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Hollywood Promotional Featurettes in the 1960s: History, Form and Visual Evidence

Before they became a staple of DVD special features, promotional featurettes brought exhibitor organizations, theatrical audiences and, later, television viewers a privileged, if somewhat hyped look at the filmmaking process.[1] Tour of Thomas Ince Studio (1920) and 20th Century-Fox Studio Tour (1936) explain the inner workings of a Hollywood studio with a brief look at the different studio departments, which visualized the detailed division of labor that was a key feature of Hollywood's mode of production. In a promotional featurette for Otto Preminger's The Man with a Golden Arm (1955), the director makes public his battles with industry self-censors over his feature film's controversial subject matter of heroin addiction. The revelation comes off as unusually candid, although highly scripted. Women in the Movies (1974), a promo film for Martin Scorsese's Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore (1974), focuses on the women involved in the production (producer, editor, and production designer) and the difficulties of working in a male-dominated industry. While each of these featurettes are largely self-congratulatory and self-promotional with the main goal of selling a brand (the studios in the studio tour promos) or a movie (the features in the Golden Arm and Women in the Movies promos), these films function as "paratexts," which reveal how the motion picture industry cultivates its own image and constructs the production process for public

[1] While a number of terms have been applied to the promotional film (e.g. making-of documentary, behind-the-scenes documentary, promo film), filmmakers and journalists working in the pre-DVD era seem to use the term featurette most consistently. For reasons of variation, I will use the aforementioned terms interchangeably.

consumption.[2] We can treat these pre-DVD era featurettes as an early manifestation of what John Caldwell has characterized as "an industry that is increasingly preoccupied with workaday forms of critical and cultural analysis." Through historical contextualization and textual analysis, I would like to at once unpack and cut through these featurettes' hype and exaggeration to uncover how the industry constructed its own image in the transitional period of the 1960s and made public what Caldwell calls "embedded production knowledge."[3]

This paper will focus on 1960s promotional featurettes: films and TV programs that attempt to document the production of a single feature film. Firstly, I will describe the historical context in which these featurettes were made by identifying the individuals and organizations responsible for making these films and suggesting where these films were shown. I will argue that in the 1960s, the featurette form matured as the industry began to rely on them more heavily for promotional purposes and as small, mobile crews developed the capability to visit location shoots in order to document the production process. Secondly, I will analyze the aesthetic and rhetorical features of these promos and make the case that these films consistently rely on a series of formal conventions and structuring motifs, many of which persist to this day. Lastly, I aim to examine what these films reveal about the production process of US films shot abroad and how these feature

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[2] In her book on movie trailers, Lisa Kernan borrows the term "paratext" from Gérard Genette to characterize the ancillary nature of trailers. Evoking Genette's usage, she writes, "Paratexts are those textual elements that emerge from and impart significance to a (literary) text but aren't considered integral to the text itself, such as all prefatory material, dusk jacket blurbs, advertisements, and reviews." The same can be said about promotional featurettes. See Kernan. Coming Attractions: Reading American Movie Trailers. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004. 7.

[3] John Thornton Caldwell. Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television. Durham: Duke UP, 2008. 3.

films were promoted. While I will draw on a variety of featurettes for both domestic and foreign productions throughout this paper, I will primarily focus on featurettes that chronicled US-backed productions whose principle photography occurred in foreign countries.[4] Far from an isolated phenomenon, foreign-location shooting was a widespread trend in the 1960s, which resulted in up to over half of US-produced films moving abroad in a given year, high unemployment in Los Angeles, a shift in Hollywood's mode of production, and a more international flavor for US films.[5] These featurettes thus become an inside view into this significant phenomenon and offer evidence for how Hollywood was trying to portray this change in its mode of production.

Historical precedents and changes in the industry

The promotional featurette has a long history in the US film industry, which has been sketched out by Paul Arthur.[6] One of the earliest behind-the-scenes short subjects was the 1908 one-reeler Making Motion Pictures: A Day in the Vitagraph Studio.

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[4] Unions called these film shoots "runaway" productions. I am characterizing these productions as the economist Irving Bernstein defined them: films shot in a foreign country, financed in whole or in part by US money, and produced by a US company. In addition, a portion of the above-the-line personnel on these films came from Hollywood, but the labor was primarily foreign. See Bernstein. Hollywood at the Crossroads: An Economic Study of the Motion Picture Industry. Los Angeles: Hollywood AFL Film Council, 1957. 48.

[5] James Monaco points out that in 1961, 54% of films produced by Hollywood companies were made abroad. See Monaco. The Sixties: 1960-1969. Berkeley: UC Press, 2001. 12. The "runaway" trend continued through the mid 60s, with a downturn in the late 1960s/early 1970s. See also Mitchell Gordon. "'Runaway' Movies: Factors Other Than Lower Pay Entice American Producers to Film Abroad." Wall Street Journal (3 March 1963). "H'Woods' Future Now at Stake." Variety (17 August 1966). Arelo Sederberg "With 40% of Film Workers Jobless, What Can Be Done?" Los Angeles Times (24 March 1968). "Economic Forces Doing What Mere Man Didn't - - Curbing 'Runaway'." Daily Variety (6 February 1970).

[6] Paul Arthur. "(In)dispensable Cinema: Confessions of a 'Making-of' Addict." Film Comment (July/August 2004): 39.

Subsequently, filmmaking and the inner workings of a film studio became a common theme in the Teens in both non-fiction short subjects and silent comedies. By the 1930s, most major studios offered featurettes to promote new stars, technological innovations, and upcoming releases. Then, in the 1950s, programming changes resulting from the Paramount consent decrees curtailed the production of behind-the-scenes shorts. Arthur makes the case that into the 1960s, featurettes appeared sporadically, usually sponsored by TV networks or "fabricated as independent offshoots of particular projects." However, taking up the history of the promotional featurette in the 1960s, I would argue that the production of these films was far from sporadic and that the featurette became an important part of a film's publicity campaign in response to the growing need of the "pre-sell" and TV serving as a key means of film promotion.

The end of block booking and the major studios' divestment of their theatre chains forced film companies to sell each picture individually and to rely heavily on that movie's earnings. Previously, earnings were disbursed more or less evenly amongst numerous releases. But by the 1950s, since studios were no longer aligned with theaters, a single successful film could comprise most of a studio's annual earnings.[7] With so much riding on a single film, the "pre-sell"—the long advance build-up of a movie—became crucial.[8] By the 1960s, the financial risk of each new production intensified as fewer movies were being produced, film budgets increased, and audience numbers fell.

[7] Christopher Anderson. Hollywood TV: The Studio System in the Fifties. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. 158.
[8] "Bigger Ad Budgets Urged By Perlberg to Hypo B.O." Hollywood Reporter (20 June 1951).

