Brief descriptions of 10 styles of student film making include references to specific films employing the techniques. The styles of film making listed are animation, pixilation animation, collage, draw-on, documentary, bio-documentary, story line, impressionistic, commercials, and the school film. Directions for submitting films to the Young Film Makers Exchange are given, and films for rental are listed. (LH)
How to read this issue  (Forsythias in autumn? Read on . . .) "If poetry comes not as naturally as leaves to a tree it had better not come at all." Words of Keats to John Taylor in 1818. Which of your students would not attest that poetry study is sledding rocks for a gram of precious metal that might, might be buried inside? Which of them would not maintain that the study of poetry is basically academic, the very opposite of "natural"? Last month we suggested tactics for getting Shakespeare out of the ground and up on his feet. This issue offers three relatively untapped poetic forms which just might put all that precious metal nearer the surface. Haiku, typographical poetry and concretism offers ways of getting poetry out of the ground and, in this case, up on the wall. Poems on the Wall by David Burmester (pg. 22) utilizes one very ancient poetic form (haiku) and two relatively modern forms (typographical and concrete poetry) and connects them with the overhead projector to provide an exciting and involving way of teaching poetry: Haiku and typographical poetry are relatively well known. Concrete poetry, however, is new by contrast; we have attempted to give you in this issue a feel for its possibilities. Adorning this month's cover is an example of concrete poetry by Mary Ellen Solt entitled "Forsythia." The poet comments on her work in "An Anthology of Concrete Poetry" (Something Else Press, 1967): "The design of 'Forsythia' is made from the letters of the name of the flowering shrub and their equivalents in the Morse code. The text is part of the poem." Your first reaction probably is—that's a poem? It's certainly not the usual sort of poem. Any meaningful definition of poetry would, however, have to count it in. It's not prose; it's not a painting; but it is verbal. What is unique about it is the intimate connection between it and the page it's printed on; that is its form and meaning. It is concrete, visual as well as conceptual, in much the same way as the experiments of Cummings are. And therein lies the special appeal of typographical and concrete poetry for today's kids. They exploit their characteristic visual propensity and have a better chance, thereby, than the old verbal venerables. The overhead is particularly crucial in this context, for it permits a group of students an almost tactile experience. The private fidgeting that usually transpires between a student and a bleeding purple ditto sheet is replaced by a public image in which all can participate simultaneously. As Mr. Burmester suggests, this treatment of poetry produces results which "are sometimes pleasing, sometimes stimulating and always unpredictable." What more could you ask from poetry study?

35  We would have been tempted to print Visuals and Verse by Irving Weiss twice if space had permitted, because to read it once would be an injustice. It is one of those essays which when cursorily read appear needlessly complex, but when delved more patiently yield lucid and important insights. There is a scarcity of depth studies in mass media in education journals—especially since the unfortunate demise of the NCTE monthly, "Studies in the Mass Media"—a scarcity complemented by a tremendous need. Scarcer yet are articles which emerge from the fog of speculation and suggest methods for probing the media monster. "Visuals and Verse" is both—a rationale and a means.

46  Cockroach in the Curriculum by Winfield Carlough describes a whimsical book of neo-fables written by a poet whose essence has transmigrated into a cockroach ("gods i am pent in a cockroach / i with the soul of a dante / am mate and companion of fleas"). His musings on his own fate and his pointed commentary on his fellow creatures can lighten your students' curriculum overload in more ways than one.
FOCUS ON YOUNG FILM MAKERS

Student film making: Types and techniques

BY HENRY E. PUTSCH In response to the needs of those who are thinking about the possibility of making films with your students—or just getting started—here are brief descriptions of ten styles of student film making which suggest the many possibilities. Lest the categories be misleading, it should be noted that most young film makers employ more than one of the following techniques. Following each mode is a “film reference” which offers an excellent model of the technique. Most film makers and teachers find it very helpful to study an exemplary film. Each film reference suggested is one of the best.

ANIMATION Troll dolls, panda bears, shoes, and many other objects are animated to tell a story. Since convincing performances by live actors are not required, this technique is often the most satisfying. Another advantage is that variables (light changes, focusing, and weather conditions) can be held to a minimum. The process requires a camera capable of single-frame exposure, a reliable film tripod, and patience. With a little experimentation, kids quickly learn how many frames to shoot and how to manipulate the object to achieve the effect desired on film.

Film reference: "Newton Mini-Films," Yellow Ball Workshop, 62 Tarbell Street, Lexington, Massachusetts.

PIXILLATION ANIMATION Developed by Norman McLaren of the National Film Board of Canada, this technique is similar to straight animation. It employs humans, however, and "animates" them to move like puppets or objects in a non-human way. The effect is unexpected, often comic, and relatively simple to achieve. The Ace, listed on the Exchange, was made by having actors sit on the pavement as if they were driving a car and moving them around (assuming the same identical position for each round of frames). Thus, the human-cars "drive" around, have a drag race, even back out of the garage, etc.


COLLAGE As in the first two, this technique employs single-frame shooting, but uses still photographs, famous paintings, or advertisements cut from magazines. A striking "environmental" effect is possible through this rather simple means. The number of frames expended on each photo or object will depend on the rhythm desired. While exploring, don't shoot fewer than three frames per unit.


DRAW-ON Using clear leader and felt-tip pens, draw directly on the leader using lines, patterns, and designs. Using black leader, scratching will produce varied effects. Scratches can be filled in with color via the felt pen. Some students have obtained interesting results by creating the sound track by drawn-on markings. The sound achieved suggests electronic music. Lots of surprises here, and quick rewards since there is no time-lapse for processing. Take four feet of film, draw and paint on it, splice the ends together. Place the resulting loop in a conventional projector, and your "painting" will be non-stop. Create color environments.


