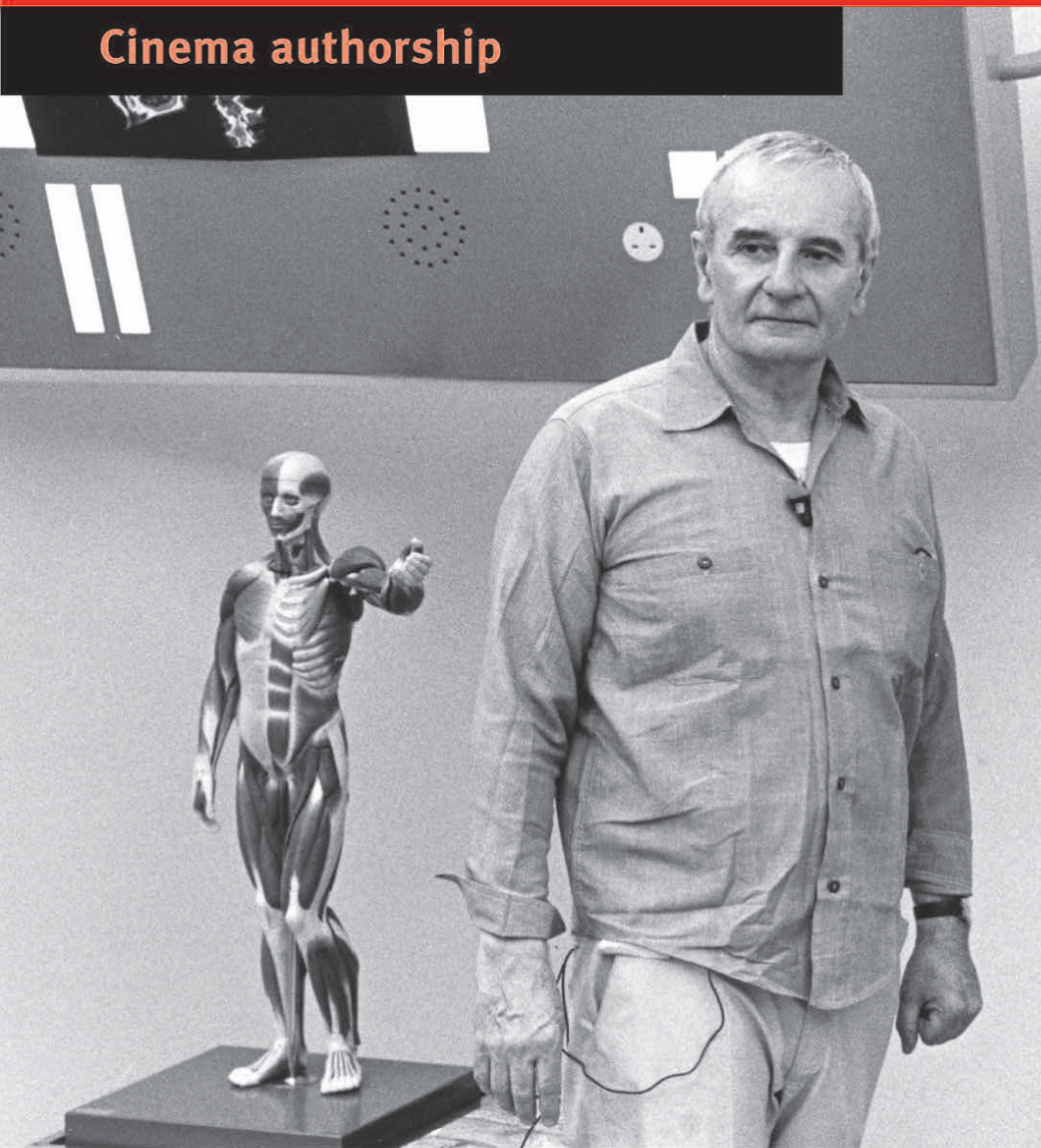


# Lindsay Anderson

BRITISH  
FILM  
MAKERS

Cinema authorship



John Izod, Karl Magee, Kathryn Hannan  
and Isabelle Gourdin-Sangouard

---

**Lindsay Anderson**

**BRITISH  
FILM  
MAKERS**

**MANCHESTER**  
1824

Manchester University Press

---

**BRIAN MCFARLANE, NEIL SINYARD** *series editors*

ALLEN EYLES, PHILIP FRENCH, SUE HARPER,  
TIM PULLEINE, JEFFREY RICHARDS, TOM RYALL  
*series advisers*

**BRITISH  
FILM  
MAKERS**

*already published*

**Anthony Asquith** TOM RYALL

**Roy Ward Baker** GEOFF MAYER

**Sydney Box** ANDREW SPICER

**Jack Clayton** NEIL SINYARD

**Lance Comfort** BRIAN MCFARLANE

**Terence Davies** WENDY EVERETT

**Terence Fisher** PETER HUTCHINGS

**Terry Gilliam** PETER MARKS

**Derek Jarman** ROWLAND WYMER

**Lauder and Gilliat** BRUCE BABINGTON

**Mike Leigh** TONY WHITEHEAD

**Richard Lester** NEIL SINYARD

**Joseph Losey** COLIN GARDNER

**Carol Reed** PETER WILLIAM EVANS

**Michael Reeves** BENJAMIN HALLIGAN

**Karel Reisz** COLIN GARDNER

**Tony Richardson** ROBERT SHAIL

**J. Lee Thompson** STEVE CHIBNALL

**Michael Winterbottom** BRIAN MCFARLANE and DEANE WILLIAMS

---

# **Lindsay Anderson**

**Cinema authorship**

**BRITISH  
FILM  
MAKERS**

**JOHN IZOD, KARL MAGEE,  
KATHRYN HANNAN,  
ISABELLE GOURDIN-SANGOUARD**

**Manchester University Press**

MANCHESTER

Copyright © John Izod, Karl Magee, Kathryn Hannan, Isabelle Gourdin-Sangouard 2012

The right of John Izod, Karl Magee, Kathryn Hannan, Isabelle Gourdin-Sangouard to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

*Published by* Manchester University Press

Altrincham Street, Manchester M1 7JA, UK

[www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk](http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk)

*British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data applied for*

ISBN 978 0 7190 8338 9 *hardback*

First published 2012

The publisher has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for any external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Typeset in Scala with Meta display by  
Koinonia, Manchester

# Contents

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	page vii
SERIES EDITORS' FOREWORD	ix
PREFACE	xi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiii
1 Lindsay Anderson's ideas about authorship in the cinema	1
2 On the diaries: Lindsay Anderson's private writing	10
3 The early films	33
4 <i>This Sporting Life</i> (1963)	58
5 <i>The White Bus</i> (1966) and <i>Raz Dwa Trzy</i> or <i>The Singing Lesson</i> (1967)	81
6 <i>If....</i> (1968)	110
7 <i>O Lucky Man!</i> (1973)	138
8 <i>In Celebration</i> (1974)	170
9 <i>The Old Crowd</i> (1979)	183
10 <i>Britannia Hospital</i> (1982)	207
11 <i>The Whales of August</i> (1987)	237
12 <i>Glory! Glory!</i> (1988)	261
13 <i>Is That All There Is?</i> (1992)	280
14 Lindsay Anderson in the archive: empirical, named and implied author	290
FILMOGRAPHY	310
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	312
INDEX	326



