

Monday, October 26

7:00 p.m.

9:30 p.m.

(26A) THE COLD EYE (*My darling be careful*)

U.S.A., 1980
90 minutes

Director/Producer/Cinematographer/Editor: Babette Mangolte; Screenwriter: James Barth; Music: Franz Schubert; Principal Cast: Kim Ginsberg, George Deem, Power Boothe, Saskia Noordhoel Hegt, Ela Troyano, James Barth, Maggie Gysnasty, Valda Setterfield; Print Source: Jackie Raynal

In Person: James Barth



French-born, New York-based Babette Mangolte has received due praise for the precise and pristine photographic qualities which she, as cinematographer, has brought to such things as Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman* and *News from Home* and Yvonne Rainer's *Film about a Woman Who...* and *Lives of Performers*. But she has so far not gotten much attention for the things she has directed herself, a body of work comprising two features, one featurette (*What Maisie Knew*, based on the novel by Henry James), and two shorts (one of which, *There? Where?*, she shot in Southern California while she was a visiting professor in filmmaking at UCSD). Her newest work, *The Cold Eye*, about a young painter named Cathy trying to find her bearings in the forbidding New York art world, is a rigorously controlled experiment in subjective camerawork (Mangolte serves as her own cinematographer), with an intensely analytical script by James Barth. What emerges is an unsparing portrait of an artist — a portrait in reverse, as it were, looking at its subject from the inside out. It is described by the director like so:

"The cold eye of the title is the recording camera which has become Cathy's own eye, continually observing, questioning, and judging, visually and intellectually. The film is about a certain stage in the development of a young artist while she confronts the real world in terms of her own idealistic notions of what art is supposed to do." *Duncan Shepherd*

(26 B) LA TORTUE SUR LE DOS (*Like a Turtle on Its Back*)

France, 1977

110 minutes, In French with English subtitles
Director: Luc Beraud; Screenwriters: Luc Beraud, Claude Miller; Cinematographer: Bruno Nuytten; Editor: Joele Van Effenterre; Music: G. Lekeu, W. Mozart, L. Van Beethoven, G. Verdi; Principal Cast: Jean-Francois Stevenin, Bernadette Lafont, Virginie Thevenet, Veronique Silver, Claude Miller, Marion Game; Production Company: Filmbolic; Print Source: New Line Cinema
Other Festivals: Montreal 1978

In Person: Luc Beraud

Luc Beraud's directorial debut is a comedy about writer's block, and the first half-hour or so establishes it as one of the best movies ever made on the process of writing, a subject which, on past evidence (*Dr. Zhivago* etc.), has often been suspected of being unfilmable. A writer himself — generally, as here, in tandem with Claude Miller — Beraud has fashioned a very articulate and introspective script, with some very accurate and very funny business on the physical rituals surrounding — and obstructing — the act of writing: all those superstitious little rituals — arranging the writing utensils just-so on the desk, smoothing down the dog-eared corners of the manuscript, and so on — which might come under the classification of literary "primping." The narrative events get increasingly wacky as the movie goes along, however — the despairing writer playing a suicide joke on his wife, with a plastic pool of blood bought at a novelty store (shades of *Harold and Maude*), or tirelessly roaming the streets to chase skirts, or getting swept up in nightmarish escapades that are best left for each viewer to discover for himself. The ever-widening spiral of lunacy runs true to the form of Beraud's second and most recent movie, *Plein Sud*, which is also presented in this year's festival (see Sunday, October 25). *Duncan Shepherd*

