mercy of God", as Jacob in the Bible had wrestled with the angel of God', Boehme came to experience, as he had half-foreseen, a 'breaking through "the gates of hell, even into the innermost birth and geniture of the Deity"'. Krohn's definition of Gnosticism (p. 185) is very close to this: 'an ancient religion which preaches that the created universe is a mistake and aims at reunion with the True God, who lives at an infinite distance from it'.

Keats's line, 'Darkling I listen', from 'Ode to a Nightingale', is clearly relevant here. ('Darkling' means 'in the dark'.) So too are the poem's references to being 'half in love with easeful Death' and 'ceas[ing] upon the midnight with no pain', not to mention its concluding couplet:

Was it a vision or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: - Do I wake or sleep?

Most of these matters have been considered in previous issues of 'The MacGuffin' dealing with, for example, *Suspicion*, and with the episode of 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents' called "No Pain".³⁹ I shan't labour them further. I only want to observe that, apart from the Gnostic and Orphic strain in 'D'entre les Morts' and a possible influence of Cocteau's film

Orphée (1950), as noted by Krohn (p. 185), an *English* literary tradition is equally potent apropos *Vertigo*. Fairly obviously, this starts with Keats's poem itself - one of the most influential and most cited ever written. I recall a key episode in John Buchan's 'Mr Standfast' (1919) in which Richard Hannay's golden-haired girlfriend Mary Lamington awaits a late-night visit by villain Moxon Ivery who has proposed to her - the situation anticipates both *Suspicion* and *Notorious* - and who will shortly ask her to accompany him to his mother's house. As Mary waits for him, '[s]he tried to distract her mind by repeating poetry, and the thing that came into her head was Keats's "Nightingale", an odd poem for that time and place.' (If, gentle reader, you can grasp the full implications of that passage, you will surely be well on the way to understanding the obliqueness of some of *Hitchcock's* best scenes.)⁴⁰ I also recall that a story, 'The Alien Corn', by another of the director's favourite authors, W. Somerset Maugham, takes its title from a line in Keats's poem.

Krohn's book provides evidence of the life/death ambiguity that is everywhere present in *Vertigo*, et al. Edith Head flatly said that green in *Vertigo* is the colour of death (p. 194), but the sequoia forest scene (which has chthonic undertones) exists to remind us that green is *also* the colour of life: 'Their true name is *Sequoia sempervivans* - always green, ever-living.' Fascinatingly, the nun's words at the end of the film ('I heard voices - God have mercy') were dubbed by Kim Novak (p. 194), which I consider another sign of the life/death force which Judy/Madeleine and the (chthonic, black-garbed) nun both represent - if you take the nun's rejection of one kind of motherhood for another to be significant. Such a life/death force and its attendant ambiguity are akin respectively to the philosopher Schopenhauer's concept of the world's Will and the aesthetics and ethics of transcendence (both those things) which he formulated for coping with the ravaging Will: a form of 'dying in order to live'.⁴¹ So when Krohn writes of *Vertigo* in Gnostic terms, actually using the expression 'glimpses of what lies behind the veil of life and death' (p. 194), he is effectively referring to the veil of Maya, the Hindu expression appropriated by Schopenhauer as a metaphor of our myopic worldly condition. Of course, both Schopenhauer and Keats, fellow children of the Romantic Age, saw the world in overlapping ways - Keats's concept of 'negative capability', for example, eschewing 'irritable reaching after fact and reason', markedly resembles the wise detachment advocated by Schopenhauer. (For a note on the veil of Maya, and the crucial role that human sympathy and compassion - and art - may play in helping us to dispel illusion, however fleetingly, check the entry on *The Birds* in my book, pp. 164-65.)

Logically I now turn to *The Birds* for one last illustration of Krohn's admirable analysis that so often gives insight into Hitchcock's work overall. The director, we learn (p.240), had recently thought of filming a science-fiction novel, 'The Mind Thing', by Frederic Brown. In the final chapters, the hero is besieged in an isolated cabin by a variety of alien-driven animals and birds. Did the novel, wonders Krohn, sharpen Hitchcock's awareness during the shooting of *The Birds* of what was implied by his alternately omniscient and subjective camera? At one point in the film, the (subjective) camera is even accused by a character of *causing* the bird attacks. Further, the film is replete with related epistemological *mysteries*, instanced by Cathy's unanswerable question about why people kill people (quoted by Krohn on p. 247) and the news broadcast announcing that the reason for the birds' attacks 'does not seem clear as yet' (lines which Krohn hints may have been pencilled into Evan Hunter's script by Hitchcock himself - p. 249). (By the way, Krohn draws a parallel with the enigmatic car radio messages heard in Cocteau's *Orphée*, but of course there is a still earlier precedent in Hitchcock's own work: the 'nonsensical' Resistance broadcasts heard in *Aventure Malgache* [1944].) In point of fact, none of these philosophical matters is unfamiliar to anyone who knows Schopenhauer's description of the world. They are all aspects of the creative/destructive Will, a life/death force which drives us at every turn, but which is finally unknowable because of our subjective human condition. The Will is thus the ultimate villain - and in *The Birds* its symbol is surely the birds themselves - but such is the *principium individuationis* (principle of individuation) that we ourselves are blameworthy for what befalls us. Out of ignorance and selfishness and pettiness, we allow -and even encourage - the Will to have its way in us, thereby more than likely bringing harm to our immediate circle and beyond. Schopenhauer extracts a moral principal here, an appeal to quietism based on wisdom, such that even going to the cinema might be thought a culpable act - as Hitchcock's camera at times implies, not altogether jokingly. Paradoxically, though, Hitchcock's films *also* appeal to the life-affirming (call it Nietzschean) as opposed to life-denying (call it Schopenhauerian) aspects of the Will in us, and/or our attitudes to them. Hence both the films' peculiar ambiguity and their power to engross us.

In his book 'Schopenhauer' (1994), Christopher Janaway inadvertently illuminates much of Hitchcock's work, I think, by noting how Schopenhauer opposed to his (Kant-derived) concept of Will a resort to the liberating knowledge offered by Plato. 'Schopenhauer's philosophy really took shape', writes Janaway (p. 22), 'once he attained the distinction between thing in itself [will] and Platonic Ideas: the first the murky reality underlying the empirical world in which the individual toils and tries to understand the connection of things, the other an exceptional vision to aspire to, of all connections undone and a brighter reality contemplated without striving and pain.'

For me, that evokes the endings or climaxes of several Hitchcock films, whether Lina's 'Keatsian' surrender without a struggle (or 'irritable reaching after fact and reason') that Hitchcock wanted for *Suspicion* ('Will it [the poison] be painless?' she resignedly asks herself),⁴² or the decidedly parodic ending of *Psycho* in which Lila Crane has a cautionary

encounter with an implacable force (or anyway its proxy)⁴³ and Norman Bates turns into a virtual Buddhist, yielding to the Mother of all principles - call it the ultimate anima-principle - and is last heard intoning, 'I'm not going to even harm that fly!'⁴⁴ Also, there is the ending of *The Birds* ...

