

Jan 74

Dear David Laib, artist exemplar, creator of Mare's Tail, Hurrah! I had the good luck to see your film last night at Peter Bloch's. I was stunned when it finished, silent, reeling, hardly able to navigate my way home... and in the morning it was still there inside me. I felt like a man without a tongue, all eyeballs, my brain sizzling and throbbing. This is truly a Buddhist film. Bare bones, white and cracking. It is the first visionary film, and yet how did you get it so close to the bone. Goddamn!

I realized about half-way through that understanding no longer mattered. The fact that every frame is beautiful no longer mattered. The absence of coherent speech, of the familiar warm, cuddly human image no longer mattered. I just got my eyeballs up close to the wall (on which Peter was projecting it) and let it happen to me. I let me happen and I could feel my brain gyrating in an exquisite new way. I could talk about the visual cortex connected to the silent right hemisphere... and whole new circuitry....

We are ordinarily afraid of the unknown. We shunt "reality" through the traditional irrigation ditches of our minds, very hydraulic, pneumatic, the Panama Canal, the Suez Canal, the great neural bundles linking Is with Was. The unknown scares the beJesus out of most men. Yet, this film is a huge leap into the dark, a howling, a falling headfirst into what? God, I don't know. In the face of this mystery there is no beginning and end, no answer, resolution, solution, revolution, hope, meaning. This is LIFE. Make of it what you will. Live. Experience. Reflect. I am so pleased you came so close to the truth. I think man must learn to live moment to moment in the middle of the unknown. Man must learn to tolerate the unknown and minimize the conditioned anxieties, fears, panics... the whole sympathetic smear... in order to live. He must rediscover the feeling of awe. For the weakness you offered one secure foothold- a pervasive, trustable, fucking incredible gulp of beauty, the kind of thing one finishes up with and says "that was so beautiful in parts." Maybe it was necessary. But you know, I think it was too beautiful. I say pull the whole rug out from under me. Send me reeling into the unknown without even beauty to pin my hopes on. I'm ready. I think you needed more clash in this beauty area, not just in the content but in the composition as well.

I want to share with you some of my other thoughts about this film. I am doing this because I think the film is great but I for one think you should take another look at it, edit it some, make other modifications and then give this light to people again. Who gives a shit if its five years old. It exists fifty years in the future anyway, if we get that far. To be sure, a work of art will really only be understood by a handful of people in the entire world, no matter what you do. That should be enough, for ones inner satisfaction. Then why bother with the rest I wonder? I'll go into this in a bit. My other thoughts about the film were that the sound track could be much improved. It isnt up to the visual field in many cases. Its great at times mind you. Thats the right sound to have for sure. But it could have more range, depth, color, everything in places. At the same time my hat is off to the music composer. I had the disadvantage of hearing it on one speaker and very poor reproduction. Is it in stereo? It should be in quadrophonic. I have had experience with the effect of quadrophonic sound and it is another dimension to the brain, no technical bullshit... it does something to the brain, a kind of clearing out the auditory connections somewhere inside, a popping clarity... if done right... and that is the only kind of sound that would be up to your images. Of course this sound is also lying await in the future, but I suggest you keep it in mind. To hell with the limits of commercial technology! The damn stuff is available... its just the money, waiting for the masses in Altoona to buy the equipment and bring the prices down. But anyway, I think the film should be cut down as well. I love every minute of it but I think its too long. I know Im not the first to say this, but I still think there is fat on the bones. Beauty in a film of this order is not a justification for anything. Throw out the Picassos,

Letter received from an unknown man in '74 with a cut of Mare's Tail - quite right he was & TS...

is get on with the job. A regular housecleaning is called for. At the same time think there could be more recurrent images, more Deja Vu recalls, flashes, random dives into the memory banks to see old images a second, or third time. It happened a little toward the end. I think it could have happened more. That whole process is such a mystery in itself.

I really think you should consider more aggressive circulation of this work, with or without modifications. It would, though, be a hell of a lot easier with modifications which is one reason I suggest them. I'm not out to castrate anything, especially something like this that gets me off. Just a mild reduction in weight, a firming up if you will. I think you should get this thing circulating so you'll get famous, make money, and have the independence and wherewithall to do more like it and communicate your vision to the race. We need some goddamn light fast.

So keep up the good work. You have a new admirer. I'd be pleased if you would inform me when your next film is finished. I would very much like to see it. At present I travel quite a lot but that's of no import. I am with you in spirit. So hail to a man of great vision.


Jeff Ordovery
5305 Witterschlich
Nettekovener str. 41
West Germany