Consequently, the need to build a film strengthened.[9] Studios and their publicity departments looked to new methods of film advertising, including the production of featurettes, which could reach audiences through television, a medium that the film industry was more fully taking advantage of for promotional ends.[10]

In the mid-1950s, a number of studios overcame initial resistance to its newest rival television and began promoting films through their own TV shows. Christopher Anderson has demonstrated that Walt Disney with his Disneyland TV series pioneered the use of behind-the-scenes glimpses of new films and the filmmaking process in order to publicize the studio's theatrical output. Up to one third of each Disneyland episode was devoted to studio promotion.[11] Warner Bros. followed with its own program, Warner Bros. Presents, whose final segment, "Behind the Cameras at Warner Bros.," consisted of clips from current releases and appearances by movie stars in exclusive behind-the-scenes productions footage.[12] 20th Century-Fox produced Twentieth Century-Fox Theater, later renamed Twentieth Century-Fox Hour, which featured promotional segments, including studio tours and excerpts from recent theatrical releases.[13] Finally, MGM developed MGM Parade, which exclusively consisted of clips from old and new MGM films.[14] While the shows of Warner Bros., 20th Century-Fox, and MGM were short-lived, Disney's program hit upon a successful formula of old cartoon shorts, the occasional original TV production, and behind-the-scenes footage, which helped

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[9] "'Fan, Mag and Trade Advertising By Distribs Unimaginative'–Corwin." Variety (12 April 1967): 15. Monaco. The Sixties. 11.
[10] "Promotional Featurettes for TV (5 to 30 Mins., Up to $25,000) Enjoy Spreading Acceptance." Variety (11 December 1963).
[11] Anderson. Hollywood TV. 143.
[12] Ibid. 169.
[13] Ibid. 188.
[14] Ibid. 189.

Disney's TV programming survive into the 1960s. By this time, other studios realized that networks liked to show making-of featurettes as accompaniments to primetime movies.[15]

Other important postwar developments included the proliferation of independent productions and the move away from studio-bound filmmaking, which resulted in film companies increasingly shooting movies on location in the 1950s and 60s, both at home and abroad. In order to capture the details of these location shoots, the producers of featurettes needed to operate in a mobile manner, traveling to far-flung locations around the globe, overcoming the same difficult location conditions that many of the feature films faced, and grabbing shots of the production process in an unobtrusive manner. Previously, most making-of documentaries either captured small snippets of the production process—lighting a set or editing a film—usually staged for the camera, or they featured hosts describing the filmmaking process from a soundstage or a set, which would be intercut with clips from the film. For example, in The Big Show (1957), a feature-length promotional film produced by 20th Century-Fox to showcase upcoming releases to exhibitors, behind-the-scenes material consists of directors introducing their productions from the Fox studios (e.g. writer-producer-director Nunnally Johnson on a soundstage) or from a foreign location (e.g. producer Darryl Zanuck in a London office), followed by film clips. Similarly, a promotional film for The Ten Commandments (1956) features Cecil B. DeMille discussing the production of his new movie from a library set,

[15] "Promotional Featurettes for TV" Variety (11 December 1963).

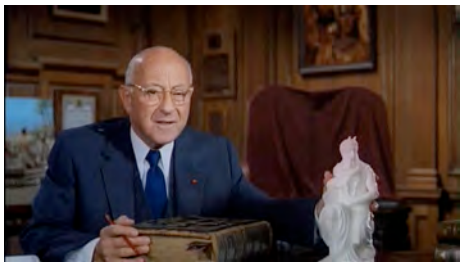
fig. 1


fig. 2


fig. 3

full of books, statues, paintings, and maps (figure 1), which is intercut with film clips.

By the 1960s, behind-the-scenes films would mainly be comprised of footage of the actual filmmaking process shot on location, though Walt Disney on Walt Disney Presents would continue to introduce behind-the-scenes segments from a studio set into the 1960s. The transition to capturing location shoots was facilitated by several technological innovations, including lighter 16mm shoulder-mounted cameras, cameras with reflex viewing, zoom lenses, faster film stock, and 1/4 –inch magnetic tape recorders.[16] The uncut, behind-the-scenes footage of the Italian-based production of John Huston's Reflections in a Golden Eye (1967) demonstrates how the featurette crew was able to swiftly and unobtrusively capture the rehearsal and execution of a single set-up from a variety of angles (figs. 2-3). In sum, behind-the-scenes featurettes had to adapt to the new reality of Hollywood production by moving from static set-ups of hosts who introduced film clips from the confines of a studio—a lingering image of the studio era—to on-the-set views of independent productions taking place all around the world—an increasingly common situation in the post-studio system era.

[16] Jack C. Ellis and Betsy A McLane. A New History of Documentary Film. New York: Continuum, 2005. 210.

Featurette producers

Featurettes were produced by a variety of organizations and individuals. In most instances, whether produced in house or contracted out to an independent company, the cost of the featurette was worked into the promotional budget of the feature film.[17] In addition, the featurette was in many cases made under the control of the publicity department, which is made clear by Saul Cooper, the unit publicist on Reflections in a Golden Eye, who explained that Golden Eye's making-of documentary would be "produced entirely under our own auspices and control."[18] It also appears that by the early 1960s, the production of featurettes was commonplace for studios such as Columbia and United Artists. In fact, The New York Times reported that as early as 1956 United Artists was making a TV featurette for each of its films, though it is unclear what these TV promos consisted of or who actually undertook the production of these promos.[19]

While the featurettes were produced under the supervision of studios and their publicity departments, we can point to a number of likely organizations and individuals who carried out the actual shooting and editing of these films. Firstly, many featurettes were made by the studios themselves. This was the case in the mid-1950s with studios such as Disney and Warner Bros. producing behind-the-scene material for their own TV shows. But by the mid-to-late 1960s, studios began to rely on New York-based advertising agencies, which offered complete advertising services, including print ads, copywriting, trailers, radio and TV spots, and, increasingly, featurettes. Variety

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[17] "Promotional Featurettes for TV" Variety (11 December 1963).
[18] Saul Cooper. Memo to Marlon Brando, John Huston, John Lee, and Ray Stark. (24 November 1966). Reflections in a Golden Eye production file. John Huston papers. Margaret Herrick Library. Beverly Hills, CA.
[19] "Sullivan to Scan Film Studio Work." The New York Times. (11 January 1964): 63.

highlighted a number of these advertising vendors, identifying Floyd L. Peterson, Kaleidoscope, Communications Forum, Cinemedia, and Rosebud Advertising as among the most important.[20] Similarly, during this time, United Artists brought all of its publicity efforts in house and created a new audiovisual subdivision in its publicity department, which placed one person in charge of featurettes.[21] However, several United Artists featurettes from this era, such as The Beatles Mod Odyssey (a promo film for The Yellow Submarine, 1968) and The Unexpected Rosalind Russell (a promo for Mrs. Pollifax-Spy, 1971) reveal that they were produced by the independent company Tarot Associates, Inc., suggesting that the studio contracted out some of its promo film work.[22]

Even before studios began to rely on ad agencies for the production of featurettes, they frequently hired independent production companies and filmmakers to write, shoot, and edit behind-the-scenes films. While many of these filmmakers likely specialized in the making of featurettes, featurette production also served as valuable training ground for future directors, producers, and technicians. I will point to two examples of aspiring filmmakers who worked on featurettes. These examples also demonstrate the difficulty that independent filmmakers faced while attempting to operate within the regularized and highly controlled system of feature-film production.