Compassion, traditionally a feminine quality, does indeed come into play at the end of *The Birds*, as Mrs Brenner, seeing Melanie's terrible wounds after the attic scene, murmurs 'Poor thing'. It's as if Melanie were herself a wounded seagull, which is apt given that Will, like the birds, is everywhere. Melanie is now at one with the birds,⁴⁵ as we *all* are if only our categorising, subjective minds would open up and see it ('all [false] connections undone'). Lina's self-sacrifice (which I admit to not fully understanding, whereas the 'To a Nightingale' scene in Buchan's 'Mr Standfast' makes perfect sense to me), and Norman Bates's dissolution back into the Mother (principle) from which he came,⁴⁶ both point towards the true seriousness that informs the ending of *The Birds*. Moreover, the film's note of compassion invites us to share the potential breakthrough in knowledge (call it Gnosis) made by Melanie. Suitably, the slanting rays of sunlight outside the Brenner house indicate the 'brighter reality contemplated without striving and pain' (Schopenhauer) and/or the absence of 'irritable reaching after fact and reason' (Keats) - states that may after all be attainable.⁴⁷

I'll try and sum this matter up and give it a focus. Krohn analyses the attic scene in *The Birds* in ambiguous terms that match the film's own (pp. 250-51). On the one hand, he reports that Hitchcock told Tippi Hedren before the start of shooting that Melanie enters the bird-filled attic and slams the door 'in a self-sacrificial way' (though again I must say that I don't fully understand the logic of this - the moment has always looked phoney to me - since surely Melanie could have saved everyone trouble by retreating back out the door and *then* slamming it?) But in fact Krohn proceeds to observe that Melanie's 'falling back and knocking the door shut when the attack starts [now] looks like an accident'. (Perversely, I have always felt at this point that you can tell that Hitchcock had *directed* it that way!). Finally, adding to the confusion, he qualifies his last point: such a so-called accident 'can also be interpreted, in Robin Wood's phrase, as a gesture of "voluptuous surrender and prostration" before her attackers'. This of course sounds like Lina's acceptance of Johnnie's poisoned glass of milk (which I suggested in 'MacGuffin' #7 is like the act of sex itself, towards which Lina has always been ambivalent).⁴⁸ Yet clearly, I'd say, Hitchcock had also wanted Melanie's 'self-sacrifice' to extend the tradition of the Christ-figures in his films (starting with Fearogod in *The Mountain Eagle* and the Ivor Novello character in *The Lodger*) who suffer or take upon themselves the evil of others for the good of a community (if not humankind in general). And he had probably seen a valid psychology in this because, as both Christianity and Schopenhauer (the latter drawing on Eastern wisdom) teach, it is precisely in an act of surrender of one's striving, wilful self to a higher power (God, Will) that salvation may be had. Lila in *Psycho* and Melanie in *The Birds* lead us, the audience, to a point where we experience, albeit vicariously, an analogue of the 'cleansing' that Marion in *Psycho* had too wilfully sought earlier. Asked what was the deepest logic of his films, Hitchcock replied: 'To put the audience through it.' *Right* through it, he might have added.⁴⁹

To encompass everything, to leave nothing out, was a tradition of German Expressionist cinema. Accordingly, the German films were typically microcosms of their time and place, whose sociological vision was pessimistic: a patently corrupt and/or economically and spiritually destitute society wasn't likely to change much. (Lang's 1927 *Metropolis* appears some sort of anomaly here but only because of its futuristic content.) Given that such a worldly pessimism, based on a determined attempt to see the world whole, in empirical terms, also informs Schopenhauer's *Weltanschauung*, it may not be coincidental that the scriptwriters of the definitive German Expressionist film, *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (1919), chose a photograph of Schopenhauer in his old age as the model for Caligari's outward appearance.⁵⁰ In addition, a line of dialogue from *Caligari* may remind us of the no less typical *subjectivity* if not *hubris* of the German films: 'I must know everything ... I must penetrate into his innermost secrets ... I must myself become Caligari.'⁵¹ (It's scarcely surprising that Murnau chose at this time to film a version of *Faust*.) Largely out of this tradition came Hitchcock's films, albeit adapted to British and, later, American, genres and their audiences. It seems to me that much of what I've been describing in the past few pages, and shown informing *The Birds* in particular, is thereby explained (or anyway best understood). Finally, I sense in reading Krohn's 'Hitchcock at Work' that its author has consistently shown an awareness of just such a largeness of purpose in Hitchcock. (It must be added parenthetically that I did not feel that awareness when reading DeRosa's book.)

* * *

Of course, both books contain valuable research material. Sometimes it is mutually supportive or just slightly variant. For instance, Krohn reports (p. 204) that the title *North by Northwest* was mooted as early as Ernest Lehman's first draft screenplay, then was dropped until much later. DeRosa indirectly confirms this when he quotes (without comment) John Michael Hayes saying that back when he and Hitchcock were working on *The Trouble With Harry*, '[i]n every spare moment we ... kicked around ideas for something called *North by Northwest*' (p. 145). So much for the notion that the title was thought up at the last minute by MGM story editor Kenneth McKenna!

Especially interesting are both authors' comments on the so-called 'Portents' hymn sung by the congregation at the Ambrose Chapel in the 1956 *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. In this matter, *prima facie* DeRosa has delved more deeply. Krohn tells us (p. 178) that the hymn 'seems to have been written specially for the film to avoid paying royalties for an existing hymn' - but DeRosa says (p. 277) that the lyrics 'appear to date back to 1791 from a volume entitled *Psalms and Hymns of Magdalene Church*'. Consistent with the tentative phrasing used by both authors here, they even quote the lyrics slightly differently! Not only that, but - fascinatingly - they offer quite divergent interpretations. Here are the lyrics (as given by Krohn):

From whence these portents around
That heaven and earth amaze?
Wherefore do earthquakes cleave the ground?
Why hides the sun in shame?

Let sin no more my soul enslave
Break now the tyrants' chain.
Oh save me whom thou canst to save,
Nor bleed nor die in vain.