## List of illustrations

1	Anderson in the officer's uniform of the King's Royal Rifles (1943). In 1944 he transferred to the Intelligence Corps and served in India until 1946.	page 28
2	Anderson on the set of <i>This Sporting Life</i> in 1962.	29
3	Anderson shooting <i>Trunk Conveyor</i> , the third of a series of four industrial films he made for Sutcliffe's Engineering Ltd (1952).	54
4	Anderson shooting <i>O Dreamland</i> in Margate in 1953. The film went on to form part of the first Free Cinema programme at the National Film Theatre in 1956.	54
5	Richard Harris and Lindsay Anderson during the shooting of <i>This Sporting Life</i> in 1962.	76
6	Lindsay Anderson, Richard Harris and Rachel Roberts on the set of <i>This Sporting Life</i> in 1962.	76
7	The Girl (Patricia Healey) in a scene from <i>The White Bus</i> (1966).	105
8	The Girl (Patricia Healey) ends her tour of her town with supper in a chip shop in a scene from <i>The White Bus</i> (1966).	105
9	Lindsay Anderson and Malcolm McDowell in discussion during the making of <i>If....</i> (1968).	132
10	Lindsay Anderson and the Chaplain (Geoffrey Chater) on the set of <i>If....</i> (1968).	132
11	Alan Price, Lindsay Anderson and Miroslav Ondricek prepare to shoot a scene during the making of <i>O Lucky Man!</i> in 1972.	163
12	Rachel Roberts, Lindsay Anderson and Malcolm McDowell on the set of <i>O Lucky Man!</i> in 1972.	164
13	James Bolam, Brian Cox and Lindsay Anderson rehearse a scene during the shooting of the film version of <i>In Celebration</i> (1974).	180
14	Jill Bennett, Frank Grimes and Lindsay Anderson pictured during the making of <i>The Old Crowd</i> in 1978.	202
15	Lindsay Anderson on the set of <i>Britannia Hospital</i> in 1981.	230
16	Lindsay Anderson faces the demonstrators on the set of <i>Britannia Hospital</i> in 1981.	231



## viii LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

17	Lindsay Anderson, Lillian Gish and Bette Davis prepare a scene during the making of <i>The Whales of August</i> in 1986.	255
18	Lindsay Anderson and Vincent Price on the set of <i>The Whales of August</i> in 1986.	256
19	Lindsay Anderson and Mike Fash on the set of <i>Glory! Glory!</i> (1988).	276
20	Lindsay Anderson and crew prepare to shoot a scene for his final film <i>Is That All There Is?</i> (1992).	287
21	Lindsay Anderson, Jocelyn Herbert and David Storey discuss the set design of the play <i>Stages</i> in a scene from <i>Is That All There Is?</i> (1992).	288
22	Lindsay Anderson, George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley at a party at the British Embassy, Beijing, during the making of the unreleased documentary <i>If You Were There: Wham! In China</i>	307

These stills are used with the kind permission of the Lindsay Anderson Archive, University of Stirling.

## Series editors' foreword

The aim of this series is to present in lively, authoritative volumes a guide to those film-makers who have made British cinema a rewarding but still under-researched branch of world cinema. The intention is to provide books which are up-to-date in terms of information and critical approach, but not bound to any one theoretical methodology. Though all books in the series will have certain elements in common – comprehensive filmographies, annotated bibliographies, appropriate illustration – the actual critical tools employed will be the responsibility of the individual authors.

Nevertheless, an important recurring element will be a concern for how the oeuvre of each film-maker does or does not fit certain critical and industrial contexts, as well as for the wider social contexts which helped to shape not just that particular film-maker but the course of British cinema at large.

Although the series is director-orientated, the editors believe that reference to a variety of stances and contexts is more likely to reconceptualise and reappraise the phenomenon of British cinema as a complex, shifting field of production. All the texts in the series will engage in detailed discussion of major works of the film-makers involved, but they all consider as well the importance of other key collaborators, of studio organisation, of audience reception, of recurring themes and structures: all those other aspects which go towards the construction of a national cinema.

The series explores and charts a field which is more than ripe for serious excavation. The acknowledged leaders of the field will be reappraised; just as important, though, will be the bringing to light of those who have not so far received any serious attention. They are all part of the very rich texture of British cinema, and it will be the work of this series to give them all their due.



# Preface

## A note on the archive

In August 1994 Lindsay Anderson died suddenly while on holiday in France, aged seventy-one. There being no immediate family to undertake the task, his close circle of friends, colleagues and relations converged on his London flat (which was also his office) to sort out his affairs. His secretary of many years, Kathy Burke, recalled the scene for David Sherwin, writer of a number of Anderson's films:

Many of Lindsay's friends rallied around and were very supportive. We had to organise his memorial celebration and the flat had to be cleared, a mammoth task as Lindsay rarely threw anything away.

The last fortnight was extraordinary. People were coming and going all the time. Representatives from the Cinema Museum and the Theatre Museum were introduced to each other as they came to collect their bequests, stretching to shake hands over the expert from Fitzjohns Books who was sorting out books crouched on the hall floor. Dr Sean Lewis and John Cartwright from the British Council, who had offered us some space to store files and papers, popped in to see what they were letting themselves in for. The furniture went off to Phillips to be auctioned, including my desk, so thereafter I operated from a card table.<sup>1</sup>

As is often the case the most visible, colourful, valuable material was taken, leaving the mass of seemingly mundane papers behind. The large collection of framed cinema and theatre posters that adorned the walls of Anderson's flat (poignantly recorded in his final film *Is That All There Is?*) was broken up and the more valuable books were sold. The remaining collection of personal and working papers, photographs and memorabilia was put in temporary storage in the offices of the British Council in London en route to its final home in the University of Stirling Archives. There it sits on the shelves next to the papers of another celebrated British filmmaker, John Grierson.

The Anderson Archive provides a unique insight into the life and career of one of the most important British film and theatre directors of the

twentieth century. It includes scripts, production notes, correspondence, photographs, promotional material and press cuttings for all his films, forty plays and much of his television work. His files include extensive correspondence to and from friends, colleagues and fans alike, numbering over 10,000 letters. His working papers detail the day-to-day requests for interviews, visits to film festivals and promotional work alongside his ongoing efforts to produce a number of unrealised film projects.

One of the major strengths of the Anderson Archive (the absence of a number of framed posters aside) is its completeness. As well as providing a detailed record of his working life it includes a variety of personal material including memorabilia from his childhood, school days, university years and military service. Over 2,000 of his books (mainly relating to film and theatre) are also held, many interestingly annotated by his fiery red pen. And the archive also contains the most personal of items, Anderson's diaries – fifty years of private reflections on his life and career recorded in ninety beautifully hand-written notebooks.

### Anderson's calligraphic devices

The diary entries feature a variety of marks for emphasis. In quoting them (and his letters), we have italicised all the underlined words and the titles of films, plays and published works. We have not tried to emulate his use of coloured pens, often red deployed either for emphasis or to tag a particular topic. In general we do not replicate his liking for phrases in upper case except very occasionally when they reveal his feelings. With these exceptions, we have transcribed his writings verbatim.

Anderson frequently used three dots ... as a punctuation mark and we have reproduced it when quoting him. Therefore we have indicated those elisions that we introduced into his writing as [...]. Where the source quoted is not Anderson, three dots signify, according to the usual convention, that we have cut the text of an original document.

Pedants often misconstrue the title of *If...* which is in fact correctly stated with four dots.

### Notes

- 1 D. Sherwin, *Going Mad in Hollywood and Life with Lindsay Anderson* (London: Penguin, 1997) 295–6.

## Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge receipt of a three-year research grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. That funding supported the writing of this and other published material as well as the generation of an on-line, item level catalogue of film-related documents held in the Lindsay Anderson Archive in the University of Stirling Archives at [www.calmview.eu/stirling/CalmView/Default.aspx](http://www.calmview.eu/stirling/CalmView/Default.aspx).