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[20] Stuart Byron. "Unsung Film-Ad Copy Experts." Variety (26 June 1968): 5. In fact, one collection of featurettes held in the UCLA Film and TV Archive contains several films produced by these ad agencies, including Searchers for a Special City (Kaleidoscope's promo for Mr. Buddwing, 1966), Lelouch in Love (Kaleidoscope's promo for Live for Life, 1967), On Location with Sky Riders (Kaleidoscope's promo for Sky Riders, 1967), Day in the Life of Mia & Vicky (Kaleidoscope's promo for The Walking Stick, 1970), and He Must Find There Nothing (Cinemedia's promo for Is Paris Burning?, 1966).

[21] Ibid. 20.

[22] It is unclear whether Tarot is an independent production company or an ad agency.

Ulf Michael von Mechow, a German independent filmmaker and acquaintance of John Huston, secured backing from German TV to produce a behind-the-scenes film on the making of Huston's The Bible and a documentary profile on the director. Writing to Huston, Mechow admitted that his TV documentaries were just a steppingstone to other filmmaking work. He writes, "I am not very happy with that TV-work, but as it gives me the possibility of making films, I use it as a crutch to gain more practice and to achieve reputation. I soon will make my films as an independent producer. Of course I will start modestly with documentaries and so on."[23] With Huston's full support, Mechow planned to visit the production in Rome. However, production holdups in Egypt appear to have delayed Mechow's visit to Rome. Then, nearly 10 weeks after Mechow received Huston's approval to make his film, the German filmmaker got word that the studio—most likely executive producer Dino de Laurentiis' company—expressed hesitation to let Mechow shoot his documentary.[24] While it is uncertain whether Mechow ever got to make his film, it is clear that by working outside the control of the studio and publicity department, the German independent filmmaker encountered resistance.

Two students of the recently created American Film Institute, Gary Weis and Gil Dennis, produced a 20-minute documentary on the making of Sam Peckinpah's The

[23] Ulf Michael von Mechow. Letter to John Huston. (11 September 1964). The Bible production file. John Huston papers. Herrick Library.

[24] Anonymous. Letter to Mechow. (14 December 1964). The Bible production file. De Laurentiis himself most likely resisted the idea of the film, as an earlier correspondence between the television department and Huston's assistant suggests that de Laurentiis expressed concern upon learning about Mechow's project. See Hugo Lodrini. Memo to Gladys Hill. (22 October 1964). The Bible production file. John Huston papers. Herrick Library.

Ballad of Cable Hogue (1970), which was financed by AFI and Warner Bros.[25] Under the approval and supervision of the studio, the filmmakers shot footage for their documentary in Ely, Nevada, where Cable Hogue was being filmed. However, since the AFI students were non-union, the members of IATSE's Camera Local, concerned with a violation of the production's union agreement, reported the incident to their union, which demanded an explanation from producer Phil Feldman.[26] The producer responded by explaining that the filmmakers were merely film students and that the documentary would not be used for commercial exploitation.[27] The clarification may have appeased the union, but as soon as the union learned that the documentary was going to be broadcast on network television, an IATSE representative contacted Feldman's assistant and laid out a series of approvals, claims, and waivers that the producers would need to obtain in order to broadcast the film.[28] While it is unclear if the documentary ever played on television, this film, along with the case of Mechow's documentary on The Bible, demonstrates that even the production of promotional material fell under the regulation of either studio control or industry-wide union rules.

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[25] Personal connections seem to have given Gil Dennis access to the Peckinpah production since Dennis was the fiancé of Peckinpah's daughter. See Phil Feldman. Letter to Gerald K. Smith. (31 November 1969). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

[26] Gerald K. Smith. Letter to Phil Feldman. (18 January 1969). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

[27] Feldman. Letter to Smith. (31 January 1969). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

[28] Arthur Schaefer. Letter to Joel Reisner. (8 January 1970). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

Featurette venues

By far, the most important venue for promotional featurettes was television. As mentioned before, studio-produced TV series, such as Disneyland and Warner Bros. Presents, were important sites in the 1950s where viewers could gain privileged peeks into the inner workings of studios and productions. By the 1960s, shows such as ABC's Sunday Night at the Movies would broadcast a feature film and follow it up with a featurette.[29] These featurettes were also syndicated at the local level to women's shows and interview shows since local TV stations needed lots of airtime to fill.[30] In addition, both at the local and national level, longer featurettes, ranging from 30 minutes to an hour, were shown in full timeslots. For example, a featurette for the Universal film Strange Bedfellows (1965) was aired locally on Los Angeles' KNBC in February of 1965, marking the first time a studio had underwritten a full time-slot to sell its own film.[31] In November of 1970, NBC broadcast The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kind in a full-hour timeslot.[32] These featurettes were also dubbed into foreign languages and shown on foreign television and in foreign movie theatres.[33]

Capable of reaching millions of viewers, these promos drew on a tradition of exploiting the public's interest in Hollywood culture. Christopher Anderson traces this interest back to fan magazines, behind-the-scenes newsreels, and radio programs such as Hollywood Hotel and Lux Radio Theatre, which, he argues, "perpetuated an image of

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[29] "Promotional Featurettes for TV." Variety (11 December 1963). Philip K. Scheuer. "Movies Draft TV to Soft-Sell Fans." Los Angeles Times (13 November 1962): D13.
[30] "Promotional Featurettes for TV." Variety (11 December 1963).
[31] Ed Olmstead. "'Bedfellows' Half-Hour TV Ad A Spicy, Selling Affair." Hollywood Reporter (22 February 1965).
[32] Rod Egan. Letter Florence Small. (12 September 1970). The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid production file. George Roy Hill papers. Herrick Library.
[33] "Promotional Featurettes for TV." Variety (11 December 1963).

Hollywood glamour while promoting recent studio releases."[34] The featurettes also continued a tradition that Disney helped establish on television. "Disney" Anderson writes, "defined television as a companion medium to the cinema, an informational medium that could be used to reveal the process of filmmaking—since that impulse could not be indulged in the movies themselves."[35] For the motion picture industry, the television medium became a way not only to promote its theatrical output, but also to manufacture an image of the production process, which was an important component of the industry's self-image since production work was going through a transition.