And here is Krohn's reading (p. 178): 'The person uttering these words, who is present at the Crucifixion, knows that the earthquakes and darkness are portents of his salvation. In the second verse he prays to the dying Christ to free him from the tyrant, Original Sin.' This sounds incontestable (in which case, note that the plural construction of the line, 'Break now the tyrants' chain' needs altering - which is in fact how *DeRosa* renders it). Such a reading goes with the arguable tendency of many Hitchcock films, including this one, to lead the viewer to a point where he/she is offered (limited) redemption - that is, if the viewer is ready for it ...⁵²

Appearing to ignore - or overlook - this reading, DeRosa interprets the role of the hymn differently. 'The hymn', he says, 'warns of the greater stakes in the two musical sequences to follow at the Albert Hall and at the embassy.' (p. 277) He continues: 'The first verse, growing darker with earthquakes and the sun hiding in shame, is a foreshadowing of the Albert Hall sequence and its ... "Storm Cloud Cantata." The second verse foretells Mrs Drayton's rebellion against her husband at the embassy - "Let sin no more my soul enslave/ Break now the tyrant's chain" - when she decides to help Ben escape with Hank and stands up to Drayton, saying, "You've got to let the boy go!"'

It needs only brief reflection to see that these two readings are not incompatible. The almost shabby English couple, the Draytons, are like a 'shadow' version of the more fortunate McKennas, and *both* couples are representative after their fashion of how things may go for us in this not exactly best of all possible worlds. (Cf, say, the situation in *I Confess*, with its two socially-contrasted couples, the Grandforts and the Kellers; note, too, that Mrs Keller finally stands up against her by-now corrupt husband in a way that foreshadows Mrs Drayton's protest in the later film.) Accordingly, Mr Drayton may finally 'represent' the ineradicable Original Sin in all of us, an interpretation which is consistent, I think, with what I suggested above about how a Hitchcock film may lead the viewer to a decisive moment (the culmination of several in each film) where essential matters become focussed, offering us finally at least a glimpse of what belongs to Man and what to God.⁵³

Note, however, that Krohn's reading is fundamental, DeRosa's less so. (Historians distinguish between an event's underlying and immediate causes, and something like that distinction seems to apply here.) You could jettison DeRosa's analysis without greatly affecting the film's substance, but Krohn's reading has a bedrock quality. I would add that Krohn's reading proceeds from the literal text (and texture) of the film, whereas DeRosa's looks more opportunistic and even to be 'read into' the film. On the whole, these distinctions seem to me to hold for the two books overall.

* * *

Still on matters of scholarship, then, I'd like to conclude this review by itemising instances of the sort of thing just mentioned. Even before 'Writing with Hitchcock' came out, DeRosa claimed to me that the reason Hitchcock often adapted films from lesser-known novels and plays was that he didn't want the original author to be a rival. On *Rebecca*, DeRosa said, Hitchcock had fretted because of his billing after both Selznick and Daphne du Maurier, and had vowed not to let such a thing happen again. DeRosa repeats this claim in his book (p. 125n), but *gives no source and little evidence*. At best, the claim strikes me as exaggerated. For one thing, Hitchcock clearly had his favourite (rather middle-brow) authors, some of whom he knew personally, such as Helen Simpson, and whose novels or plays he would very likely have filmed anyway because they offered him cinematic or technical stimulus. (Robert Hichens's 'The Paradine Case', Patrick Hamilton's 'Rope', and Simpson's 'Under Capricorn' were all works that he had long thought of filming - though it's true that the latter was seen by him primarily as a vehicle for bringing back his favourite actress to that time, Ingrid

Bergman.) For another thing, Hitchcock's theory adduced to Truffaut that classic novels have already found their perfect form - so why meddle with them? - is obviously put forward in good faith. Not that Hitchcock was rigid when it came to choosing source material. He seriously wanted to film Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' with Cary Grant, and I gather that the main reason the project fell through was simply that Laurence Olivier beat them to it!⁵⁴

Another instance of DeRosa's not-fully-substantiated claims relates to his central theme: that Hitchcock tried to give the impression that he alone created his films. I would contest this suggestion, up to a point, on two grounds. The first reason for contesting it is simply that Bill Krohn's book gives ample evidence nullifying DeRosa's position in which the screenwriter is seen as ascendant or at least equal to Hitchcock as a creative figure. A Hitchcock film is a Hitchcock film, indubitably. (Samuel Taylor has spoken of the way Hitchcock got the sort of material he wanted from his screenwriters by what could afterwards be seen as a process of osmosis: two minds had become one.)

My other ground for questioning DeRosa's claim is that he himself several times provides evidence to the contrary. On p. xi he quotes Hitchcock as saying, 'very often the director is no better than his script'. On p. 105, we learn that the director publicly complimented John Michael Hayes for having done 'a remarkably fine job on the screenplay of [*To Catch a Thief* ... when you're forced to cut such a script you're left with an awful feeling of guilt'. Hitchcock had already told reporters during the filming, 'Proper casting, not only of performers but of writers, and a close relationship between the artistic and technical people involved in a production, are all vitally important to the success of a good suspense film' (p. 119). And on p. 166, DeRosa tells us that 'Hitchcock valued Hayes's talents, which developed significantly under his tutelage'. (Significantly, too, Hitchcock wanted Hayes to work on the 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents' series.) Put all of these instances of the director's frank acknowledgment of his indebtedness to the work of others with further such instances to be found in 'Hitchcock on Hitchcock' (1995), edited by Sidney Gottlieb, and you see a rather different Hitchcock to the one DeRosa would paint. Further, I think that Hitchcock was often of necessity merely going along with the simplifications required by the popular media of his day. *Anyone* who has had dealings with the media knows the pressures to keep a narrow focus and to dramatise. Besides, I'm not aware of other directors of Hitchcock's day (outside of Russia and perhaps Ingmar Bergman's Sweden) who were any more eloquent in public about the work of their collaborators.

Lastly, I'll cite the following as an instance of where DeRosa (cf his analysis of *The Trouble With Harry*) again seems to me to ignore a film's most fundamental level. In the 1956 *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, we're told, 'it is by pure chance that Jo (and later Ben) arrives at the site of the assassination attempt' (p. 279). In basic story terms, that's true enough: Jo and Ben head for the Albert Hall simply because they need to contact Buchanan, the police official who is attending a diplomatic affair there. But of course their son has been kidnapped by the would-be assassins to silence them - all along, both have 'known too much' about the planned killing, if not its intended victim.⁵⁵ Besides, there is something very satisfying about the seemingly fortuitous way everything comes together like this. Given the London setting, there's a Dickensian sense of the power of melodrama to touch the ineffable - Hitchcock's (and Angus MacPhail's) very next film, *The Wrong Man* (1957), would capitalise on just such a sense (and its psychological/epistemological underpinnings).⁵⁶ Moreover, Hitchcock was careful to introduce into his film a thematic thrust (what Krohn calls a 'fatalistic tinge, which is reversed in the last scene' - p. 178) that gives a further dimension again. The matter of 'knowing too much' becomes finally the already-cited question informing so many Hitchcock endings: what belongs to Man and what to God? In other words, in what sense, if any, can we talk of Free Will?⁵⁷