Elements of our analysis of Anderson's authorship of *O Lucky Man!* first appeared in two publications: 'Music/Industry/Politics: Alan Price's Role in *O Lucky Man!*' in Laurel Forster and Sue Harper (eds) *British Culture and Society in the 1970s* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010); and 'What Is There to Smile At? Lindsay Anderson's *O Lucky Man!*' in Paul Newland (ed.) *Don't Look Now: British Cinema in the 1970s* (Bristol: Intellect, 2010). John Izod presented a panel paper '*Is That All There Is?* Lindsay Anderson, Forgetting and Remembering' at the Scottish Consortium for Film and Visual Studies Fourth Annual Conference in June 2011.

Isabelle Gourdin, 'Creating Authorship? Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's Collaboration on *If....* (1968)', *Journal of Screenwriting*, 1, 1 (2010) contributed ideas to our chapter on that film. Kathryn Hannan (née Mackenzie) did the equivalent in her 'In Search of an Audience: Lindsay Anderson's *Britannia Hospital*,' *Participations: The Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*, 6, 2 (2009).



## Lindsay Anderson's ideas about authorship in the cinema

Where in the period under review does one look for the British equivalent of Bergman, or Forman, or Rohmer, or Antonioni, or Truffaut, or even Godard? The answer is, nowhere. (Alexander Walker)

'Thanks!' (Anderson's annotation on the above)<sup>1</sup>

As Stephen Crofts has shown, notions of the film director as *auteur* had surfaced sporadically in Europe for thirty years prior to the moment often taken as the concept's source – the publication in 1954 of François Truffaut's 'Une Certaine Tendance du cinéma français'.<sup>2</sup> Crofts believes that ideas of authorship originated in Europe because a larger proportion of directors experienced greater creative freedom than their peers in Hollywood where at that time the studios operated producer-led regimes.<sup>3</sup>

For Lindsay Anderson (as later for Truffaut and the young Turks writing for *Cahiers du Cinéma*), the author was the director. Anderson believed this was the person who fused the contributions of all the other craftspeople involved into the finished whole.<sup>4</sup> He certainly did cite European directors in his critical writing but he also gave careful attention to American films. As it turned out, that interest was to shape his understanding of cinema authorship by leading indirectly to his first experience of filmmaking.

In the late 1940s Lois Sutcliffe Smith became one of the first readers of *Sequence*, a new British film journal edited by Anderson, Gavin Lambert and Peter Ericsson. She was sufficiently impressed by its articles on Hollywood films that she distributed the magazine to members of her Film Society in Wakefield and made a point of meeting its editors. When, early in 1948, the Sutcliffe family business wanted a short film produced to promote the mining machinery that they manufactured, she invited Anderson to make it, confident that, despite his complete want of production experience, his analytical acuity and appetite for directing would equip him well.<sup>5</sup>



Anderson had just concluded his undergraduate studies in December 1947 and published *Sequence 2* – the first issue over which he, Lambert and Ericsson had control. Years later, Philip French compared the moral stance and puritanism of Anderson's writing to F. R. Leavis – whose combative, denunciatory style in the literary journal *Scrutiny* had much influenced the *Sequence* editors. French added that Anderson's writing likewise had an immense influence on his contemporaries.<sup>6</sup> Evidence to this effect is found in a 1954 letter from the director of the BFI, Denis Forman, inviting John Grierson to respond to a blast from Anderson.

In many ways [the *Sequence* group] have given me a hell of a life and the number of scrapes into which they have dragged the Institute could not be numbered on the fingers of two hands. In spite of that I believe them to be, as I am sure you do, the most vigorous, the most talented and certainly the most fearless group of people writing on films today in Britain, or anywhere else.<sup>7</sup>

Notwithstanding his engagement on other fronts, a few weeks after launching *Sequence*, Anderson was starting his first job as a director (propelled by the urgency driving a generation whose careers had been postponed by war service). This sudden doubling of his professional life shaped his concept of the film director. Stimulated by this new beginning, Anderson welded into a seamless whole his ideal of the director as both the *filmmaker*, active through every stage of production and also the *author* subject to the critic's evaluation of his or her work. Indeed, he developed an argument designed to clinch this fusion, claiming that if critics were to fulfil their role, they needed to play a central function in cinema and complement the director. This is a theme in two early articles for *Sequence*, 'Angles of Approach' (1947) and 'Creative Elements' (1948). They express his aversion to the intellectual apathy of British film critics whom he charged with aspiring only to a position of middlebrow complacency and showing a very low degree of commitment to film.

In assailing these critics for their reluctance to grant the cinema a place alongside the older, well-established art forms against which they often measured its value,<sup>8</sup> Anderson was contributing to what Edward Buscombe identified as a project typical of the film magazines that emerged post-war. They aimed to raise the cultural status of cinema and claimed it was an art form which, like painting or poetry, offered the individual the freedom of personal expression.<sup>9</sup> For Anderson, in the making of those films of highest quality in which the director has a personal input, the authorial role becomes guarantor of the claim that the cinema is an art. Indeed, he often referred to the director-as-author as an artist. John Ford's scenarist Nunnally Johnson took issue with

him, resisting the elevation of the director over the writer who provides story, plot, character and dialogue.<sup>10</sup> The two men debated the issue (which Johnson called the cult of the director) both on and off the pages of *Sequence*.<sup>11</sup> Not persuaded, Anderson often reiterated the idea of the director as author – see, for example, ‘Stand Up! Stand Up!’<sup>12</sup> and an unpublished piece ‘The Film Artist – Freedom and Responsibility!’<sup>13</sup> As John Caughie pointed out, Anderson was one of those who sought to install the individual, expressive and romantic artist in cinema.<sup>14</sup>

Anderson also argued that British critics dodged the core role they ought to play in the filmmaking process. Making a film involves, he wrote, ‘the fusion of many and various creative elements’,<sup>15</sup> which conversely makes the process dependent upon the presence of each and every component. The film critic’s reluctance to engage fully with the medium breaks the perfect circle which ought to sustain the creative process. This was so because, ‘It is by their instinctive appreciation of what the critic distills by careful analysis, that the few great men of the cinema have made [their] rare and treasured works...’<sup>16</sup>

In his own critical writing during this period, Anderson sought to do what he advocated. He tried to provide (albeit in the comparatively short form inescapable in journal publication) the kind of guidance that he thought should help young British filmmakers. He did this initially in ‘A Possible Solution’ (1948) by analysing the difficult economic structures of the British industry and recommending that small-scale independent production might be the best (though far from easy) hope for the tyro director in the bleak environment of the day.<sup>17</sup> Then in ‘British Cinema: The Descending Spiral’ (1949) he wrote sharp analyses of seven films using six of them to exemplify specific, but typical lacks of stimulating material.<sup>18</sup> Rather than merely observe the current state of affairs, he argued that while new directors should by all means be brought on, the far more urgent need to supply British cinema’s wants was for new writers to rectify the endemic failings that spoilt the work of even the best British directors: ‘clumsy dialogue, poverty of invention, lack of dramatic structure’.<sup>19</sup>

By acknowledging the centrality of criticism, Anderson’s articles advance the idea of cinema as a perpetually ongoing, circular process. The film critic should be a responsible observer and commentator engaged with and informed about all the stages involved in filmmaking, from the elaboration of the scenario, right through to the shooting and exhibition to the public of the finished product.

