

1947-04-03

SENDER

Iris Barry

RECIPIENT

Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen

FACTS

Document type:

Letter

Language:

Engelsk, Dansk

General comment:

I brevet nævner Iris Barry "Mr. Lewin" i forlængelse af Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersens oprindelige forespørgsel til Alfred H. Barr. "Mr. Lewin" kan muligvis være den amerikanske filminstruktør Albert Lewin (23.9.1894 - 9.5.1968), som i 1945 instruerede den sort-hvide "The Picture of Dorian Grey". Nærværende registrering af Iris Barrys brev vedhæftes samtidig en engelsksproget synopsis til Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersens "The Birth of Light" på i alt tre sider og seks sider noter på dansk til "Lyset opstod. Lysets genfødsel". En kopi af dette brev fra Iris Barry til Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen findes i MoMAs arkiver: The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY. File I.A.149 "Correspondence B". Her findes også en intern besked fra Alfred H. Barr til Iris Barry om samme sag.

Sender's location:

New York

Sender info (seal, address, etc.):

Brevhoved f.o. på brevet: THE
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
NEW YORK 1911 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-
YORKFILM LIBRARY
IRIS BARRY, DIRECTOR

Recipient's location:

New York

Recipient info (Transcript, Inscription,
etc.):

Betegnet på brevet f.n.: Mr. Vilhelm
Bjerke-Petersen,
835 East Walnut Street,
Long Beach, New York

Mentioned people:

Alfred H. Barr

Archive:
IV 36. Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersens arkiv.
Museum Jorn.

TRANSCRIPTION

April 3, 1947

Dear Mr. Petersen:

I am ashamed at my delay in writing to you about your communication to Mr. Barr. It reached me just as I returned from a long trip to Europe and I put it aside partly in order to think it over and partly in the hopes of seeing some solution to the problem of how to find someone willing to finance a film of this sort.

Now I still dislike writing you a discouraging letter but candidly I do not know who I think of as a likely patron for what is so excellent an idea.

No one would welcome such a film more than I: but how can we get it made? By all means, approach Mr. Lewin and let us hope that his response will be all that you might wish.

I have thought a lot about your idea and am greatly taken by it. It seems to me that it should perhaps really be made in France or at least made with cooperation between France and the U.S.A. Will you permit me to speak about it to one or two people when I am next in Paris in June? As I say, I am not optimistic about getting support, but I should regard it as a privilege were I able to help in any way to see your admirable idea materialize. And I know that if the film were [understreget] made there would be a great and endless demand for it, if no financial rewards.

Sincerely yours,

Iris Barry

Mr. Vilhelm Bjerke-Petersen,
835 East Walnut Street,
Long Beach, New York

Kunst. woude kunst. der toezegende
kerkachtig. nu met interne artisten
malen in de kerk. der der kerk
hier nu kan realiseert elgaten
almenenmenselijke kunst op de kerk.

sluit. Naar der van gl. maand
kan opleent hele in uitruims zijn
haver gaende en na dit kerkens
stuur g. nu met in in aanbesteding
saler wil in vanden
kerken nu kan lange en more
saler.

Saler
slut.

Paris og berømte franske billedkunsthåndværkere af de samme
motiver.

10 Vi følger de enkelte maleres liv *

11 Samt den centrale figur Bazanne (i Zolas
schildring). Na hans uheldige kamp til hans
indvirkende indflydelse.

12 Alle scene og malskninger og kampene
i filmen skildret gennem billedlig
kamp mellem mørkt og lyst - mellem
forurenet og forurenet.

13 Samt ridsporing de uendelige søgende
morsomme anekdoter om malerne.

14 Senere Van Gogh samt hovedskikkelser

15 Endelig uendeligheden i publikums
indstilling

16 Samt afslutning i rask tale en syntese
af det moderne livsliv, de moderne
kulturelle - og i luft - en ny moral

17 - - - - - Solen!

* Alle de gode forskellige individualiteter
fra "hundred" Monet til den forurensede
begreb fra den berømte Renoir til de
høje Lantier.

Gurgenianismen
(lysets syke).

5

1. Nørfur i sit laboratorium og dages
farspejdet. (Grundlagene for alle gær)
2. En parisisk stue. Mørk. Tætte tykke
parketter for vinduerne. Tunge møbler.
En kunstner ^{farv gæstgiver} ~~se ud~~ af vinduet. En
draske han kommer paa den parisiske
gade. Salen skinner dæmte. Han sender
kunstigt ind i en.*
En smal salstuaale falder ind paa
gulvet.
3. Maleriet af salpetteren, den danner mange
salpetter, et helt gul' af salpetter.
Sættes paa et tæppe. isin med paa seinar
4. En Maler sidder i maleri (Maleri)
forlader sine aktier.
5. Malerier vander ud i natinen.
6. Kunstnerne med distansier.
7. Den første Gurgenianistuet.
8. Publikums forarbejde g. haare.
9. En rødt skiffende billeder af livet i
* Et mægtigt mørkt sort maleri paa væggen
(et landskab)

Zala: Tiden vil engang arbejde Haaret paa den
plads der ligger ham, beundret dette daad-
es store arbejdsere der gør dem liv her
for at sandheden kunne se.

- L'œuvre.

Claude: "Forskan der, det er en anden
solen vi behøver, den vi lyft, en ring
3 lys udsender."

"Hans vidrede sig om og til et frem-
bring et virkelig oprøbs arbejde. Hans
ville male det gamle solskin."

Maret: ^{unvollst.} neolydrique ^{verdensorden} und kaiser (Pantura)
1863 "Le digne dans l'ordre" ^{referece} "Satan"
anecdote of Kaysen.