* * *

So how exactly do I rate Krohn's book? While I was reading it, I felt at times that the author was skirting a certain brittleness in his grasp of Hitchcock (especially of the British films) - but doing it so well that the book becomes a *tour de force* by that very fact. Once or twice, I heard echoes of my own material published first on my website, but nearly always I concluded that Krohn and I had simply arrived at insights or conclusions by similar, or even divergent, paths. Occasionally, too, Krohn would say something that went against a supposed fact, or attribution, in my 'The Alfred Hitchcock Story', as when he claims (p. 105) of *The Paradine Case* that Hitchcock brought 'the picture in under budget by filming the courtroom scenes on his Old Bailey set ... using four cameras'. According to what is reported in my book (p. 103), the use of the four cameras indeed 'speeded things up and saved money, [but this] was just as well since the film [still] cost an astronomical \$4,000,000'. (I don't know for sure, but I suspect that this time Krohn has made a rare slip-up!) Lastly, I would occasionally rebel inwardly against Krohn's explication of abstruse imagery, as when in describing Alex Sebastian in *Notorious* he took licence from Ben Hecht's second draft to tell us (p. 101) that 'mythologically Alex is Hades, who bore Persephone off to his kingdom in Hell'; and Alicia, in the same film, 'like all the heroines of Hitchcock's films of the 1940s ... is [indeed] a modern version of classical antiquity's most famous dying and reborn vegetable goddess', i.e., Persephone.⁵⁸ This might be true, I told myself (mindful that in 'MacGuffin' #16 I analysed *Spellbound* in terms of fertility myth), but it doesn't get us very far.

Well, shame on me! In retrospect, I readily accept Krohn's reading of the film here, and find it (and the author's scholarly vigour) instructive. None of my original reservations about the book matters in the light of one simple fact: overall, Krohn gives us the best insights into Hitchcock's working methods, and artistry, since the publication of Truffaut's 'Le cinéma selon Hitchcock' thirty-five years ago. In addition, the book is lavishly illustrated, often with rare, astutely chosen and placed (and generously sized) frame blow-ups, many of them in colour; as for the text, it is supple and intelligent, and contains found truths of a high order in practically every paragraph.

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Notes

1. Neff himself doesn't source his claim. I believe he is referring to a remark made by Ivor Montagu which, on examination, appears more speculative than conclusive on Montagu's part.
2. This step by Hayes effectively foreshadowed the sundering of his working relationship with Hitchcock that soon followed.
3. Nor does either author note the provenance of that title in a famous passage from Shakespeare's 'The Tempest': 'Our revels now are ended. These our actors, / As I foretold you, were all spirits and / Are melted into air, into thin air: / ... / ... We are such stuff / As dreams are made on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep!' (IV, 2) It would of course have been the second time that Hitchcock had raided 'The Tempest' for a film title (cf. '*Rich and Strange*'). Of further interest is how the title was simultaneously being considered for the episode of 'Alfred Hitchcock Presents' eventually released as "The Vanishing Lady" (and starring Pat Hitchcock): airdate 30 October, 1955. The notion of life as a dream informed several Hitchcock films of the 1950s, including *Rear Window* and *Vertigo*. (I would add that the notion greatly appealed to the philosopher Schopenhauer, who applied it to his *Weltanschauung* of the world as Will and Representation [reality and appearance] and quoted both Shakespeare and the Jesuit poet/dramatist Calderón, amongst others, in support.)
4. Hayes himself acknowledged that plotting wasn't his forte: 'Plotting was not my greatest talent' (quoted in DeRosa, p. 92).
5. Not only that, but he may well have obtained from stage melodrama inspiration for the notion of the MacGuffin. The very same paragraph from Smith part-quoted in the text also lists such typical ingredients of melodrama as the following: 'Awful Secrets are always revealed [by the play's end] and The Missing Papers found. These necessary documents provide endless excitement. Heroes are always searching for secret despatches, scientific formulae, forgotten marriage-lines, mortgage deeds, holograph confessions or forged receipts, and every villain hides a will of his own.'
6. I thank Richard Franklin for providing me a taped copy of Hitchcock's USC remarks.
7. A couple of other times, or more, Krohn has -gratifyingly - confirmed a hunch of mine about a Hitchcock film. In his book, he notes (p.178) that the title of the song sung by Doris Day in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956), "Que Sera, Sera", was indeed taken from the Rosanno Brazzi character's family motto (seen on a tombstone) in Joseph Mankiewicz's *The Barefoot Contessa* (1954) - with 'Q' substituted for 'C', notes Krohn, so as to give the title appeal in Spanish and French-language markets. And recently Krohn's archival research into *Suspicion* has shown that Hitchcock and writer Samson Raphaelson were indeed - to judge from one script draft - thinking of Johnnie (Cary Grant) as a bit of a rake - hence the allusion in the finished film to Johnnie's membership of the Hogarth Club!
8. Thus he is as *troubling* as Ballyntine's suppressed memory in *Spellbound* (1945) of having accidentally killed his young brother. As I show in my book (p.96), that incident serves as the film's suitably Freudianised metaphor of Original Sin; and in both *Spellbound* and *Harry* the characters are guilty innocents - or (if you prefer) innocently culpable. There's further discussion of the MacGuffin-as-metaphor on the FAQs page of the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' website.
9. Of course, I'm pleased that DeRosa thinks highly of Sikov's book, seeing as I had myself cited it favourably in my own book (pp. 134-35).
10. There had been an exactly similar name change, I'm reminded, in the first version of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. There, the name of the assassin in the script, Levine, was changed to Ramon in the film to avoid offending Jews. See DeRosa, p. 312 (n153).
11. Oops! This may not be so! Doris Day may have got it right after all, and DeRosa may have got it wrong! I was sufficiently puzzled by the discrepancy between the two reports, to contact Bill Krohn before going to press and ask if he could explain why Day appeared to have mis-remembered what happened. (Note: emails I sent to Steven DeRosa were not answered.) Bill, I said, Steven DeRosa reports that Scenes 146A and 147E were taken eleven and ten times each. Here's Bill's typically forthright (and perceptive) reply: 'So? Scene 146 is the one where Ben forces Jo to take the drug, ending with her saying "I am now relaxed and waiting." 146 or 146A, depending on the numbering system used at Paramount, would be the particular set-up that covered it in a master shot. That's not the one she said she did in one take. 147 is the long scene that ends with her breaking down. If AH decided to cover it in a master, her "one take" would be 147 or 147A - and if you watch, this is in fact the case: It's the long take of Stewart in MLS walking around the room with Day on the bed, her back to us (her line about being relaxed is repeated at the beginning, or looped in). At the end of it, she gets up, he takes her in his arms, and she cracks. This is intercut with at least three other setups showing Stewart and Day in MS, and then tighter on Day, but the crackup - the shot she's remembering in her memoir - happens in what must have been the first MLS after lunch, which would be listed as 147 or 147A - again, depending on how a Paramount script supervisor would count. It wouldn't be 147E, that's for sure. 147E was almost certainly a closeup, of Day or Stewart, to be used with shots taken before, when the breakdown had already occurred. I'm not surprised AH shot it several times. The only way Day's recollection of doing the scene in one take could be literally true would be if the entire three pages were covered in the film in one uninterrupted shot, with no other setups, which is certainly not the case.' Thanks Bill. I'm allowing the text to stand so as to accommodate this footnote, which I might not otherwise have had the opportunity to write up.
12. The film now begins with a shot of a travel poster proclaiming 'If you love life, you'll love France'. This parallels the emphasis on the life-force in *Harry* - though, initially, that film's characters - like Robie in *Thief* - appear to be existing in a state of retreat from real engagement with life. (Such a theme may also be detected in *Rear Window* and *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.)
13. I suppose that a good instance of the last-named - ironic framing or transition - is the eye-into-plughole transition in *Psycho*; life-to death, organic-to-inorganic, being-to-nothingness. It has a rough parallel in the bone-to-spaceship transition early in Kubrick's *2001*, except that the 'irony'