In addition to television, a number of other important venues offered studios a way to show these shorts and build up their feature films. Cable Hogue producer Phil Feldman outlined a number of ways to exploit the making-of Hogue documentary and identified the various places a featurette could be shown, including movie theaters, where they could serve as a kind of trailer or used as a promotional aid by distributors.[36] Promotional films for exhibitors had existed during the studio era, but they took on greater importance in the post-Paramount consent decree era since theaters were no longer aligned with studios. Distributors would use the featurette to attract interest from exhibitors, who would then engage in competitive bidding for a single film. Sometimes, a studio would put together a feature-length promo to highlight its slate of releases. 20th Century-Fox's exhibitor film The Big Show, for example, shows that time and money were poured into these promotional films. In this case, the promo film was shot in CinemaScope and featured studio executives, directors, producers, and stars from

[34] Anderson. Hollywood TV. 142.
[35] Ibid. 145.
[36] Phil Feldman. Memo. (Undated). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

Hollywood and abroad, extolling the strength of Fox's output and introducing clips for upcoming releases. At other times, a promo for a single film would be made to attract exhibitor interest. In 1969, Paramount mobilized a major advertising campaign for its blockbuster Paint Your Wagon, which involved a number of promotional featurettes, including one aimed at exhibitors that had already booked the film.[37]

Phil Feldman's plan for the rollout of the Cable Hogue featurette also suggested that the film should be made available to civic groups and charities. With group sales a key source of a film's revenue, featurettes aimed at civic groups would have been an important strategy to interest those groups.[38] Other potential venues that Feldman identified included universities, colleges, and high schools that offered film education programs, which could receive the documentary for free. Eventually, Cable Hogue director Sam Peckinpah envisioned that he would use the featurette on a tour of universities across the United States.[39] Similarly, in a treatment for The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, producer Ronald Preissman explained that the film, which would detail the role of director George Roy Hill and the specific problems and solutions that he encountered during the production, would be aimed at film students.[40] In each of these cases, producers seemed to balance these featurettes' promotional design with

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[37] Leonard Sloane. "Advertising: Unreeling a Movie Promotion." New York Times (8 August 1969): 44. Wayne Warga. "Hollywood Gets More Mileage Out of 'Wagon'." Los Angeles Times (7 September 1969): Q1.

[38] For the importance of group sales, see Warga. "Hollywood Gets More Mileage Out of 'Wagon'." Los Angeles Times and the campaign brochure for The Agony and the Ecstasy (1965). "Advertising for films" clipping file. Herrick Library.

[39] Joel Reisner. Letter to Lou Simon. (7 January 1970). The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

[40] Ronald Preissman. Treatment for The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. (Fall 1968). The Making of Butch Cassidy production file. George Roy Hill Papers. Herrick Library.

educational value. However, with a film culture that had been flourishing on university campuses throughout the 1960s, it is likely that these producers were also contemplating tapping into a key demographic.

Formal conventions and structuring motifs

"The very embodiment of corporate, instrumental values," writes Paul Arthur, "the [making-of documentary] is putatively exempt not only from questions of visual style but also those of authorship, politics, or aesthetic ideology."[41] While promotional featurettes certainly forfeit any kind of creative flair or personal style to the demands of studio publicity, these films draw on some key formal conventions from the documentary tradition. Questioning these films' visual style and authorship can help us gain insight into how these seemingly disposable texts were constructed, how the films the featurettes are claiming to document were marketed, and how the image of Hollywood filmmaking in the post-studio system era was manufactured.

To start off, we can place promotional featurettes into what Bill Nichols calls the expository mode: texts that "address the viewer directly, with titles or voices that advance an argument about the historical world."[42] One of the key characteristics of these featurettes and the expository mode is the ubiquitous presence of anonymous, "voice-of-God" commentary. For example, Searchers for a Special City, a featurette made by the ad agency Kaleidoscope for the film Mister Buddwing (1966), adopts this kind of commentary to describe the use of New York City as a location. However, some films

[41] Arthur. "(In)dispensable Cinema." Film Comment. 39.
[42] Bill Nichols. Bill Nichols. Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1991. 34.

mix "voice-of-God" narration with commentary from directors, producers, or actors, who serve as eyewitnesses to support the ideas introduced by the anonymous commentary. Nichols also suggests that the expository mode can accommodate interviews, but they are largely subordinated to the point that the film is trying to make. The voices of others, he argues, "retain little responsibility for making the argument, but are used to support it or provide evidence or substantiation for what the commentary addresses. The voice of authority resides with the text itself rather than with those recruited to it."[43] Promotional featurettes offer many examples of this strategy.

In On the Trail of the Iguana, a featurette for John Huston's Night of the Iguana (1964), the primary aim is to promote the feature film, but the secondary goal is to celebrate the artistry of John Huston. This goal is accomplished by balancing John Huston's modest claims about his filmmaking process with the praising "voice-of-God" commentary, which is given credence by off-camera quips from actors Richard Burton, Deborah Kerr, and Cyril Delevanti, who all attest to the director's skill of working with actors. In one of the more unusual instances of voice-over commentary, Escape to Paradise, a segment from Walt Disney Presents promoting Swiss Family Robinson (1960), features narration provided by the locals of Tobago, where the film was shot. Interestingly, the commentary is presented as a calypso song. Even though the narration seems to offer the perspective of the locals, who participated in the making of the film, the commentary fulfills the aim of the behind-the-scene segment: a celebration of the joys and adventure of making a film in an exotic location. But the calypso narration curiously contrasts with the visuals, which provide evidence of a less than joyful production. As the

[43] Ibid. 37.


fig. 4


fig. 5


fig. 6


fig. 7


fig. 8

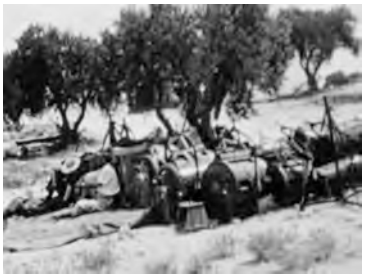
fig. 9

narration maintains an upbeat tone, celebrating the "fun" of making Swiss Family Robinson, the imagery reveals a violent tropical storm (fig. 4) and the resulting ruined location (fig. 5), which had to be cleaned up by local labor (fig. 6), i.e. the source of the commentary.

