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Note from Santa Barbara International Film Festivalâ??s Roger Durling #SBIFF

Description

Dear Cinephiles,

Werner Herzogâ??s one of the most distinctive voices in Cinema â?? excelling both in fiction and documentaries. His latest, â??Lo and Behold: Reveries of the Connected Worldâ?• explores the internet â?? an incredibly timely topic â?? and the movieâ??s thought provoking as well as absorbing. It plays tonight at 5pm and tomorrow at 7:30pm at the Riviera Theatre. Below find a Washington Post review.

See you at the movies!
Roger Durling

Click here for information on tickets

In â??Lo and Behold,â?? Werner Herzog examines good, evil and the Internet
By Ann Hornaday â?? The Washington Post

Werner Herzog has explored the known world from the Amazon and Antarctica to the prehistoric cave of Chauvet. It seems only fitting that he would set his restless, perpetually questioning sights on the Internet, the ether where we spend increasingly more of our lives, at their most public and most intensely secret.

Herzogâ??s documentary â??Lo and Behold: Reveries of the Connected Worldâ?• is just what its title promises: A series of ruminations, each its own 10-to-15-minute chapter, on the origins, implications, moral ambiguities and latent possibilities of a medium weâ??ve absorbed readily, almost reflexively, without much consideration of the consequences.

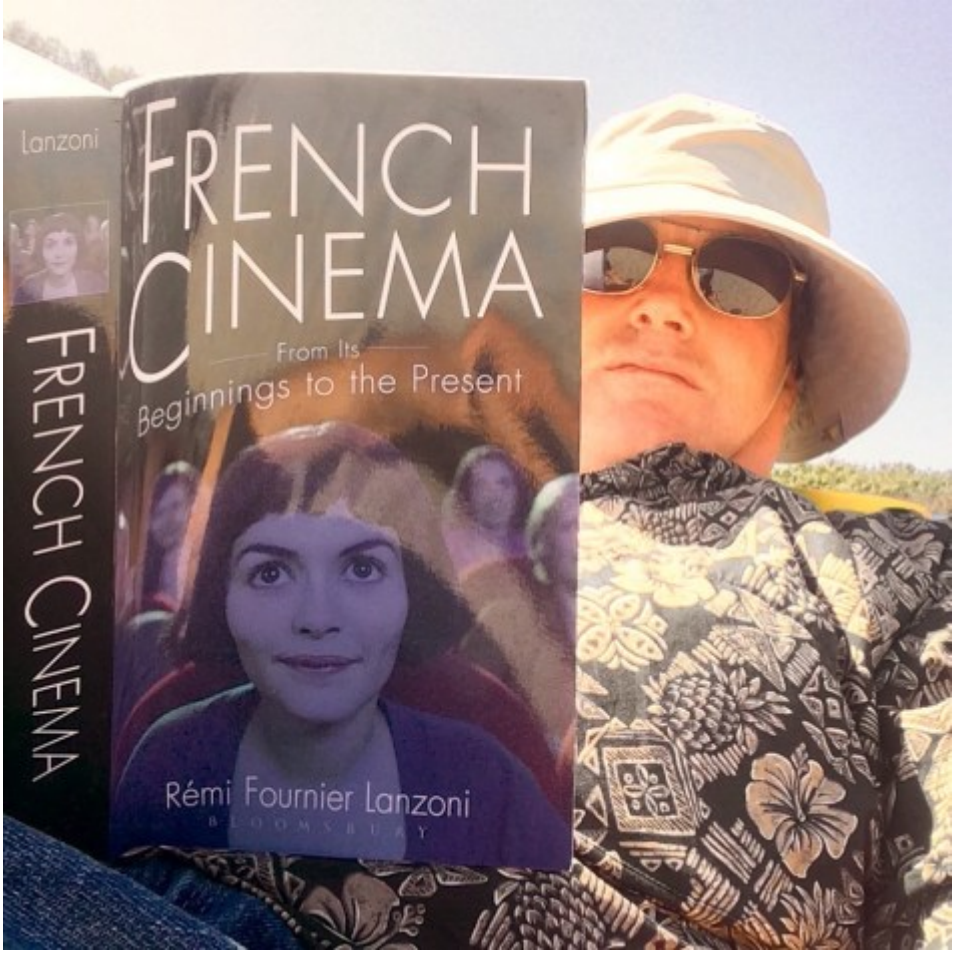
Beginning at UCLA, where the first message was sent on what would become the Internet, and traveling the globe to interview engineers and astronomers, philosophers and hackers, robotics experts and refuseniks, Herzog creates an intriguing bookend to Alex Gibneyâ??s â??Zero Days,â?• which

examined the looming dangers of cyberwarfare. Although Herzog touches briefly on the subject of security, heâ??s far more interested in how our online life has changed us and whether itâ??s allowed us to access the best parts of ourselves â?? such as when a huge community of gamers comes together to help find a cure for disease â?? or the worst, represented by a family who were sent horrific emails and graphic pictures following the death of their daughter in a car accident.

Is the technological ideal to be found in absolute transparency or absolute privacy? As one early pioneer observes, the founding irony of the Internet is that it was created by scientists with such idealism and mutual trust that they couldnâ??t comprehend the potential for anonymous cruelty and abuse that they were unleashing.

Formally, â??Lo and Beholdâ?• breaks no new ground: Itâ??s a collection of talking heads, archival footage and illustrations, punctuated by Herzogâ??s own queries and asides, delivered in the German accent that always conveys a tone of barely contained existential panic. Of course, thatâ??s what makes the movie special, as when Herzog insists on bringing the conversation back to the mysteries of love and attraction, or when, during a speculative digression about video games, he intones the phrase â??malevolent Druid dwarf.â?•

Thoughtful, searching and wonderfully moving in its wistful final moments, â??Lo and Beholdâ?• may not be Herzogâ??s most artistically ambitious film, but itâ??s an intriguing, even important one nonetheless. Come for the engaging, reflective tutorial on technological progress, human nature and transformation; stay for the malevolent Druid dwarves.



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