there (different degrees of sophistication of tool or weapon - what Marshall McLuhan called 'extensions of man'; the suggestion of *plus ça change ...*) is making a more purely intellectual point. (I'm taking the opportunity to note here the fundamental life/death concern that is so typical of Hitchcock.)

14. Such characters may be found in other Hitchcock films, though. Several of Hitchcock's villains are clearly incorrigible. And do we really believe that, say, Roger Thornhill in *North by Northwest* is going to mend his divorcé ways at the end of that film? Further, perhaps it's worth noting that characters in Dickens are often especially set in their ways - almost like impaled insects wriggling futilely on a board - including even the heroes (notably in the darker, later novels), such as John Harmon in 'Our Mutual Friend'.

15. Cf her mother's remark to Robie about sending her to finishing-school: 'I think they finished her!'

16. All of which is akin to what Schopenhauer taught: that though one's 'empirical character' may change, our underlying 'intelligible character' (which exists in the noumenal realm, and is essentially unknowable) does not. Hitchcock presents this truth about human nature expressionistically, so to speak.

17. I have recently written a slightly revised and expanded account of this aspect of *Rear Window* - its *archetypal* aspect, I've called it - based on what I originally wrote on that film in 'MacGuffin' #23. This new account may be published in 'SPFX' magazine and/or - eventually - on the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' website.

18. John Michael Hayes calls it 'my favourite sonnet from Shakespeare': DeRosa, pp. 139-40.

19. The pre-natal experience (or even the whole pre-Oedipal one, up until the child turns four) is traditionally associated with 'timelessness', as is the state of death. From Mother's womb (back) to Mother Earth is the journey we all must take, with fluctuating degrees of consciousness - which, though, is never absolute. (If it were, Kant's and Schopenhauer's distinction between phenomenal and noumenal realms - the latter essentially unknowable - would be invalid.) Yet artists, philosophers, mystics, and others, have often felt that a supra-consciousness is possible, and some have suggested that it amounts to an 'escape' from time. On the other hand, common sense says that this is an illusion. Schopenhauer resorted to Plato's notion of ideal 'forms' to try and reconcile, or anyway move between, the two positions; Hitchcock, you feel, simply kept an open mind and thus, as so often, remained close to Schopenhauer's particular largesse of outlook.

20. Scottie's impotence - real and/or symbolic - is established early in the film: his acrophobia is itself symbolic in that respect - in the final analysis, a symbol of a symbol (acrophobia > sexual impotence > metaphysical impotence). When he meets Madeleine, and falls in love with her, he has something to prove, but clearly this is more than just a virility problem. He embarks on a quest, or odyssey, that makes him a virtual Faust-figure, an everyman. (Note all the great stories coming together!) He even dreams of getting over his 'impotence', and being 'omnipotent', *permanently* or in *eternity*: this is the meaning of the religious and other symbolism that accompanies his attempt to turn Judy (back) into Madeleine, an 'eternal-feminine' figure who seems to possess (or be possessed by) the very secrets of the grave itself.

21. I originally discussed this matter in 'MacGuffin' #20, and then in my book, p. 145. The mind's predisposition (Arthur Schopenhauer tells us) to 'comprehend' all phenomena and all experience using just *three* categories of understanding - 'time', 'space', and 'causality' (the latter subject to the 'principle of sufficient reason') - represents Schopenhauer's own boiled-down version of Kant. But the implication is the same. What we 'know' is always 'subjective' - because whatever our 'knowledge' consists of, it remains purely 'mental' and subject to human (mental) nature, while non-phenomenal 'reality', the noumenal, escapes us. And even within the limitations that human (mental) nature imposes, further limitations apply because of the capacity and background and situation of any particular individual. If 'God' is 'ultimate reality', then not only is 'God' unknowable but even the most able of us is puny indeed. This hasn't stopped artists, mystics, philosophers, etc., from having 'intimations of immortality', or from reporting experiences that seemed to offer 'transcendence' of mortal limitations via heightened or intensified consciousness. But Manny in *The Wrong Man* knows none of this, and the film seems predicated on how he feels overwhelmed by events related to the time-space-causality nexus of our everyday understanding.

22. In 'To His Coy Mistress'. For example: 'The Grave's a fine and private place,/ But none I think do there embrace.'

23. Cf Krohn (pp. 220-21) on how Norman has failed to negotiate Lacan's mirror-phase. In related vein, Krohn notes (p. 278) the symbolism of the island in (the script of) *Mary Rose*: the island's representative quality of infantile narcissism is apparent when Mary describes it to Kenneth: 'It's so beautiful and loving and there is only oneself ... One needn't ever ... search.' Such imagery relates to the pre-Oedipal 'innocence' evoked in *Spellbound* and poeticised in *Marnie* (for instance, the golden colouring of Marnie's hair when she's riding Forio).

24. Novello was partnered onstage by Robin Irvine, and the scene was the one where the two schoolboys are summoned by the headmaster. See Charles Barr, 'English Hitchcock' (1999), p. 18 and p. 220.

25. See my book, p. 16.

26. Cf the photographers who hound Larita Filton in *Easy Virtue* - without them, and their 'stand-ins' (e.g., the pity-less woman on the jury), the film would be dead, dramatically-speaking.

27. The uncle's line stayed in, as did some others (e.g., Kane's speech to Pat about trusting Tobin 'just because he's got a ranch and a lovely pool'); others served as trade-offs.

28. See my book, p. 83

29. Sally Benson wrote 'Meet Me in St Louis'. Watching Vincente Minnelli's 1944 film again recently, I thought of *Shadow of a Doubt* during the scene where the teenage daughter receives a long-distance call from an eligible young man in New York, and the family at the dinner table all listen in. However, according to Krohn (p. 62), the specific reason Hitchcock employed Benson was that he wanted someone to depict 'life in a [go-ahead] small town lit by neon signs' - Benson's 'Junior Miss' stories are set in a Manhattan brownstone. As for Herb and Joe's conversations, they seem to owe much to the not-always-saintly conversations between Mr Morland and his friend Mr Amy in J.M. Barrie's 'Mary Rose'.