That agenda highlights Anderson’s view of a further failure of British critics. They fall short in their duty to expose the public to that ‘almost miraculous fusion of many and various creative elements’<sup>20</sup>

which the director must have brought about to make the work of art possible and available for audiences to fully understand and therefore enjoy.<sup>21</sup> ‘Competent criticism – merely a syllogism, after all, for full appreciation – demands the capacity to analyse, to comprehend “what” through “how”’.<sup>22</sup>

Anderson returned to the topic of authorship as late as 1991 in drafting an Introduction to a proposed reprint of *Sequence*.<sup>23</sup> He recalled that,

*Sequence*... was quite untouched by the French influence and the aesthetics of *Cahiers du Cinéma*. We certainly had no time for the *auteur* theory. From the start we knew that the film director was the essential artist of cinema; but we also knew that films have to be written, designed, acted, photographed, edited and given sound. We tried to look for the creative elements.<sup>24</sup>

Had Anderson changed his mind about the nature of authorship in the cinema in the forty years since co-editing *Sequence*? In a *Sight & Sound* essay of 1955 he had written sardonically about ‘the covey of bright young things’ then newly writing for *Cahiers du Cinéma* and alleged their enthusiasms were spoiling the reputation of a journal for which he had noted his admiration only three months earlier. The immediate causes of his disfavour were first, the ‘absurdity’ that these young writers (the incipient Nouvelle Vague) should elevate Hitchcock into their Pantheon of the greatest *auteurs*; and second, their comparison of Hitchcock’s films with the works of Dostoevsky, Faulkner, Nietzsche and a dozen other literary heroes reaching back to Homer.<sup>25</sup> But notwithstanding his dismissal of these French upstarts, Anderson remained constant to his theme that the director was the individual who brings all the disparate elements of a film together in a unified whole (a notion he returned to time and again in both his diary and interviews).

This usage, which ‘the covey of bright young things’ writing for *Cahiers* had initiated in the early 1950s and Andrew Sarris augmented in the 1960s, was an ill-conceived offspring of *la politique des auteurs*. The *politique* was in effect a polemic call for the director as *auteur* to be the creative source for truly cinematic films.<sup>26</sup> It depended on the belief that the energetic expression of the true *auteur*’s personality brings about the organic unity of the work. That made it possible to compare his or her films with, for example, the work of great writers and painters.<sup>27</sup> Truffaut heightened the *auteur*’s profile by contrasting it with the director as *metteur-en-scène*. The *metteur* merely brought onto the screen a filmed version of someone else’s original novel (usually psychologically realistic and sometimes socially conscious).<sup>28</sup> The *auteur* (for Truffaut, the only type of director worthy of being considered an artist) used cinematic rather than literary skills to express him or herself.

Well before the *Cahiers du Cinéma* debate distinguished the work of *metteur-en-scène* from *auteur*, Anderson derived a broadly comparable dichotomy that differentiated two ways in which the film director might operate. He did not belittle the importance of contributions made by the principal talent; in particular he identified the scriptwriter and cameraman as indispensable creative members of a team.<sup>29</sup> However, he argued that those writers who claim the dominance of their profession's contribution most admire those films 'in which the director's function approximates closely enough to that of a stage director'.<sup>30</sup> For Anderson this view 'puts the film director severely in his place, demanding of him technical capacity, sensibility to the ideas and characters provided for him by his author, but no independent response to his material, no desire to present it in the light of his own imagination, illuminated by it, or transformed'.<sup>31</sup>

In its origins, the *politique* (to which campaign Truffaut, Rohmer, Godard and others contributed in the pages of *Cahiers*) amounted to a loose manifesto for the kind of films that its writers would attempt to produce a few years later as members of the *Nouvelle Vague*. However, their clarion call for directors to introduce into their filmmaking deeply experienced personal values (the divine spark of the Romantic artist-as-genius)<sup>32</sup> transmogrified by degrees into something different. This was a dogmatic approach to critical evaluation unsteadily based on passionate assertions of quality (or its absence) rather than the firm bedrock of evidence. In, for example, Truffaut's and Jacques Rivette's advocacy, the effort to discover roots of artistry in Hollywood's output pushed to extremes the idea that directors could and should be ranked according to their supposed success in investing their personalities in their films. This renegotiation of aesthetics soon translated into a compulsive categorisation of film directors, as Buscombe notes.<sup>33</sup> This was the aspect of the so-called theory that Anderson dismissed in his 1955 piece with scorn for the elevation of Hitchcock to the Pantheon. Its arbitrary nature and susceptibility to the private enthusiasms of the commentator are evident in Rivette's selection of Nicholas Ray, Richard Brooks, Anthony Mann and Robert Aldrich as four *auteur* directors. Rivette claims that these directors had hitherto been all but ignored prior to the raising of awareness by those interested in American *auteurs*;<sup>34</sup> and indeed, as Buscombe noted, 'the *auteur* theory' did have the merit of opening previously unknown areas of the cinematic map.<sup>35</sup> But the 'theory's' demerits are also clear in Rivette's words.

Why four names? I would have liked to have added others (those for example of Edgar Ulmer, Joseph Losey, Richard Fleischer, Samuel Fuller, and still others who are only promises, Josh Logan, Gerd Oswald, Dan

Taradash), but these four are for *the moment* incontestably at the front of the queue.<sup>36</sup>

The subjectivity of this judgement is so naked that Rivette's 'incontestably' could be replaced with 'because I say so'. Among his critics was André Bazin who (in 1957 in *Cahiers'* own pages) surveyed the state of the *politique* and identified two further weaknesses inherent in ranking *auteurs* according to their supposed value.

[The process] consists, in short, of choosing the personal factor in artistic creation as a standard of reference, and then assuming that it continues and even progresses from one film to the next.<sup>37</sup>

Bazin also said that he

felt uneasy at the subtlety of an argument, which was completely unable to camouflage the naïveté of the assumption whereby, for example, the intentions and the coherence of a deliberate and well thought out film are read into some little 'B' feature. And of course as soon as you state that the film-maker and his films are one, there can be no minor films, as the worst of them will always be in the image of their creator.<sup>38</sup>

Andrew Sarris became, as Buscombe said, the American apologist for the *Cahiers du Cinéma's* Young Turks.<sup>39</sup> In 1962 he derived the phrase 'auteur theory' to replace *la politique des auteurs*.<sup>40</sup> This would almost certainly have been the original source for Anderson's use of the phrase in his 1991 draft paper. Buscombe shows that Sarris's *auteur* theory borrowed *Cahiers'* penchant for 'cultism' and turned it into a more radical approach: auteurism verges into a conception of authorship in which the director remains untouched by the circumstances of time and place.<sup>41</sup> Through Sarris's prism, auteurism entailed an extreme personalisation of the art of filmmaking.

The ... ultimate premise of the *auteur* theory is concerned with interior meaning, the ultimate glory of the cinema as an art... Dare I come out and say what I think [interior meaning] to be is an *élan* of the soul? Lest I seem unduly mystical, let me hasten to add that all I mean by 'soul' is that intangible difference between one personality and another...<sup>42</sup>

If Sarris proved to be a most effective amplifier of the *Cahiers* Young Turks, it was less through any soundness inherent in 'the *auteur* theory' than its rejection by that irascible (and widely read) film critic and self-publicist, Pauline Kael, and the ensuing controversy she and Sarris flamed. Reacting to the passage cited above, Kael wrote (not without justification):

'Interior meaning' seems to be what those in the know know. It's a mystique – and a mistake. The *auteur* critics never tell us by what

divining rods they have discovered the *élan* of a Minnelli or a Nicholas Ray or a Leo McCarey. They're not critics; they're inside dopesters.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, when rejecting in 1955 what in 1991 he called 'the *auteur* theory', Anderson (like André Bazin two years later) was rebutting a specific *critical* practice which deployed the idea of authorship as an implement to evaluate individual directors' artistic quality and then rank them in a fixed, pyramidal hierarchy. He was not reneging on his belief in the centrality of the director (emphatically including himself) in the process of making a film, but continued to believe that 'cinema at its best and purest belongs to the director', as he wrote once again thirty-five years after first expounding the same opinion in *Sequence*.<sup>44</sup>