Another feature of the expository mode is that images are at the service of the commentary. This image-sound relationship is a key stylistic device that usually sustains much of the featurette. In The Camera's Window of the World, a making-of featurette for King of Kings (1961), segments of the documentary present shots that directly correspond to a piece of information provided by the commentary. For example, the narration describes the mounting of the production in Spain and relates, "From the Canary Islands came camels, unknown in Spain (fig. 7). Under the watchful eye of the Spanish Civil Guard (fig. 8), preparations begin for the days work (fig 9). The giant super Technirama cameras are made ready for the dramatic panorama (fig. 10). Up the precipitous mountainside, a special track has been laid for movement of equipment into

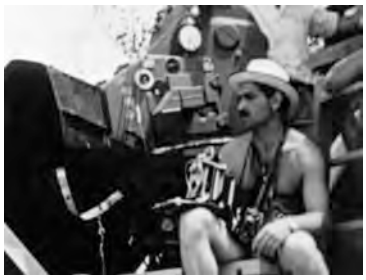
fig. 10


fig. 11

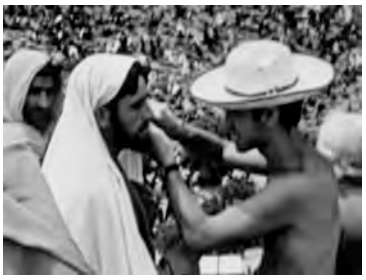
fig. 12

position (fig. 11). Makeup men put the final touches on the Biblical characters (fig. 12)."[44]

Such direct sound-to-image correspondence belies a narrative strategy that aims for maximum clarity. This correspondence also suggests a documentary convention that is easy to execute in post-production—as was probably the case with The Camera's Window of the World—and easy to conceive of in the planning of a documentary. In Ronald Preissman's treatment for The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, he proposes using this approach, writing, "Any of these interviews could be enlivened by flashbacks to color footage taken during the filming of the production which would more colorfully illustrate the point the interviewee is making. For example, if Paul Monash is talking about the casting of 'Etta', CUT TO a scene showing Katherine Ross as Etta."[45]

Just as images can act as illustrations of the commentary in the expository mode, Nichols also argues that images can serve as counterpoint to the commentary. This is the

[44] Neal Moses Rosendorf has demonstrated that Spanish dictator Franco and his regime courted Hollywood productions because they could "cultivate a positive image for a government with an image problem, through positive portrayals of Spain and Spaniards, and the imprimatur of both glamour and 'normality' conferred by Hollywood operation in the country." We might consider that this featurette, which revealed the participation of the Spanish people and the Franco regime through its arm of the Spanish Civil Guard, inadvertently played into the dictatorship's propagandistic tactics. See Rosendorf. "'Hollywood in Madrid': American Film Producers and the Franco Regime, 1950-1970. Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television 27.1 (March 2007): 77-109.

[45] Preissman. Treatment for The Making of Butch Cassidy. (Fall 1968).

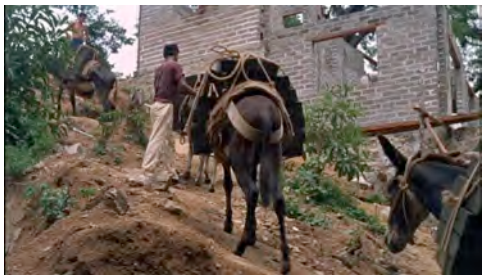
fig. 13

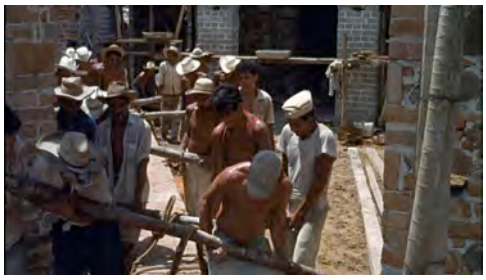
fig. 14

case with the abovementioned example of Escape to Paradise, which juxtaposes—perhaps unintentionally—cheerful calypso-style narration with images of production problems. In On the Trail of the Iguana, we seem to have another case of inadvertent irony. Actress Deborah Kerr's voice-over explains how the set, near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, was built on a hill and that each day she had to climb up and down the hill countless times, which reduced her legs to "jelly." To illustrate this point, the filmmakers present not Kerr ascending the hill, but first mules carrying building materials up the hill (fig. 13) and then Mexican laborers struggling to carry a massive wood beam through a cramped space (fig. 14). The images were likely chosen to illustrate the challenge of Kerr having to climb up and down the hill all day, but her description seems disproportionate to the actual physical labor of the Mexican workers. Consequently, the film brings to the fore what is never directly addressed: that the production relied on the physical—and cheap—labor of the locals.

In the expository mode, Nichols makes the case that the presence of the authoring filmmaker is represented by the commentary. However, there are certain instances, such as TV news, when a representative will stand for "a broader, institutional source of authority."[46] In promotional featurettes, we typically encounter this latter case, in which the narrator and the filmmakers are carrying out the will of the studios' broader

[46] Nichols. Representing Reality. 37.

institutional voice and authority. The subsuming of the filmmaker's authorial presence brings the featurette into the tradition of the industrial film. Donald Levin describes this aspect of industrials and writes, "Industrial films use the conventions of documentaries to naturalize, and to a large extent obscure, their ideologies, which are the ideologies of their corporate sponsors and not their anonymous filmmakers."[47] While the filmmakers of promotional shorts can cultivate certain styles (e.g. Kaleidoscope films relies heavily on "voice-of-God" commentary and promo producer Robert Faber typically intercuts a director directing a scene with edited clips of the movie to simulate the illusion of filmmaking), their aim and ideology is that of the studio's: to soft-sell the feature film and present the production process as appealing, easily comprehensible, and heroic.

To achieve these objectives, the filmmakers fall upon a series of structuring motifs that have become conventions of the making-of form. Many featurettes revolve around a single theme, which provides the structure for the film and allows the filmmakers to convey a narrative in a short amount of time. For example, four featurettes made for The Guns of Navarone (1961) each take up a single theme. Great Guns highlights the filming location of the Greek island of Rhodes, while No Visitors focuses on the parade of film-set visitors, including US sailors, the prime minister of Greece, and the Greek royal family. Evy and James Darren's Honeymoon follows the actor and his wife's Greek honeymoon taken just prior to Darren's participation in the film, whereas Two Girls on the Town tracks actresses Irene Papas and Gia Scala as they shop on their days off. The reliance on single themes allows the filmmakers to present a more personal

[47] Donald Levin. "Reconstructing Reality: The Industrial Film as Faux Documentary." Docufictions: Essays on the Intersection of Documentary and Fictional Filmmaking. Eds. Gary D. Rhodes and John Parris Springer. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006. 89.

side to the movie stars in less than five minutes for each featurette. The filmmakers are also able to reuse the same footage in each featurette, reconfiguring its meaning in accordance with the promo's theme.