30. See Norman Lloyd, 'Stages: On Life in Theatre, Film and Television' (Limelight pb, 1993), p. 72. Cf Krohn, p. 92, where he speculates about *Notorious* that Hitchcock intended 'to strip away any explanations for Dev's behaviour until the moment he confesses all to Alicia'. (An implication of this, I take it, is that explanations *per se* weren't important to Hitchcock, and that if audiences didn't take them all in, no matter.)

31. There was at least one other real-life 'inspiration' for Uncle Charlie. Krohn, p. 58, notes that a serial-killer from New York was hiding out in the bosom of his sister's family in Hartford, California, when he was arrested in 1939.
32. Cf the mischievous accusation against Roddy by a waitress. But the film shows that males are no saints either (e.g., Roddy's friend who won't own up).
33. Alain de Botton has written amusingly, and well, of how Schopenhauer's 'Will' inveigles two people together whose only real suitability as future marriage partners is often that they complement each other genetically - for the benefit of the offspring rather than the marriage. See Alain de Botton, 'The Consolations of Philosophy' (2000), pp. 183-202 *passim*.
34. I would interpret *The Birds* by saying that its feathered creatures are sent as emiseres of Will to awaken the complacent (dreaming) humans from their slumber - that the birds are effectively a *symbol* of the noumenal Will, a life-force that is also a death-force.
35. Did his recent neuralgia trigger the drinking this time?
36. Jason's quest in his ship named the 'Argo' for the Golden Fleece has Homeric echoes, of course.
37. I put it on the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' website in 1998, and it's still there.
38. H. Popper, "Jacob Boehme", in R. Cavendish (ed.), 'Man, Myth, and Magic' (1970), p. 301. Boehme influenced several later thinkers and mystics, including Hegel, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in Germany, and the Quakers, William Law and William Blake in England. (p. 302)
39. The latter, airdate 25/10/59, was directed by Norman Lloyd from a story by Talmage Powell. Talmage told us that he was not responsible for the episode's title. Clearly someone at Shamley Productions had chosen it ...
40. Buchan's intimate knowledge of John Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress' and frequent citing of it, links more (I suggest) to the picaresque. Haggard-like aspect of such Hitchcock films as *The 39 Steps* and *North by Northwest*.
41. The Will is ambiguous by its very nature: both destructive and creative. Schopenhauer's aesthetic and ethical systems are ambiguous both because of the (Christianity-akin) paradox of 'dying in order to live' and because they're 'all in the mind' (though, hopefully, translatable into either action or desistance from action) ...
42. This amounts *also* to a 'Wagnerian' moment - it would, after all, have been a 'love-death' - *and* a pragmatic one, because Lina has ensured that husband Johnnie won't go free. Hitchcock the realist has it every which way!
43. At least two other Hitchcock heroines are brought to a moment of surrender of the self to some 'superior force', it seems to me. I'm thinking of Jo's *involuntary* scream in the Albert Hall in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956) and of Melanie's surrender to the birds in the attic in *The Birds*.
44. It's worth remarking that Keats thought Shakespeare the prime example of negative capability - the capacity to enter fully into one's characters and their viewpoints - as opposed to the partisan approach of Milton and the 'wordsworthian or egotistical sublime'. But a certain ambivalence sometimes led Keats to express admiration for the Miltonic approach. Douglas Bush writes: 'As artist he fluctuates - and is aware of his fluctuations - between belief in the poetic efficacy of a wise passiveness and belief in the active pursuit of rational knowledge and philosophy.' (Quoted in 'The Oxford Companion to English Literature', note on 'Negative capability'.) Obviously this isn't the same as Nietzsche's distinction (in 'The Birth of Tragedy') between 'Dionysian' (ecstatic) and 'Apollonian' (rational), but it's intriguing to speculate on the different approaches to 'knowledge' and its forms thus opened up, or indeed on their relation to any simple split between 'feminine' (passive) and 'masculine' (active) - though let's remember that sex, art, mysticism, etc., are often said to offer a *transcending* or *bridging* function rather than to be an either/or matter. It's in this area, I think, that Schopenhauer's (basically cognitive) aesthetics and (compassionate) ethics meet Hitchcock's pragmatics of filmmaking ...
45. Earlier, when the gull that seemed to have 'lost its way in the dark' crashed into Annie Hayworth's front door, *she* had said, 'Poor thing!' But the ratiocinative Melanie had been quick to point out that in fact there was a full moon! Note, too, that the line 'Poor thing!' is also used in *Vertigo* where it's given to Midge. *Vertigo* is very much a film about the sadness of life and what to do about it - sheer egoism, of course, is shown not to work.
46. Cf the 'going home (to Mother Earth)' theme in *The Trouble With Harry*, and the significance of the chthonic 'Mother Superior' (the black-garbed nun) who finally prevails in *Vertigo*. (The chthonic *Sequoia* forest scene in that film, which in retrospect appears absolutely central, is clearly an equivalent of the autumnal death-and-mutability imagery in *Harry* - and, grimly, the faecal swamp in *Psycho* ...)
47. Given the emphasis in the final scenes of *The Birds* on compassion (cf the end of *Marnie*, where Mark says, 'It's time to have a little compassion for yourself'), one is again reminded of Schopenhauer's ethics - though also, naturally, of Catholicism. (Carl Jung, of Protestant background, praised this 'feminine' aspect of the Church's tradition and regretted its relative absence in Protestantism.) Madame Blanche in the opening scene of *Family Plot* foresees a time when there will be 'no more suffering, no more pain' - arguably another Schopenhauerian (or Catholic) touch.
48. Bill Krohn's recent remarks about *Suspicion*, on the Web and in the French journal 'Trafic', likewise interpret the glass of milk as a fellatio symbol. (Note. In the first script draft of *The Trouble With Harry*, young Arnie squirts milk at both his prospective stepfather and at the dead Harry, his real father: no doubt some sort of Oedipal gesture by the spirited lad! Cf Sikov, p. 173 and p. 253, n19.) Lina in *Suspicion*, unlike her counterpart in the novel, does seem ambivalent about her husband's sexual advances, and thus effectively imitates 'I' (also played by Joan Fontaine) in *Rebecca*, another at-times shrinking woman who must manage a household as best she can while sexually frustrating her husband in the process (though it's not 100% clear who is to blame - the traumatised Maxim, living in the shadow of his first wife, or the inexperienced 'I' who is secretly tempted towards lesbianism). Lina's closing of the bedroom door in Johnnie's face, after they return from dinner at Isobel's, is very pointed - and it's a gesture that will be echoed in *Spellbound*, *Under Capricorn*, and *Marnie*.
49. Kierkegaard remarks somewhere of the subjective path - on which he places the highest value - that it must indeed be followed all the way 'to the other side'. A film like *Psycho*, I would argue, offers a classic case of audiences being made to experience their subjectivity - call it 'Will' - in all its life/death aspects, and amoral seeking, the better for them to be 'purged' or 'cleansed' (however fleetingly).
50. S.S. Praver, 'Caigari's Children: The Film as Tale of Terror' (1980), p. 173.