There was another facet to his rebuttal of auteurism. He voiced it in a 1973 interview about *O Lucky Man!* with François Maurin of *L'Humanité*. He said that the ambition to become an *auteur* had harmed both the artistry and careers of several competent directors whom he knew. They had been seized by this mysterious desire to be an *auteur*, to be the Proust of cinema. Yet ever since silent cinema, named directors such as Eisenstein, Dovjenco or Dziga Vertov had been discussed, everyone knowing that the role of director was very important. So there was no need to create a theory, or a myth.<sup>45</sup>

As indicated by this collapsing of the roles of the director in action and the perceived director as object of observation, Anderson was a critic but never a theorist. In 1981 he wrote a review of three recently published film studies textbooks for *The Guardian*.<sup>46</sup> He made use of this platform to go well beyond a critique of the books in question and launch a searing attack on what he characterised as 'a *Trahison des Clercs*'.<sup>47</sup> This was 'the indiscriminate proliferation'<sup>48</sup> of film studies in higher education (he did not mention his own considerable experience as a nomadic, paid guest lecturer). After reviewing briefly the evolution of 'the *auteur* theory' he proceeded to attack the then new theoretical writing deriving from structuralism and semiology. He judged as harmful its gracelessness, its 'attempt to substitute rule for taste, formula for intuition ... [and] stylistic analysis – as if a film were some kind of chemical compound – for interpretation, for examination of meaning, for human interpretation'.<sup>49</sup> This vigorous rant reveals that, while Anderson succeeded in identifying those whom he thought of as intellectual adversaries, he did not understand (although he did identify certain failings in the books under review) what the theoretical framework they proposed was designed to achieve.

The foregoing pages summarise Anderson's understanding of authorship as expressed through his own critical writings. The questions that remain to be examined centre on:

## 8 LINDSAY ANDERSON

- whether, in the light of further evolution of theoretical ideas about the nature of authorship, his films reveal aspects of authorship of which he had no knowledge; and
- how best authorship of his films can be attributed some twenty years after his death.

We shall return to these topics after considering how each of the films reveals both his authorship as a practitioner (including his reflections on the work) and his perceived presence as the subject of observation by others.

### Notes

- 1 Alexander Walker, *Hollywood England: The British Film Industry in the Sixties* (London: Michael Joseph, 1974) 462.
- 2 François Truffaut, 'Une Certaine Tendance du cinéma français', *Cahiers du Cinéma*, 31 (January 1954) 15–28.
- 3 Stephen Crofts, 'Authorship and Hollywood', in John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (eds) *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 312.
- 4 Lindsay Anderson, 'Creative Elements', *Sequence* 5 (Autumn 1948) in *Never Apologise: The Collected Writings*, ed. Paul Ryan (London: Plexus, 2004) 199.
- 5 Lois Sutcliffe Smith, 'Discovering Lindsay', unpublished paper, 1997 (LA 7/2/1); Anderson, *Never Apologise*, 50–2; Gavin Lambert discussed the opportunity with Anderson by mail, 27 January 1948 (LA 4/1/1).
- 6 Philip French, 'A Rough-and-tumble Sporting Life', *The Observer* (4 September 1994) Review 4 (LA 7/1/1).
- 7 Correspondence, Denis Forman (Director, BFI) to John Grierson, 17 September 1954. The John Grierson Archive, University of Stirling (G6.33.13).
- 8 Anderson, 'Creative Elements', 199. See also his 'Stand Up! Stand Up!' *Sight & Sound* (Autumn 1956) in *Never Apologise*, 220. There he quotes C. A. Lejeune, cinema columnist at *The Observer*, who on two occasions – and nine years apart – made it clear that she did not deem the cinema to be an art form. In 1973 the editor of a Norwegian journal asked for Anderson's permission to reproduce 'Stand Up! Stand Up!' alongside his answers to questions on *O Lucky Man!* The editor wanted to compare the by then well-established film and theatre director with his work as 'a once revolting critic' (correspondence, Silvi Kalmar to Anderson, 22 November 1973 (LA 1/7/3/10/9)).
- 9 Edward Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship' (1973) in John Caughie (ed.), *Theories of Authorship* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981) 22–3.
- 10 Lindsay Anderson, 'The Director's Cinema?' *Sequence* 12 (Autumn 1950) in *Never Apologise*, 204.
- 11 Some of Johnson's letters are published in Lindsay Anderson, *About John Ford* (London: Plexus, 1981) 245–6; see also correspondence, Nunnally Johnson to Anderson, 26 August 1950 (LA 4/1/5/20).
- 12 Anderson, 'Stand Up! Stand Up!', 218–32.
- 13 Lindsay Anderson, 'The Film Artist – Freedom and Responsibility!' (1959) in *Never Apologise*, 210–14.
- 14 Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 10.

- 15 Anderson, 'Creative Elements', 199.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 Lindsay Anderson, 'A Possible Solution', *Sequence* 3 (Spring 1948) in *Never Apologise*, 336–40.
- 18 Lindsay Anderson, 'British Cinema: The Descending Spiral' *Sequence* 7 (Spring 1949) in *Never Apologise*, 340–7.
- 19 Anderson, 'British Cinema', 347.
- 20 Anderson, 'Creative Elements', 199.
- 21 Lindsay Anderson, 'Angles of Approach', *Sequence* 2 (Winter 1947) in *Never Apologise*, 193.
- 22 Anderson, 'Creative Elements', 194.
- 23 The project did not come to fruition almost certainly because the cost of printing 2,000 hardback copies of a 700-page illustrated book had more than doubled to almost £20,000 in the six years since negotiations had begun over publishing the journal in its entirety (correspondence with Routledge and Kegan Paul, 31 July 1991 (LA 4/1/14)).
- 24 Lindsay Anderson, Introduction to a Reprint of *Sequence* (30 March 1991) in *Never Apologise*, 48.
- 25 Lindsay Anderson, 'Positif and Cahiers du Cinéma', *Sight & Sound* (January–March 1955) in *Never Apologise*, 256.
- 26 Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 35.
- 27 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 23.
- 28 Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 35.
- 29 Anderson, 'Creative Elements', 198–9.
- 30 Anderson, 'The Director's Cinema?' 207.
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 23–4.
- 33 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 25.
- 34 Jacques Rivette, 'Notes sur une révolution' (1955) in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 41.
- 35 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 27.
- 36 Jacques Rivette, 'Notes sur une révolution', 41.
- 37 André Bazin, 'De la politique des auteurs' (1957) in Barry Keith Grant (ed.) *Auteurs and Authorship* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) 25.
- 38 Bazin, 'De la politique des auteurs', 20.
- 39 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 25.
- 40 Andrew Sarris, 'Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962' (1962), in Caughie, *Theories of Authorship*, 62.
- 41 Buscombe, 'Ideas of Authorship', 25–7.
- 42 Sarris, 'Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962', 64.
- 43 Pauline Kael, 'Circles and Squares' (1963) in Grant, *Auteurs and Authorship*, 54.
- 44 Lindsay Anderson, Introduction to *The Old Crowd* (1985) in *Never Apologise*, 139.
- 45 François Maurin, 'Lindsay Anderson: "Le meilleur des mondes possibles" n'est pas le nôtre', *L'Humanité* (13 October 1973) 10 (LA 1/7/6/5/31).
- 46 Lindsay Anderson, 'Critical Betrayal', *The Guardian* (2 March 1981) in *Never Apologise*, 271–6.
- 47 Anderson, 'Critical Betrayal', 271.
- 48 Anderson, 'Critical Betrayal', 275.
- 49 Anderson, 'Critical Betrayal', 274–5.