DOCUMENTARY Straight cinema-verite reporting, well-edited, of a neighborhood, special event, or even a whole city. Often, "television style." Need elaborate mobility, expertise with uncontrolled conditions, and generous quantities of luck.


BIO-DOCUMENTARY Tell it like it is for a person, a group or gang.


Photo by Hella Hammid
The films will be screened at the Exchange by a group of students and teachers; if your film is selected, duplicate prints will be made and the film listed on the Exchange for rental.

The original print will be returned to you.

It is important that films sent to the Exchange for screening travel: Fourth Class, Special Delivery, Insured. Sent this way, they will be fully protected and will travel as fast as first class.

As the Exchange is a non-profit service, any rental money remaining after expenses incurred in duplicating and distributing a film have been paid, will revert to the film maker.

TO RENT FILMS FROM THE EXCHANGE. Any interested student or teacher may rent films from the Exchange. For a film up to 10 minutes, there is a fee of $5. For a film over 10 minutes, there is a fee of $7. All rentals are pre-paid. Make checks payable to Young Film Makers’ Exchange at the address below.

Young Film Makers’ Exchange
Film/Media Center for Communications
Drexel Building
16th and Moore Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19125

THE PURPOSE OF THE EXCHANGE is to encourage student film making. By providing a rental service for well made student films, the Exchange permits aspiring film makers elsewhere to see what can be done with inexpensive equipment and massive ingenuity. This is but one way in which the films below can be used. Others: as curriculum material in English, Humanities and Social Studies; as a means of evaluating any work you yourself might be doing in film making; as an incentive to a beginning class in film making or film study, etc. The Exchange also permits young film makers who have films listed to gauge their effect on a large audience.

TO SUBMIT FILMS FOR LISTING ON THE EXCHANGE. Send your films to the Exchange address listed below. The films must be accompanied by a fact sheet which includes the following:

(1) Basic Data: name and address of film maker, gauge of film, (16mm, 8mm, Super 8mm), type of sound track or tape, number of copies or showing time, running time.

(2) Content: What is the film about? (Use the descriptions of the films below as models.)

(3) Audience: For whom do you recommend the film?

GUM (16mm, b/w, optical sound, 6 minutes) By Paul Miller. Chery Brown, Carole Greeno, Sandy Maudel and Tim Ross of the Theatre Arts and Film making class, 8th grade, Quincy High School, Quincy, Mass.

CAN YOU HEAR IT NOW? (16mm, b/w, optical sound, 9 minutes) Directed by George Gray. 11th grade, Drake High School, San Diego, Calif., California.

As a war film based on the contrast between sound and image. As students study the sounds of war intrade.

THE GREAT BANK ROBBERY (8mm, b/w, tape track, 15 minutes) Edited by Nancy Welshol, 11th grade, George School, Fla.

A narrative film telling the story of the George School Bank with a series of chase scenes made by seniors at school, each student editing his own version. Appropriate for all ages.

MACBETH (16mm, b/w, optical track, 4 min.) By Ken Nordine and David Malden, Notre Dame College, Calif., California.

Macbeth is a fine example of an “Impressionist” film using live action, fast and jump cuts as well as surrealistic effects, which make a clear, dramatic and hard-hitting statement. It was developed as a project for English and is a contemporary rendering, calling “variations on a theme” of Macbeth’s famous lines on “Tomorrow.”

DO YOU FEEL? (16mm, b/w, tape track, 4 mins.) By Janet Stern, The Fieldston School, Riverdale, New York.

The film uses the photographic technique of “relaxation” for the relaxation of mind and body.

THE PERILS OF PAULINE, PATRICIA and PAM (8mm, color, tape track, 8 min.) By Paul O’Byrne, 11-years-old, Prouting High School, Chico, Calif.

PERILS is notable for its exhuberant hunger. It is a fanciful, hilarious parody of the old melodramas in which Pauline (and others—al sister of the film maker) get involved with their railroad tracks. Some of the best scenes are the old footage shots into his live-action narrative told by the story.

THE SORCERER’S APPRENTICE and THE ACE (8mm, color, tape track, 8 min.) By Bruce Leney, Wilmington Friends Schools, Wilmingtong, Delaware.

Sorcerer is an excellent animated film which uses trolls dolls to tell a charming story. The ACE uses pixillation animation in which teenagers “drive” around the streets without the help of automobiles. Both are outstanding possibilities of the kinds of effects possible...

THE THIEF (16mm, b/w, optical sound, 10 min.)

THE THIEF is a live-action, narrative film—which tells itself like it is on the lower East Side of New York City. Since the film is part of an already existing catalogue of work we cannot include it as a regular “exchange” piece with the others. The catalogue is available on request from the Children’s Cultural Foundation, 825 East 87th Street, New York, New York 10028.

THE MEMORY OF JOHN EARL MCFADDEN (16mm, b/w, optical track, 10 min.) By John Earl McFadden and others, Upward Bound, Wesleyan University.

MEMORY is a rare achievement for a first year film; it tells the story of a southern Negro boy who is terrorized by a white store owner. The film’s success stems from the fact that the story is a true life experience of the film maker, who not only wrote and directed the script, but also acts the role of himself.

THE SCHOOL FILM A concept first identified by Gayl Soule, School of the Fine and Drama. Mann School puts the whole school into the act. Music department creates sound track, art department does the settings, designs, and titles; the drama coach directs the acting of a story board developed in English class. On information or situation research by history class. Adults work in all phases equally with the kids. Hence, the “School Film.”