Like the single themes, many featurettes structure their narratives around depicting a single aspect of the production process. Maan, Jordan: The Camels Are Cast, a featurette for Lawrence of Arabia (1962), highlights the casting of camels in the Jordanian desert. Day in the Life of Mia & Vicky follows two American fashion designers based in Paris as they provide costumes for the shoot of The Walking Stick (1970), taking place in London. In Hollywood Afloat, the planning and staging of a virtuosic helicopter shot from a submarine to a battleship for the film Morituri (1965) are detailed. Focusing on just one aspect of the filmmaking process allows the featurette filmmakers to spotlight the skill and ingenuity that go into movie making in a short amount of time. These types of featurettes typically only capture a single day's events, suggesting that the theme and structure of the promo were likely determined by the access that the filmmakers had to the productions.

Another central motif of the featurette is a spotlight on a single individual involved in the production process. The focus is usually on the director, though featurettes frequently mention the stars of the film and occasionally pay fleeting attention to a screenwriter or cinematographer. On the Trail of the Iguana centers on John Huston, but actors and even the cinematographer are given a voice to explain their working relationship with the director. The Gamblin' Man, a featurette for the film On the Beach (1959), concentrates on producer-director Stanley Kramer and the risks he takes with actors, in this case, the aging Fred Astaire, who is cast against type. Though above-the-

line talent is the focal point of most featurettes, below-the-line crew is frequently visible in images of the set, but they are hardly mentioned in the commentary. The depiction of key creative individuals once again allows the featurette makers to tell a cohesive narrative succinctly. It also seems to play into another important concept of narrative storytelling: the creation of a coherent point of view. In a memo regarding the chaotic state of the Cable Hogue documentary, the writer offers this narrative strategy as a solution to the problem of restructuring the film and suggests shifting "the focus of the documentary in favor of the director, Sam Peckinpah. He will provide the needed illumination of transition and control of audience's point of view."[48]

In a similar manner, the creators of The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid aimed to fix the film in director George Roy Hill's perspective. A making-of concept proposal explains, "Overshoulder, underfoot the film will be tied subjectively and objectively to the directors point of view. Sounds over films [sic] will be the director's conversations with the cameraman, actors, second unit director, unit manager, art director, and other key personnel of the moment."[49]Ultimately, the final film omitted these conversations and instead balanced the director's voice over with commentary from actors Paul Newman and Robert Redford and screenwriter William Goldman. The result is a surprisingly candid making-of that juxtaposes the director's take on producing the film with the other principle talents' experience.

One of the key and enduring structuring motifs in the making-of is treating the feature film's story as a metaphor for the filmmaking process. Paul Arthur calls attention

[48] Anonymous. Memo regarding The Ballad of Cable Hogue documentary. Undated. The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.
[49] Anonymous. Making-of concept. Undated. The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid production file. George Roy Hill papers. Herrick Library.

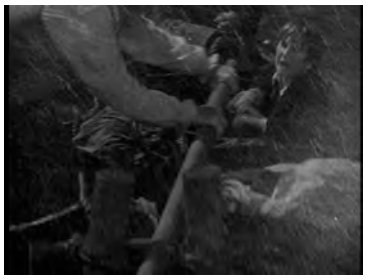
fig. 15


fig. 16


fig. 17

to this convention and writes, "A recurring tactic is to seize on an integral trope for the filmmaking process that mirrors the typology of the original narrative."[50] This metaphor can function as a device to connect a segment of a promo or it can serve as an organizing principle for an entire film. In a sequence from Escape to Paradise, associative editing conflates the storm that the Swiss Family Robinson encounters (figs. 15-16) with the tropical storm that production grappled with (fig. 17). For Challenge of the Champions, a promo film for Grand Prix (1966), the shooting of a crucial race sequence is treated as a race itself, with the same level of pressure and drama as the Monaco Grand Prix. This convention has also made its way into the conception of a project. One solution to the re-editing of the Cable Hogue documentary was to convey the "sense that the goals of the actors and Sam are in many ways identical to the goals of Hogue's main characters."[51]

The feature's story as filmmaking metaphor has more recently shaped some of the better-known making-of documentaries. In Burden of Dreams (1982), a chronicle of the making of Fitzcarraldo (1982), the quixotic dreams of director Werner Herzog are merged with Fitzcarraldo's quixotic dream, with both individuals pursuing the same impossible goal of hauling a ship over a mountain. In Heart of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse (1991), the production of Apocalypse Now (1979) is depicted as war or, as

[50] Arthur. "(In)dispensable Cinema." Film Comment. 41.
[51] Anonymous. Memo regarding The Ballad of Cable Hogue documentary. Undated. The Ballad of Cable Hogue production file. Sam Peckinpah papers. Herrick Library.

director Francis Ford Coppola even suggests, the Vietnam War itself. Why after so many years do making-of documentary filmmakers continue to bring out this seemingly tired cliché?

Perhaps, this is the way the image of moviemaking—at least in Hollywood—has always been treated by journalists, the public, and the industry itself. After all, isn't the star image predicated on a conflation of screen persona and actor personality? Both journalists and featurette filmmakers may also rely on this convention in order to make sense of the filmmaking profession, which is largely a technical trade involving endless decision-making. By appealing to images and ideas that people are more familiar with (e.g. racing and war) and that convey a more glorified role than mere craftsperson, the makers of behind-the-scenes documentaries can conjure up images of the filmmaking profession that are as appealing as the films themselves. Interestingly, movie directors sometimes rely on these metaphors when talking about themselves. Maybe drawing upon these metaphors becomes a way for filmmakers to make sense of their own overly technical and often managerial profession. Or perhaps, it is a way for filmmakers to aggrandize their self-image. Rather than just a craftsperson, they become a general (Coppola), army sergeant (Sam Fuller), dictator (Preminger), quixotic dreamer (Herzog), magician (Orson Welles), or ringmaster (Federico Fellini).

"Runaway" productions and visual evidence

In this last section, I would like to treat 1960s promotional featurettes as historical texts, which can be put into dialogue with the film whose production they are documenting and other primary sources, such as technical journals, in order to understand


fig. 18


fig. 19


fig. 20

both the details of the production process of films shot abroad and how these films were promoted. Far from detailed and accurate records, these behind-the-scenes films depict the production process very selectively. They ignore the economics of filmmaking and the labor needed to mount these large productions—though we can catch glimpses of the film labor, as will be discussed shortly. Instead, these promotional films concentrate on the personalities and artistry of directors and actors, the logistical challenge of location filmmaking, and the technical accomplishments of carrying out large-scale film shoots. At once analyzing and cutting through these films' promotional rhetoric, I believe we can treat them as, what John Caldwell calls, "publicly disclosed deep texts," which contain "embedded" information on the production process.[52]

Firstly, what do these featurettes tell us about how US-backed films shot abroad were promoted? A survey of a handful of films reveals that authentic foreign locations are consistently highlighted in each of these promos. In The Secret of the San Pablo, made for the film The Sand Pebbles (1966), the various Chinese locations—Hong Kong Harbor (fig. 18), the waters of Tsao-chuang (fig. 19), the waterfront village of Tam Sui (fig. 20), and the docks of Keelung (fig. 21)—are given prominence at the front end of the film. Though many of these Taiwanese locations were stand-ins for Mainland China,

[52] Caldwell. Production Culture. 347-8.