51. Quoted by Praver, p. 164.

52. Or anyway is given a glimpse of what 'redemption' (or 'purgation' or 'enlightenment') may mean. Such an outcome happens to be consistent with what is offered (albeit without guarantee) in Schopenhauer's aesthetics, and represents, I think, knowledge of what Manny in *The Wrong Man* does not comprehend, namely, his whole position vis-à-vis the time/space/causality nexus of (subjective) human understanding. By 'ready' (for redemption) I mean psychologically, cognitively, spiritually.

53. The decisive moment here is of course Mrs Drayton's 'inspired' resolve to acknowledge an evil to which she has literally been married. Cf Rupert's (admittedly not fully convincing) soul-searching at the end of *Rope*, and his question: 'Did you think you were God, Brandon?' In *Under Capricorn*, Milly, of all people, reminds us how 'The Lord moves in mysterious ways,/His wonders to perform.' And, at the end of *I Confess*, as the camera retreats back across the river from the representative city of Quebec, we're reminded (by the skyline) that it may be a city of churches but *not* the City of God. As for the matter of a society in which inequality of opportunity or endowment or wealth all figure, this is detectable as a theme of many Hitchcock films. In *Under Capricorn*, Milly is driven by her ill-conceived passion for Flusky who is married to Lady Henrietta though himself 'only a groom', a commoner - like the resentful, proud Milly. In *Strangers on a Train*, the lines from Kipling above a gateway at Forest Hills speak of life being a matter of both 'Triumph and Disaster', and it's not exactly clear which of Guy or Bruno is fundamentally the luckier or the unluckier, as the case may be. In *To Catch a Thief*, Robie earns himself the enmity of his former Resistance pals by the seemingly unfair way he has prospered while, as Danielle says, 'we [still] work like idiots for a loaf of bread'. You could fairly say that all of these nuances and shadings are part of Hitchcock's instinctive Expressionism ...

54. *Under Capricorn* shows the influence of Olivier's film: the prowling camera travelling even up and down staircases almost turns 'Minyago Yugilla' into another Elsinore!

55. Hitchcock, Hayes, and MacPhail could easily have had Jo and Ben guess the details of the intended assassination by reading a newspaper ('Important Dignitary Visits London Today'). But as Hitchcock once said, 'That's the easiest part, so why bother?'

56. I discussed this matter at some length in 'MacGuffin' #20, and, succinctly, in my book, pp. 144-45. In *The Wrong Man*, it seems to me, the thinking of Kant (1724-1804) and Schopenhauer (1788-1860) meets the visions of Blake (1757-1827) and Dickens (1812-70).

57. Krohn, p. 178, notes how Jo's singing of 'Que sera, sera' at the embassy 'becomes, in spite of the words, an expression of human will triumphing over adversity' - but arguably (it seems to me) she thereby only fulfills an even greater 'Will'. (Schopenhauer's prize-winning essay, 'On the Freedom of the Will', a classic text, argues powerfully that ultimately we *don't* have free will, whatever appearances may say. Of course, the matter isn't cut-and-dried - cf notes 19 and 21 above - but that's precisely the point here: Hitchcock's film reflects a 'shadow of a doubt' about the status of our worldly knowledge that we are destined - Willed - to retain until we die. Notice, further, that 'Que sera, sera' means 'What *will* be, *will* be' - our very language points to what is at stake.)

58. This echoes Lesley Brill's remarks in 'The Hitchcock Romance: Love and Irony in Hitchcock's Films' (1988) to the effect that 'most of Hitchcock's heroines' (p.12) are Persephone-figures whose Underworld adventures (and those of her mother Demeter) 'delineate a kernel myth for romance' (p. 72) and provide 'the mythic subfoundation of *The Lodger*' - as well as 'many of Hitchcock's [subsequent] films' (pp. 85-86).

New light on the prolific Charles Bennett

Background

Charles Bennett (1899-1995), actor, playwright, and screenwriter, began writing melodramas when he was a boy: see the excerpt from CB's 'Memoirs', edited by his son, John Charles Bennett, published on the Hitchcock Scholars/'MacGuffin' website. When CB's play 'Blackmail' was staged in London in 1928, starring Tallulah Bankhead as Alice, it attracted the interest of Alfred Hitchcock. The director chose the play as the basis of his last silent film and first sound film; it was adapted for the screen by Benn Levy and produced by British International Pictures. CB took no part in writing the screenplay. Nonetheless, he seized the opportunity of meeting Hitchcock, to whom he was introduced on the film's set, and the two men immediately became firm friends and drinking companions. CB entered the film industry soon afterwards. His first contract appears to have been with BIP (though see below) whose story editor, Walter Mycroft, one day suggested that the writer collaborate with Hitchcock. Mycroft pointed out that the studio owned the rights to the popular 'Bulldog Drummond' character created by 'Sapper' (H.C. McNeile), and that if CB would write a story about Drummond, the studio would assign Hitchcock to direct it. As events turned out, "Bulldog Drummond's Baby" - an original story by CB - remained in a drawer for several years. But when Hitchcock went to Gaumont-British in 1933, he needed a script and asked CB to help re-write the Drummond story, which now became *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (with Drummond gone). This was the first Bennett-Hitchcock collaboration, and the rest is cinema history. CB's subsequent screenplays included *The 39 Steps* (1935), *Secret Agent* (1936), *Sabotage* (1936), *Young and Innocent* (1937), and *Foreign Correspondent* (1940) - all for Hitchcock - *The Clairvoyant* (1935), *King Solomon's Mines* (1937), *Reap the Wild Wind* (1941, the first of three films for Cecil B. DeMille), *Ivy* (1947), *The Curse of the Demon* (1958), and *The Lost World* (1960, one of four films for producer Irwin Allen). CB also directed two films, both of them scripted by himself: *Madness of the Heart* (1949) and *No Escape* (1950).