## On the diaries: Lindsay Anderson's private writing

### Diary or journal?

Lindsay Anderson's diaries surprised the archivists in our team because they are so neat and well ordered. For the most part they read as though everything had been planned out and sifted through before being written down. This suggests that he went through a careful decision-making process, whether conscious or subconscious, about what to remember and what to omit. Occasionally we found entries which he had read over and either extended or revised, sometimes on the original page, sometimes as a separate entry – but this was rare. Occasionally he referred back to earlier passages which he had read again. But his usual, extensive practice appears to have been to write well-crafted prose in a single, uncorrected draft and an elegant hand.<sup>1</sup> This capability is confirmed by the diary he kept in 1988 while shooting *Glory! Glory!*.<sup>2</sup> Lacking time to write, he recorded his observations on audiocassettes for later transcription by his secretary, yet the prose has the same elegant quality as the handwritten pages.<sup>3</sup>

He recorded his intentions in the first entry, written when he was eighteen, on New Year's Day 1942.

One of my principal New Year's Resolutions is to keep a Journal – not, please note, a diary, for a diary besides being, for me, far too exacting an undertaking will also inevitably include a large mass of uninteresting and unnecessary detail (Got up, had breakfast etc.) In this journal I shall write only when I have something to say; its purpose is both to remind me in after years of how I felt and what I did at this time and also – quite unashamedly – to give me literary exercise. It should help improve my style and my ability to express myself and many of the incidents it records will no doubt prove excellent copy. I will not however tell lies in order to improve a story, or if I do, I will say so.

I am not sure whether or not it will be absolutely frank; I am not used to writing solely to myself – and that perhaps is why I am so quick to

mistrust published diaries... So at first at any rate I will probably be fairly reserved. And yet this is absurd: either I am writing for myself, or for a friend or friends or for publication. Well I can cross out the last – though of course I can easily expurgate it if necessary. Nor am I writing for my friends. I will therefore resolve to be utterly frank – a resolution which I do not think I can possibly keep!<sup>4</sup>

Over the next fifty years much of this private writing can be seen as reflective journal entries; but there are periods (for example, while he was suffering extreme tension in making *O Lucky Man!*) when it becomes primarily a chronological record of events. Accordingly, just as he eventually did, we use the terms journal and diary interchangeably when referring to the volumes. As for his uncertain resolution to be frank: after a few months, the pages display a blistering openness – a phenomenon we shall take into account as we consider the ways he used them as well as the ways open to us to construe them.

### Public or private?

Reading these immaculately achieved writings, our initial impression was to think that Anderson might have meant them to be published. But, quite apart from the fact that he left no instructions concerning the volumes' disposition after his death, he soon abandoned even vestigial discretion concerning his sexuality, emotions and fantasies, not to mention his opinions of people he knew or worked with. In fact, after his first year of keeping the journal, he admonished himself, 'On looking through this book, by the way, I find it more & more incredible to reflect on the way I've been leaving it about the house for anyone to look at. I must be more careful!'<sup>5</sup> During the previous year he had by degrees moved towards writing explicitly of his homosexuality and his attraction to various male friends.<sup>6</sup> The naked self-revelation makes it extremely unlikely that he had in mind the journals' publication in that form. By no means incidentally, it was one of the factors (the length of the original text being another) that caused Paul Sutton to compile his edition of *The Diaries* from extracts rather than the complete text.<sup>7</sup>

Janet Bottoms discusses diaries as both a private medium and a literary genre.

The diary may be a private form of writing, but it is remarkable how many diarists do, in fact, address themselves to someone or something, to a fantasized reader who is a part of themselves and yet separated in order to give the affirmation, the appreciation which they dare not claim consciously. The way that the reader is conceived of must therefore make

a difference to the selecting and shaping process by which experience is translated into written record.<sup>8</sup>

Bottoms illustrates this argument with the example of Alice James's diaries in which she addressed 'Dear Inconnu', a male observer of her solitary life. Likewise Anderson addressed himself through his private writing. On numerous occasions he made the journal his confessional, and not infrequently it was his consolation. In December 1944 on landing at Bombay as a junior Army Intelligence officer, he notes,

My journal is becoming quite a habit with me – an old friend to whom I can turn and talk when idle or depressed or just garrulous. And after all who else is there who can provide so frank, easy and sympathetic a companionship? Who else is there to whom I can talk without reservation, affectation or the need to temper my thoughts and veil my emotions? I am, it seems, fast becoming my most valued companion [...]<sup>9</sup>

Almost thirty years later, feeling severely stressed while bringing *O Lucky Man!* into shape, he once again addressed his diary as 'my only friend'.<sup>10</sup> It was thus always the confidante of a man who, despite being constantly busy with fellow professionals, was alone in heart: 'Since there is no one else to talk to – this can only be a chapter of groans'.<sup>11</sup> Self-doubt and unhappiness made him treasure this way of putting himself in command of a version of events that nobody could deny him. This fits closely with Richard E. Grant's belief that to a great degree all diaries are a way of dealing with loneliness: if no one else has understood you, you are trying to understand yourself in writing down your thoughts.<sup>12</sup>

### Reflections on his own personality

An extended encounter with Anderson's journal is a bruising experience. It is hard to study the manuscripts and not feel the misery and pain that pervade so many of the entries. Questioned when he was in his fiftieth year about his statement that *O Lucky Man!* would be his last film, Lindsay Anderson answered, 'when I'm in pain, I believe in groaning a lot'.<sup>13</sup> No one who has read his journal would take issue with that. It functioned sometimes as 'a safety valve for emotions dangerously compressed';<sup>14</sup> on other occasions it provided him with a means of feeling that he had control over difficult circumstances; and sometimes it served as an aid to grieving ('groaning' was indeed his preferred term) over events that he could not order to meet his wishes.

Early in 1971 Lindsay Anderson was researching material for a documentary about Alan Price that was to focus on the bandleader's life on

the road. In a February journal entry Anderson describes the musician as manifesting wild swings of exaltation and depression. Although he knows there is a medical term for the condition, he cannot recall it;<sup>15</sup> nevertheless his description makes it clear that he believes Price to be manic-depressive. That failure of memory at this moment is ironic (if not revelatory) since, viewed through these private writings, he himself displayed symptoms that might be ascribed to bipolarity. Those symptoms include his sudden and unpredictable reversals from sweet good humour to self-righteous, blinkered rages; his feeling that he should be able to change everything and everyone who annoyed him; and his fury when he found that he could not do so. However, he never wrote of being a victim of manic-depression, instead mentioning from time to time that he suffered from paranoia – but he used that term as it occurred in common speech rather than as a medical diagnosis.

In some entries he ascribed to paranoia behaviour which in retrospect he found cringe-worthy and speculated that it was brought on by the anguish of unanswered love. For example, he asked himself of his friendship with Jon Voight, ‘Why, I wonder, do I find these narcissistic, self-powered personalities so attractive? Is it because my own passive personality (unsuspected by most people who know me) needs such contacts, as it needs specific situations, to spark it off?’<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere he ascribed his ‘paranoia’ to pressure of work.<sup>17</sup>

It’s tempting to psychologise the dead because they can’t answer back. However, it hardly needs saying that Anderson’s public response to any suggestion that he might be bipolar would have been lacerating (all the more devastating if it had come from people like ourselves involved in critical evaluation of his work). On the other hand he might have acknowledged a hit – were he to think it such – in his journal. And we can be reasonably confident of his willingness to have recourse to painful self-observation because, as in the instances just mentioned, he often reflected on his psychological make-up.

While there are good reasons for not performing an autopsy on the mind of an individual one has not met (not least because his colleagues’ and friends’ accounts of his personality do not explicitly refer to bipolarity), it needs to be noted on the other side of the balance that, with one exception, those same friends do not comment on his self-diagnosis of paranoia. The exception was Gavin Lambert, one of the very few people to have read the diaries in their entirety. He summarised astutely the personality revealed in them and presented abundant evidence from friends’ recollections of Anderson’s liability to devastating public mood swings.