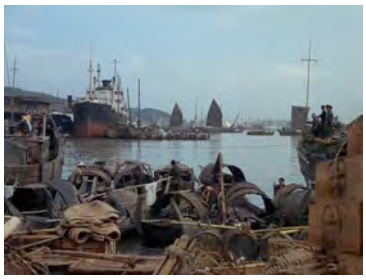
fig. 21

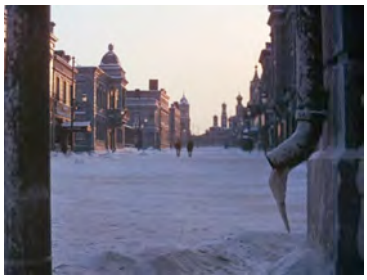
fig. 22


fig. 23

the featurette promotes The Sand Pebbles by emphasizing verisimilitude and exotic locales rather than total authenticity. While authenticity was an important justification for US producers to make films abroad,[53] it seems that the illusion of authenticity was just as important as actual authenticity. Moscow in Madrid, for example, explains how Moscow was recreated in various locations throughout Spain (fig. 22) for the production of Doctor Zhivago (1965). Here, the ingenuity of production design seems to trump authenticity. Even Walt Disney explains in his introduction to Escape to Paradise that no back-lot could convey the realism needed to tell the story of Swiss Family Robinson. In typical fashion, Disney frames the search for an authentic location within an educational discourse and points out the filmmaking location of Tobago on a wall map (fig. 23). This attention to foreign locations suggests that US film companies were using this aspect of film production—in conjunction with widescreen processes, color, and stereophonic sound—to promote films and differentiate them from television.[54]

What kinds of insights do these featurettes provide us into the filmmaking process of runaway productions? One important factor in shooting overseas was the reliance on cheap local labor. As touched upon before, though these promos rarely identify the use of

[53] William Perlberg. "What Do You Mean? Run-Away Production!" The Journal of the Screen Producers Guild (December 1960): 7-8, 33.
[54] It should be noted that by the mid-to-late 1960s, a few US TV shows such as I Spy (1965-68) and Cowboy in Africa (1967-68), which were shot overseas, were using their exotic locales as a selling point.

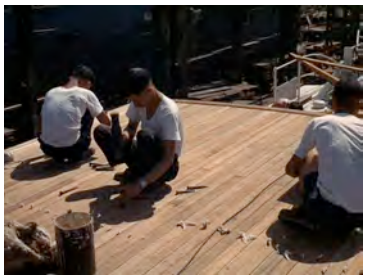
fig. 24


fig. 25

local labor directly through voice-over commentary, the visuals clearly reveal that locals performed much of the manual labor. In another featurette for The Sand Pebbles titled A Ship Called San Pablo, the filmmakers capture Taiwanese workers building the titular ship, which plays a key role in the feature (fig. 24). Likewise, in On the Trail of the Iguana, we see Mexican workers carrying out the strenuous manual labor of set construction (fig. 14). While the workers of Tobago are fore-grounded in Escape to Paradise, the cheerful and carefree calypso narration does not reflect the difficult work of cleaning up the beach and ruined sets after the violent storm (figs. 5-6).

No longer studio-bound, independent productions that were engaged in location shooting had to contend with unpredictable weather patterns. This problem worsened on overseas productions that took place in far-flung locations or locations with no cover sets. Featurettes consistently highlight weather difficulties since these kinds of challenges serve as dramatic events, which the productions are shown surmounting through skill, tenacity, and technical know-how. We see the Swiss Family Robinson production overcoming the aforementioned tropical storm by rebuilding sets. In The Comedians in Africa, a featurette for The Comedians (1967), actors suffer and endure temperatures of up to 138 degrees due to a deadly combination of Dahomey, Africa's sweltering heat and scorching set lighting. The Lawrence of Arabia featurette, In Search of Lawrence, depicts the crew's struggle with desert sand storms (fig. 25), which they dealt with by simply

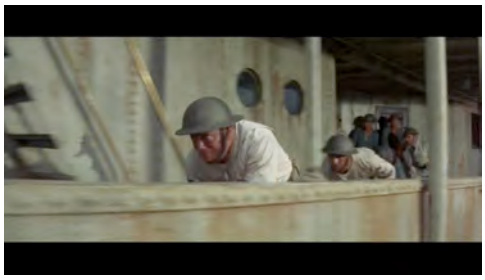
fig. 26

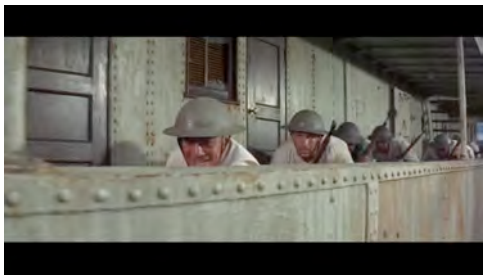
fig. 27

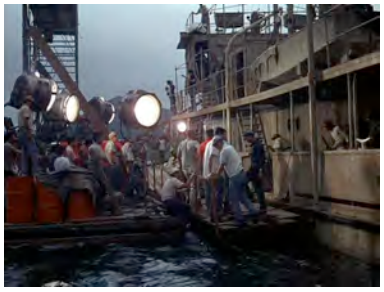
fig. 28

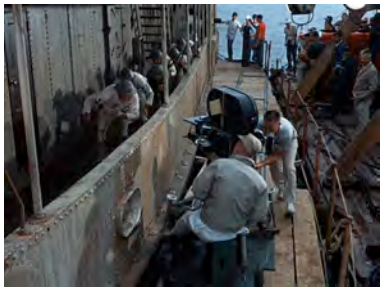
fig. 29

continuing to shoot. Whereas a production record for one of these films might hint at the kind of weather problems that contributed to filmmaking delays, the actual visual record of the weather conditions that a crew faced offers an important clue to the reconstruction of a movie's production process.