We express our gratitude to John Bennett, both for making available to our website excerpts from his father's memoirs - which still await a publisher despite their obvious enormous interest to film scholars and historians, Hitchcock buffs and the general reader - and for sending us the following lists of film and/or script titles on which CB worked between 1929

and 1933, here published for the first time. A word of explanation is in order. CB is quoted in Patrick McGilligan's 'Backstory: Interviews With Screenwriters of Hollywood's Golden Age' (1986) as saying he 'was under contract to British International from 1929 to 1930'. Yet the same book contains Bennett's filmography indicating that his first films as (co-)story writer were for independent producer-director of mainly quota quickies, George King, starting in 1931. This note and lists from John Bennett do not entirely clarify the situation, but they do indicate that CB sold stories to BIP from at least as early as May 1931 and that he wrote many others at this time.

Note by John Charles Bennett

My father wrote numerous produced films while under contract to BIP, but those titles are forgotten and the films have disintegrated. Unfortunately, Charles never listed his BIP productions. Perhaps he still considered himself a playwright, or perhaps he was more pleased with his concurrent work for director George King. (In September 1932, King's *Deadlock* - a story constructed by Charles and publicist Billie Bristow - set a British box office record with more than 1400 theatre bookings.) Sadly, film historians who interviewed Charles in his 90s were principally focussed on the Hitchcock connection, and did not ask the ancillary questions - to the detriment of the BIP scripts, which titles he had by now forgotten. Nonetheless, Charles did preserve many notebooks, treatments, synopses, and draft scripts from this period - among which I have found the numerous titles listed below. I vividly remember Charles' saying his BIP productions included *Fireman, Save My Child!* and *Love My Dog*. Also, I remember his pointing to a 1926-1929 bound set of 'The Union Jack', saying some of his BIP productions derived from that source. ('The Union Jack' was a British magazine, which serialized stories of detective Sexton Blake, pitting him against such villainous characters as Paul Cynos, Satira, and Miss Death - see below.) I have also read publicity clippings and found, for example, that BIP purchased *High Speed* (see Bioscope, 5/20/1931) and *Meet His Majesty*. Charles' original notebooks, story drafts, and diaries are either in my possession, or are stored at the Margaret Herrick Library of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Los Angeles. In the Herrick Library, too, are Charles' BIP and Gaumont-British contracts. An effort to reassemble the BIP production list from British archives would certainly be a fine scholarly project, and would surely result in Charles' attaining the Guinness record for most produced screenplays.

Possible titles of Charles Bennett BIP films, assembled from Charles Bennett's notebooks

1929?	Riders of the Storm
1929?	The Death Cruise
1930?	What a Night
1930?	Danger Calling
1930?	Meet His Majesty - story bought by BIP
12/1930	The Gipsy Melody
1930?	Masquerade
1931?	Phantom of the Footplate (= High Speed?) - a Sexton Blake story bought by BIP, adapted from 'The Union Jack' #1341
1931?	Channel Tunnel
????	The Bear Envelopes - a story of Moscow under the Soviets
????	The Bird of Passage
????	Danger Street
????	Fireman, Save My Child
????	George Story
????	The King with Sunlight in His Hair
????	Love My Dog
????	Melodrama for Melvilles - a Sexton Blake story
????	Myron
????	New Loves for Old
????	Police Car - co-story with Billie. B. Bristow
????	The Problem of the Mayfair Treasure Hunt (=The Mayfair Treasure Hunt?) - a Sexton Blake story
????	Rhapsody (in Red)
????	Scandal
????	Sentimental Journey
????	Society Wedding
????	The Death Cruise
????	Tonight You're Mine! (= Tonight is Ours) - a CB original screen comedy
????	Vagabond
????	The Wife Speaks
1932?	Next Please
1932?	The Parrot Whistles - a Sexton Blake story
1932?	Chinese Waters
1932?	Sunken Gold
1933?	High Seas (=The Case of the <i>Marie Celeste</i> ?)

The following is a list of stories from 'The Union Jack' (#s 1185-1367) which attracted CB's interest for possible adaptation. We know he adapted *The Phantom of the Footplate*; perhaps he adapted others as well.

Retribution (11/2/1929, #1359:2ff)
 King's Evidence (8/31/1929, #1350:2ff)
 The Phantom of the Footplate (6/29/1929, 1341:2ff) - a produced screenplay that went to at least 3 drafts
 I Defy (6/8/1929, #1338:2ff)
 The Case of the Bradford Dragon (5/4/1929, #1333:2ff)
 Are You Paul Cynos? (3/23/1929, #1327:2ff)
 Dead Man's Plunder (3/16/1929, #1326:2ff)
 The Case of the Hairless Man (3/2/1929, #1324:2ff)
 The Book of Death (2/23/1929, #1323:2ff)
 The Mystery of the Black Van (12/8/1928, #1312:2ff)
 A Million in Gold! (8/25/1928, #1297:2ff)
 Tinker's Note Book (10/15/1927, #1252:14-15)
 The Trail of the Bandaged Man (10/8/1927, #1251:2ff)
 Sexton Blake-Convict (10/1/1927, #1250:2ff)
 The Mystery Man of Marl House (9/24/1927, #1249:2ff)
 Justice Defiled (9/17/1927, #1248:2ff)

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ODD SPOT: FIRE AT WILL

In Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps* (UK, 1935), an already unruly audience in a music hall is suddenly stampeded to the exits when a pistol is fired in their midst. A variant of that scene occurs in one of Hitchcock's first American films, *Saboteur* (1942), when again a gun is fired in a crowded auditorium - the Radio City Music Hall - and further confusion is caused by a character on the auditorium's movie screen firing a gun too. Almost certainly, Hitchcock would have taken legal advice about showing the scene in *Saboteur*. In America, where freedom of speech is enshrined in the Bill of Rights, it is widely thought that the Supreme Court has ruled that citizens do not have the right to shout 'Fire!' in a created theatre. Actually, that is false in several respects. The misunderstanding goes back to 1919 when Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes adjudicated in the Supreme Court case of *Schenck v. United States*. In his summing-up, Justice Holmes merely observed: 'But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. [...] The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. It does not even protect a man from an injunction against uttering words that may have all the effect of force. [...] The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger [of panic, etc.]'. So a prohibition against falsely shouting 'Fire!' in a crowded theatre was not enacted as legislation, but was merely referred to in Justice Holmes's commentary. (Note the word 'falsely': obviously, you could shout 'Fire!' if the theatre were actually ablaze. Also, intentionality is important here: anyone may shout 'Fire!' if it is not intended to create a panic. Thus an actor in a movie is free to speak a line like 'Open fire!' or 'Fire at will!'. By the way, the 1994 movie *Clear and Present Danger* appears to use its title without regard to the original context of Justice Holmes's comments.) Of course, more than twenty years after *Saboteur*, Hitchcock returned to the idea again, when in *Torn Curtain* (1966) he did allow a character, Professor Michael Armstrong (Paul Newman), to shout 'Fire!' in a crowded theatre, with on-screen panic likely to ensue. Perhaps it's significant that the movie is set abroad, in East Germany! [Some material for this 'Odd Spot' comes from the website <www.eclipse.net/~mtngoat/fire.htm>.]

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