The diaries are a dark mirror. The abrasively unhappy and overly judgemental person who inhabits them reflects all Lindsay's negatives and few of his positives. Some experiences, Nietzsche wrote, either kill a part of you or make you stronger, and in Lindsay's case they did both. The alienated child who perceived himself as an emotional orphan became a young man who sentenced himself, at the age of twenty-one, to grievous psychological stress for life. But by this time, as he later noted, Lindsay had also discovered 'a mysterious appetite for drama'. He began by responding to movies and the theatre ... as a way of escape. Then they awakened a sleeping talent. By directing films and plays, Lindsay was able to work through the feelings he'd locked away, release his imagination and live out loud as an artist.<sup>18</sup>

### Anderson's reflections on colleagues, friends and family

The private suffering that Anderson so often recorded is just one of the journal's recurrent themes. He reflected on the world around him too. In many entries he vituperated colleagues and friends. For example, while making *O Lucky Man!* he made stinging observations about people with whom he had worked for years. Of his producer he wrote: 'Michael Medwin (of course) has no kind of substance, presence, resolution of his own'.<sup>19</sup> He expostulated about his scriptwriter, David Sherwin, at a time when the latter's personal life was disintegrating spectacularly.

Well, the script of *O Lucky Man* is even more of a shambles, a disappointing nothing, than I had expected. All David's worst faults: the lack of concrete imaginings; the attempt to pass off a string of notes (usually directly transcribed from a conversation we had several weeks ago) as a *scene*; lack of dramatic ability – no idea at all how to construct a scene; lack of characterisation; lack of work. I read part of it in the train coming down, as David bleated his incapacity to write *anything* for the scene on the roof, his incapacity to believe in Patricia or Mick... An encouraging start! So I gave him some ideas and he sat there blankly. Is he a writer at all?<sup>20</sup>

In his own published diaries, Sherwin confirms the chaotic scenes in which the script emerged. For example, in July 1971, Anderson took him to Hythe to spend a weekend writing a scene on which Sherwin had got completely stuck. The latter recorded that the director checked into a three-star hotel with his mother, but put him into a cheap guest house.

There's no table in my room, so I set the typewriter on the chair by the bed. But feel so depressed about the script, and the unwritable scene on the roof, that I go to the nearest pub. Drink and read the *Daily Mirror* over and over.

That evening Lindsay phones Malcolm [McDowell]. 'The author's lying drunk on the floor and the script is in ruins ... I think we'll seriously have to consider forgetting the whole idea.'<sup>21</sup>

Although Anderson repeatedly lamented his inability to work without a collaborator to test ideas on, the two men were mutually dependent.<sup>22</sup> Sherwin asked Anderson to edit the typescript of his own 'Diary of a Script' and adopted Anderson's amendments wholesale. The resultant text was included with the published screenplay of *O Lucky Man!*<sup>23</sup> Over twenty years later it formed part of Sherwin's memoirs *Going Mad in Hollywood and Life with Lindsay Anderson*, from which the extract above comes.

Anderson's criticisms of his crew on *O Lucky Man!* touched every department. There are many damning entries concerning his production designer and friend, Jocelyn Herbert, in which by degrees she becomes in his story the exhausted heavy who won't let go of anything of which she had first conceived.<sup>24</sup> Anderson also writes with gathering hostility a long series of entries about his cameraman Miroslav Ondricek. He resents, for example, the 'more pretentious, international Prima Donna Persona that Mirek is becoming' when the latter abandons the shoot to attend the Cannes film festival.<sup>25</sup> Anderson's editors come off no better. He thinks of them as 'dolts'.<sup>26</sup>

This, merely an indicative selection, is so characteristically forceful as to leave us sceptical concerning an opinion about the entries' veracity that we have heard expressed by some of Anderson's strongest supporters. They urge that Anderson didn't mean what he wrote in these vitriolic attacks on colleagues for their gross ineptitude, and on friends for their want of style, grace and understanding. It is probable that in voicing this opinion, they may have reached it after reference only to the published selection from the diaries. Many of the more acidic personal entries were suppressed from that volume.<sup>27</sup> But it also needs to be said that this protection of his reputation exhibits a tendency found in many people who have known celebrated and powerful individuals during their lifetime. It's a phenomenon all the more marked when the dead hero had formerly led a group who came to regard themselves as a coterie privileged through their relationship with the deceased. The surviving disciples tend somewhat uncritically to buoy up his memory – not least because their own sense of professional self-worth is to some degree invested in the reputation of their late mentor. Thus, for example, John Grierson's memory, post mortem, was exalted along with the films he had supervised in the British Documentary Movement. Similarly C. G. Jung's immediate followers, often referred to as the second generation, lionised his works passionately. In each of these instances it took the

entry of a third generation of commentators, untrammelled by personal acquaintance, to reach an assessment of the dead hero's output ruled less by personal indebtedness than judgement.

David Storey recognised this tendency in his introduction to the celebration of Lindsay Anderson's life and work held at the Royal Court in November 1994:

A great deal of idealisation goes on invariably when someone important to us dies. Not infrequently it's followed by a polarisation of feeling, the axis which unites the two extremes often, if not invisible, obscure. But after a while, the extremes coalesce and something like a cohesive and recognisable entity thankfully returns.<sup>28</sup>

So there is no doubt in our minds that Anderson did mean what he wrote about his collaborators and friends as well as his enemies. His condemnations recur frequently and their insistence cannot be missed. However, it is important to recognise that these bilious passages do not provide the full account. The journals' scathing entries do not represent everything he thought about the individuals who became objects of his fury. In earlier years he had loved or admired many of them, sometimes extravagantly, as in the case of Ondricek. Sometimes, even when upset with colleagues, he wrote with fine appreciation of their circumstances. For example, a few days after cursing Sherwin's incompetence with *O Lucky Man!* he revisits the topic not without sympathy for his writer's suffering.

David admits that he really was hoping (whether consciously or not) that it would somehow be written for him by Malcolm, or by me. And then when he knew it wouldn't he panicked... I still respect his intuitions greatly – but his invention is lagging, I suppose because he is in a state of complete exhaustion. But what alternative have we to continuing?<sup>29</sup>

Anderson's friends speak with one voice in celebrating a loyalty to them that lasted through his life. One of his endearing characteristics – mentioned in passing in the diaries – is that he would cook for friends even when they had just been having a monumental row. He sometimes fed Sherwin when the scenarist was exasperating him over *O Lucky Man!*. Indeed Sherwin was one of those – including not only members of his own family but Patricia Healey, the Grimes family and Rachel Roberts – to whom Anderson gave a home at times of crisis.

After his death a number of his friends and colleagues reciprocated his loyalty by forming the Lindsay Anderson Memorial Foundation to keep his memory alive and publicise screenings and events that celebrate his work.<sup>30</sup> Five of his closest collaborators honoured him with signal public generosity. Two, Sherwin and Lambert, wrote books,<sup>31</sup> and

two, McDowell and Mike Kaplan, made a film.<sup>32</sup> Lambert was a life-long friend from their schooldays together; Anderson was professional mentor to both Sherwin and McDowell; and Kaplan produced his last feature film. We shall benefit from the work of all four in later chapters.

The fifth was David Storey (with whom Anderson's relationship was considerably less fraught than that with Sherwin). He spoke with unmistakable passion about Anderson's nature at the commemoration of his life, finding his internal contradictions as evident in public as in the 'dark mirror' of his journals. Likening his physical appearance in middle years to a short and somewhat stout Roman emperor, Storey used this as a cue for an account of his moral qualities.