An equally significant piece of the puzzle is the representation of the techniques employed to execute shots. To identify such techniques, we can take a comparative approach by analyzing a shot from the feature film, such as this tracking shot from The Sand Pebbles (figs. 26-27), and its execution from the featurette (figs. 28-29). From this brief behind-the-scenes footage, we can extract valuable information—with the aid of a production profile from American Cinematographer[55]—to help us understand the problems and solutions that went into achieving this tracking shot on what looks to be a difficult, open-water location. First of all, in figure 28, we can see that the production

[55] Charles Loring. "The Photography of 'The Sand Pebbles'." American Cinematographer (March 1967): 174-177, 200-201. This article provides information on the kind of equipment used on the production.

used pontoons as lighting platforms to allow the crew to light the ship in open water. The lighting set-up consists of about a half dozen Brute arcs trained on the moving actors. The American Cinematographer article reveals that up to 150 cast and crew members would be on set. We can see that this cramped location would have made it a challenge for the crew to avoid getting in front of the camera. Figure 29 shows that an outrigger catwalk was built alongside the ship to allow for camera movement. We can also see that the lighting set-up creates potentially problematic cast shadows from both the actors and the Panavision camera. In order for the camera crew to avoid capturing their own shadow in the shot, they position the camera from a skewed angle, which in fact results in a dynamic-looking shot.

By mobilizing information gleaned from the American Cinematographer article and the featurette, we can identify the technical challenges posed by shooting on location and the creative solutions devised by the production and suggest how these contexts leave their mark on the final film.[56] More than just a disposable piece of publicity, I believe that these early featurettes can provide us with critical information for not only understanding how the motion picture industry constructed its own image for the public, but also for the kind of visual evidence that helps us comprehend how creative decisions were made even when the demonstration of technique is rarely the focus of the featurette.

Conclusion

Christopher Anderson makes the case that the Disneyland TV series in the 1950s served an important analytical function by providing audiences with a discourse on both

[56] For a problem/solution model of stylistic history, see David Bordwell. On the History of Film Style. Cambridge, MA: 1997. 149-157.

Disney movies and cinema in general. Anderson explains that the show "educated viewers to perceive continuities among Disney films, to analyze certain aspects of the production process, and to recognize the studio's body of work as a unified product of Walt's authorial vision."[57] In a similar fashion, promotional featurettes in the 1960s would fulfill a corresponding critical function by giving the public insight into filmmaking culture and the production process—albeit in a hyped up way—which oftentimes could only be accessed through television. This fusing of cinema and TV points to the growing convergence of these media, which would strengthen through the rest of the 20th century and into the 21st.

However, the image of the US motion picture industry that these featurettes projected would stray from the image cultivated by studio-backed TV shows such as Disneyland and Warner Bros. Presents from the mid-1950s. Anderson points out that these TV programs promoted an outmoded image of the industry. He writes, "By representing the studio as an active self-contained creative community bustling with activity, these scenes evoke impressions of studio-era Hollywood while masking the fact that historical conditions had rendered those very images obsolete."[58] Promotional featurettes, on the other hand, offered a more up-to-date image of US film companies. Even in the late 1950s, behind-the-scenes shorts depicted the rise of independent productions and the move away from studio-bound productions and into location shooting. These promos also captured an array of overseas productions, a crucial development in the organization and operation of the industry. Nevertheless, these images were just as manufactured as anything before. Instead of stars living out their

[57] Anderson. Hollywood TV. 144.
[58] Ibid. 144.

fantasies in Beverly Hills mansions, there were now globetrotting actors involved in the high adventure of far-off and exotic location shoots. Instead of directors conjuring up illusions on Hollywood backlots, there were now filmmakers mobilizing masses of people, overcoming the most difficult of logistical challenges, and contending with the unruly forces of nature. A marginalized form to be sure, these promotional featurettes have nonetheless helped to create an image of moviemaking and moviemakers that persists to this day.

FILMOGRAPHY
–The title in parentheses refers to the feature film that the featurette documents and the year in parentheses typically refers to the release year of the feature film.

Material viewed from the UCLA Film & TV Archive:

Tour Thomas Ince Studio (1920)
20th Century-Fox Studio Tour (1936)
The Man with a Golden Arm featurette (1955)
Twentieth Century-Fox Hour (12-14-1955)
Saint Joan casting call promo (ca. 1956)
The Ten Commandments featurette (1956)
The Big Show exhibitor film (1957)
The Gamblin' Man (On the Beach, 1959)
On the Beach news story (1959)
Ghengis Khan featurette (1965)
Hollywood Afloat (Morituri, 1965)
Challenge of the Champions (Grand Prix, 1966)
He Must Find There Nothing (Is Paris Burning?, 1966)
- Maurice Jarre featurette

Lost Command featurette (1966)
Searchers for a Special City (Mister Buddwing, 1966)
The Comedians in Africa (The Comedians, 1967)
Cowboy in Africa featurette (1967)
Lelouch in Love (Live for Life, 1967)
On Location with Sky Riders (Sky Riders, 1967)
The Beatles Mod Odyssey (The Yellow Submarine, 1968)
On Location with David L. Wolper's Production of the Devil's Brigade (Devil's Brigade, 1968)
Day in the Life of Mia & Vicky (The Walking Stick, 1970)
Focus on Airport (Airport, 1970)
The Making of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1970)
Science Fact or Science Fiction (The Andromeda Strain, 1971)
The Unexpected Rosalind Russell (Mrs. Pollifax, Spy, 1971)
Mary and Elizabeth (Mary, Queen of Scots, 1972)
Wayne Train (The Train Robbers, 1973)
Women in the Movies (Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore, 1974)
Heroes with Wings (The Great Waldo Pepper, 1975)
LTA Means Lighter-Than-Air Craft (The Hindenburg, 1975)
Making of the Man of Bronze (Doc Savage: The Man of Bronze, 1975)
The Mystery Surround Sherlock Holmes (The Seven-Per-Cent Solution, 1976)
A Pirate Ship Sails Again! (Swashbuckler, 1976)
The Foreign Legion Marches Again (The Last Remake of Beau Geste, 1977)
Rescue Impossible (Airport '77, 1977)
Same Time, Next Year featurette (1978)

Outside viewing material:

Warner Bros. Presents: Helen of Troy (Helen of Troy, 1956)
Walt Disney Presents: Escape to Paradise (Swiss Family Robinson, 1960)
The Camera's Window of the World (King of Kings, 1961)
Evy and James Darren's Honeymoon (The Guns of Navarone, 1961)
- Great Guns
- No Visitors
- Two Girls on the Town

In Search of Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia, 1962)
- Maan, Jordan: The Camels Are Cast
- Romance of Arabia
- Wind, Sand and Star: The Making of a Classic

The Cardinal featurette (1963)
On the Trail of the Iguana (Night of the Iguana, 1964)
Behind the Camera with David Lean (Doctor Zhivago, 1965)
- David Lean's Film of Doctor Zhivago
- Moscow in Madrid
- Pasternak

The Secret of the San Pablo (The Sand Pebbles, 1966)
- A Ship Called San Pablo

Reflections in a Golden Eye uncut behind-the-scenes footage (1967)
Burden of Dreams (1982)
Heart of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse (1991)