



# **WOMEN AND THE CINEMA**

A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY

Edited by

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to think that. But I don't know, because it doesn't happen all the time. If it happened all the time, then I would have the statistical guarantee that this works to advantage in that sense. But I was thinking also of the role of the male director who becomes a heroic figure, and thinking of what you said about women filmmakers not being taken that seriously. I mean, to be a male director—even on a small scale—becomes a very glamorous kind of occupation; but with the woman, oddly enough, being an actress holds a great deal more glamour, even though she may have a very small part, than the position of being a female director. On the other hand, there's an indulgence toward the female which sometimes works to a very great advantage in terms of getting things done.

SC: Do you think it's slightly a disgrace to be a woman film director?

SDH: This depends on the eyes of the beholder.

SC: Haven't you noticed that labs, for instance, are very friendly with you—they immediately call you by your first name. I mean, I'm always "Shirley" to everybody.

SDH: I haven't had quite that experience; but that might have been because of my own attitude in coming in.

SC: I pick up the phone and I say, this is Shirley Clarke and I'd like to know how much it costs to print such-and-such. "Well, Shirley, it's . . ." I mean, immediately. Now, I'm pretty sure that this is not what is done with the average man. Since it happens to be an attitude that they have, then women should use it, because actually, it's better if people don't take you completely seriously. Strangely enough, they are more agreeable and more willing to do things for you than if they are afraid of you. And if they're not afraid of you because they don't take you seriously, you know what you're doing yourself—that's still your business. If your goal is a certain goal, you go right ahead getting it, and let them think whatever they want.

## On Yoko Ono\*

### Yoko Ono

October 1968

on *Film No. 4, 1967* (in taking the bottoms of 365 saints of our time)

I wonder why men can get serious at all. They have this delicate long thing hanging outside their bodies, which goes up and down by its own will. First of all having it outside your body is terribly dangerous. If I were a man, I would have a fantastic castration complex to the point that I wouldn't be able to do a thing. Second, the inconsistency of it, like carrying a chance time alarm or something. If I were a man, I would always be laughing at myself. Humor is probably something the male of the species discovered through their own anatomy. But men are so serious. Why? Why violence? Why hatred? Why war? If people want to make war, they should make a color war, and paint each other's city up during the night in pinks and greens. Men have an unusual talent for making a bore out of everything they touch. Art, painting, sculpture, like who wants a cast-iron woman, for instance.

The film world is becoming terribly aristocratic, too. It's professionalism all the way down the line. In any other field: painting,

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music, etc., people are starting to become iconoclastic. But in the film world—that's where nobody touches it except the director. The director carries the old mystery of the artist. He is creating a universe, a mood, he is unique, etc., etc. This film proves that anybody can be a director. A filmmaker in San Francisco wrote to me and asked if he could make the San Francisco version of *No. 4*. That's OK with me. Somebody else wrote from New York, she wants to make a slow-motion version with her own behind. That's OK, too. I'm hoping that after seeing this film people will start to make their own home movies like crazy.

In fifty years or so, which is like ten centuries from now, people will look at the film of the 1960s. They will probably comment on Ingmar Bergman as a meaningfully meaningful filmmaker, Jean-Luc Godard as the meaningfully meaningless, Antonioni as meaninglessly meaningful, etc., etc. Then they would come to the *No. 4* film and see a sudden swarm of exposed bottoms, that these bottoms, in fact, belonged to people who represented the London scene. And I hope that they would see that the 1960s was not only the age of achievements, but of laughter. This film, in fact, is like an aimless petition signed by people with their anuses. Next time we wish to make an appeal, we should send this film as the signature list.

My ultimate goal in filmmaking is to make a film that includes a smiling face snap of every single human being in the world. Of course, I cannot go around the whole world and take the shots myself. I need cooperation from something like the post offices of the world. If everybody would drop a snapshot of themselves and their families to the post office of their town, or allow themselves to be photographed by the nearest photographic studio, this would be soon accomplished. Of course, this film would need constant adding of footage. Probably nobody would like to see the whole film at once, so you can keep it in a library or something, and when you want to see some particular town's people's smiling faces you can go and check that section of film. We can also arrange it with a television network so that whenever you want to see faces of a particular location in the world, all you have to do is to press a button and there it is. This way, if Johnson wants to see what sort of people he killed in Vietnam that day, he only has to turn the channel.

April 1969

on *Rape II* (a film)

Violence is a sad wind that, if channeled carefully, could bring seeds, chairs, and all things pleasant to us.

We are all would-be Presidents of the World, and kids kicking the sky that doesn't listen.

What would you do if you had only one penis and a one-way tube ticket when you want to fuck the whole nation in one come?

I know a professor of philosophy whose hobby is to quietly crush biscuit boxes in a supermarket.

Maybe you can send signed plastic lighters to people in place of your penis. But then some people might take your lighter as a piece of sculpture and keep it up in their living room shelf.

So we go on eating and feeding frustration every day, lick lollipops and stay being peeping toms dreaming of becoming Jack the Ripper.

This film was shot by our cameraman, Nick, while we were in a hospital. Nick is a gentle-man, who prefers eating clouds and floating pies to shooting *Rape*. Nevertheless it was shot.