The imperiousness was always there ... together with a set of values which had been in place seemingly since birth ... They were values with which he observed, scrutinised and judged everything around him. He was a man of vivid contradictions, authoritarian ... and yet he was unmistakably a liberal. He was a stoic, and yet undeniably sentimental. He was ... a vigorously self-confessed atheist, and yet he was imbued with what could only be described as a religious spirit ... He was cantankerous, he was vituperative, he was obdurate and acerbic, yet he was incorrigibly loyal and unfailingly generous. He was in many respects perhaps human nature turned inside out. What normally might have been contained if not constrained on the inside, he wore vividly and explicitly on the outside. He loved what he hated and hated what he loved in a seamless circle of retributory affections... With this in turn went an ability to look at the worst in human nature ... But above all there was his appetite for a world which was nobler, more charitable and above all more gracious than the one in which he found himself and which he struggled unfailingly to enhance.<sup>33</sup>

Storey's tribute not only characterises the man but also reminds us that Anderson was, from his early days in Oxford, a critic. The critical attention could never be missed in his writing about films and theatre. When he had control of his productions, it also imbued his commentary through both screen and stage on the decline of Britain. The critical, even hypercritical verdicts he passed on colleagues and friends partake of the same mercilessly sharp-eyed quality. The ex-cathedra pronouncements of the professional critic and the private person form a seamless entity. And as we shall see, the tensions across which his personality was strapped have their counterpart in the perceived authorial personality that can be discerned as a construction underlying several of his major films.



**Self-analysis and authorship: 1/ family**

From the earliest entries in 1942, Anderson used the journals for what he called ‘self-analysis’. These reflections on his own personality illuminate his input to films in the production of which he claimed an authorial role.

In February 1944, a few weeks before his twenty-first birthday, he drafted a binary list of oppositions that formalised some of his earlier self-observations. He did this at the moment when his studies were interrupted by conscription to wartime service in the Rifle Brigade. He was on the point of taking over his own platoon as a junior subaltern, a responsibility causing anxiety not least because he considered himself a loner.

There are two sides to my character	A	B
	masculine	feminine
	hearty	artistic
	conventional	individualist
	conservative	left wing
	inherited	my own
	middlebrow	highbrow
	middleclass	intellectual <sup>34</sup>

In 1947 he returned to this theme: ‘I find myself writing as though to myself – with a personality clearly split, one half trying to extract the other from the bog of introversion and hopelessness where it desires to wallow’.<sup>35</sup> Two days later he elaborates, ‘I seem at times to be two people, so clear is the divergence between my two states of mind. One, which I am meant to be escaping from in this book, introspective, repressed, defeatist, incapable [sic] of nothing but lassitudinous imaginings; and the other alert, humane, full of ideas about all sorts of things, ambitious, socially conscious’.<sup>36</sup>

It seems likely that his outsider perspective on the world was instilled by an absent father, a stepfather who failed to meet his stepson’s needs and a mother preoccupied with herself to the point of coldness towards her three boys. The family background corroborates his motivation as a diarist wherein the writer (as Richard E. Grant said of himself) becomes his own archivist to store memories of things that he was unable to share when they occurred.<sup>37</sup> The psychological disposition of the Anderson family did not change during Lindsay’s absence in India in the Intelligence Corps. Following demobilisation, he resumed his studies at Wadham College, Oxford and in April 1946 spent his first vacation at Cringletie, the family home. It remained for him an uncongenial environment.

Mum and I get on each other's nerves: to me, at her worst, she seems selfish, inhumane, cynical and lazy – about any but material duties. To her I seem lazy, self-satisfied, selfish, conceited, interfering. No doubt there is wrong on both sides, but I feel the chief trouble is the lack of a proper husband to shoulder his share of her *family* responsibilities. Though probably it was not altogether his fault, Father should have insisted on taking on that side of the marriage too, instead of occupying this unsatisfactory half-and-half position, bad for Mum [...]<sup>38</sup>

On a later visit he felt deeply offended by the selfishness of his parents who, living in a house stuffed with food, did not feed the German prisoners of war working in their garden.<sup>39</sup>

Despite his doubtless self-fulfilling sense of being an outsider, Anderson tried hard in his forties to help his fractious relatives by taking on family responsibilities. When his brother Murray's marriage broke up, Lindsay committed himself to doing what he could to support the ex-wife Mary and their children – notwithstanding repeated searing rows between every adult in the family and the erratic behaviour of the unhappy couple.

Very occasionally compassion and relief broke through his irritation. He found it difficult, lacking natural affinity with children, to act *in loco parentis*, yet felt delighted when occasionally he succeeded, as on one Sunday in May 1967.

Lunch with Murray and family, the children playing on their swings seem very happy, and the whole atmosphere a miracle of harmony. I suppose this is one achievement that will be to my credit when the last great roll is called...<sup>40</sup>

A week later in another untypical passage, he reflected with sympathy on his mother's circumstances, feeling guilty for his failure to talk to her about 'age and loneliness and change'.<sup>41</sup> He recognises the suffering occasioned her first by the death of his younger brother Sandy and later by his stepfather's passing. Noticing that she keeps a picture of Sandy on which the imprint of her kisses can be seen, he finds that understandable. Nevertheless his sympathy had its limits: he reports that he cannot bring himself to sit and talk with her for hours about her grief.<sup>42</sup>

It is not hard to see how his childhood and adolescent experience of family life taught him that his longing for love (which the journals frequently mention) would always be frustrated. He learned early and well (as so many generations of British upper-middle-class children have done) to internalise that expectation so deeply that he soon frustrated his own desires and revolted against physical attraction.

## Self-analysis and authorship: 2/ sexuality

Although Anderson's overt behaviour was repressed, his sexual appetites were no secret to himself. He often wrote about his erotic fantasies, of which he had first become conscious during the Easter term in 1941 when he experienced powerful desire aroused by a schoolmate.

My feelings about him are also interesting & (I suppose) I like thinking them because they afford stimulation. (What a horrid word & horrid thought!)<sup>43</sup>

After conscription in 1943, finding himself constantly in the company of young officers (not a few of them fellow undergraduates whose Oxford studies the war had disrupted) he reported passionate feelings for two of them.<sup>44</sup> Posted to New Delhi late in 1944 as a cryptanalyst in the Intelligence Corps, he found himself among interesting fellows.<sup>45</sup> Soon he experienced 'the very exstasy of love [sic]'<sup>46</sup> for a new friend which, typically, he was not able to declare openly. However, a few weeks later Anderson sensed the indifference of this individual and his clique. Thereon, Anderson's emotions swiftly modulated into the doubts and jealousies that became integral to his account of all the virtual relationships that haunted his lonely hours.<sup>47</sup>

Anderson's homosexuality must have added to his sense of being an outsider. Although from the late 1950s (when he was in his mid-thirties) he moved in a community of talented theatre, opera, ballet and cinema people who readily accepted same-sex relations, homosexuality was illegal until he reached his middle years. After 1953 gays well placed in arts organisations were apprehensive about witch-hunts, as Jann Parry records. In that year Sir David Maxwell-Fyffe, the Home Secretary, declared war on 'a vice infecting the nation' and an intimidating, high-profile court case was brought against Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. That year too John Gielgud was arrested for importuning.<sup>48</sup> In England and Wales gays remained liable to prosecution until parliament passed the Sexual Offences Act in 1967, marking the first legislative step in a slow process of decriminalising private acts between consenting males.

Since British society at large stigmatised homosexuals as perverts whose desires put them beyond the pale, the sense of ostracism that many gays felt impacted on their everyday life more deeply than fear of the law. With the exception of a brave minority of flamboyant characters, gays kept their sexual orientation private. In Anderson's case, as we have seen, psychological conflict cut deep. Timidity and a fastidious revulsion from physical contact locked him into celibacy even though he knew that, 'Unfortunately, what I seem to need above all is the personal stimulus of affection. If love is not to be found'.<sup>49</sup> While editing a film