1866 milder Herbst, sandhaftere in
Pfe Gnebois

1870 Kigen, de stilles alle
Mand & Pinar, Landen under Kigen
gaaende

Degus: fisch. Baumgarnist. sorte Sittelnat. (Laguna)
 kann in Natur

Monet. 1874 den fünfzigsten Jahrestag der Republik,

~~Study~~ - Analyze structure of apostle's Natural

Sisley - diomineen
Pissarro filosofisch

Lezume. gul Var med Zola. (Plante Lantier)
 handtlij g olishe. Mullersted 2
 Relvayisimela

"Le déjeuner sur l'herbe"

Lyset overstod
Lysets genfødeelse.
(En plan om Gynæmionismen)

En begynde til lyset og til de kunstnere
der gennem gynæmionismen, genfundt
lyset.

- 1) Sollykuler i alderen.
- 2) Mødets alder. (midalderen, klostre. -
Borge. (maa qittervinder).
- 2) 80 aarene. Interim maalt en sortklædt
dame holder gardinerne for da en solstråle
næsten gennem vinduet.
- 3) Malerne gaar ud i naturen.
- 4) "Moralen". Frakoster i det grønne.
(Udviklingen af filatellivert → Ballustrandene).

(Solen, fornuftstræt (de blev dogge).
(værksteder af solen (Solfornikublen-planterne
der lukker sig i dyrene gaar i seng. det elek-
triske lys - en ny kunst- og -litteratur.
(Kysordet i New York).

- 3 -

I can, of course, make an outline of the manuscript, but I believe it would be more satisfactory if from the start a professional manuscript author, an art historian, who is a specialist in Impressionism, and myself worked together.

5. Never before has an artistic movement brought forth or predicted such a complete upheaval of the entire human existence and thereby so completely triumphed. From the dark and pent-up way of living of the '60s - '30s to our present time's dominating outdoor life and sun worship, the artist's visions became the strongest realities in life and in art for generations to come.

6. No period in art has attained such popularity in our time as Impressionism, loved and cultivated, known and honored by the entire world, reproduced and hung up in millions of homes in Europe and America.

The Film's Structure:

The Impressionist picture world: Paris, side-walk cafés, the Seine, Notre Dame (Monet);
The country around Paris (Sisley);
The variety theatres, night restaurants, dance halls (Lautrec);
Race tracks and the ballet (Degas) etc.;
Women (Renoir).

The Action in the Film:

1. Portrayal of the artist. One could here, among other things, use Zola's "L'oeuvre", the dramatic story of Germaine's life, and also later on Van Gogh.

2. The conflicts between the artist's ideas and the public. (Think of Manet's "Déjeuner sur l'herbe". The indignation it aroused and in comparison to this, the modern bathing and camp life. - Zola: "Time will one day give him the place he deserves - among the workers of this century who gave their lives so that truth might triumph".)

The Film's Style:

A marked use of dark and light, an always changing effect between the style of the time and the Impressionist works of art.

Socially, ethically and morally: the triumph of light over the dark.

It is a presentation of historic culture to carry out such a film and because the whole narrated epoch is yet so near and of such current interest, the film will have great possibilities of awakening the strongest feelings in the spectators and will surely have far-reaching significance for the large masses' whole attitude and adjustment to art and artists.

Aside from the beauty in the spirit of the film (the aesthetic and ethical) and in the works of art, the subject invites abundant opportunity of satisfying all the ordinary aims of a popular film. The lively Parisian life, the interesting artist personalities, the numerous amusing anecdotes from their lives, all grouped around a few dramatic figures.

The film can be made as a color film, but I think it will be more effective if one only brings the works of art and perhaps the last scenes in color - as revelations.

I can...

THE BIRTH OF LIGHT - An Idea for a Film

by Wilhelm Bjerke Petersen

I beg to submit the following idea for a film. It is an idea which has interested me for many years and whose filming possibilities seem to me to be exceptionally rich.

I want to express the struggle between the habitual outlook of daily life and the burning points for new ideas in life. I want to show how artists (or one artist as a central figure) apparently work with purely aesthetic problems, but in reality, as it later on usually shows, realize profound universal thoughts, ideas and dreams.

I want to show the dramatic, often tragic course of such people's sacrifice of everything in life except their ideas, all their collisions with the small-mindedness in society and, finally, their brilliant triumph. I want also to show all this by a whole historical epoch.

I want to realize the idea through a film about IMPRESSIONISM:

IMPRESSIONISM;
THE BIRTH OF LIGHT (in Art);
THE TRIUMPH OF LIGHT (in Life);
A FILM ABOUT SUN AND SUNLIGHT.

"It is perhaps the sun we need, you see--the fresh air, a young and light art." (Claude in "L'oeuvre".) "He worked himself up into producing a truly rebellious painting. He wanted to paint the sunshine itself." (L'oeuvre)

It is not to bring forth a certain epoch in art that I have chosen Impressionism, but because this epoch in art contains such boundless possibilities (when one regards it from the right angle) of effective pictorial matter, of human drama, idealistic struggle, and charming spirit of the age--all with a great and burning ethical and social aim.

The reasons for this are:

1. Impressionism signified a complete artistic revolution.
2. It is the first time in history that artists came into conflict with society in full earnest in a dramatic settlement with a whole era. It is a very interesting fact that it was just these artists who were such worshippers of light.
3. It is the first time that the individual artist's fate and personal condition must be seen, not from individual experience but in connection with a great social upheaval.
4. The theme itself:

The introduction of light in art is the film's own medium. The combat between the dark and the light makes the basic theme, both in regard to the active as well as the pictorial side. This subject matter will be both historical, concrete, and at the same time symbolic for art's (and also for human beings') eternal struggle and it will be intensified in some of these artists' bitter existence and economical and social struggle.

5. Never....

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NEW YORK 19

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FILM LIBRARY
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