

## Film & Video by & about Robert Lax

Compiled by Paul J. Spaeth

[revised 2/06]

### **Black & White** (1946. b&w)

Directed by Alexander Eliot & Robert Lax

Description: *“Our film consisted of nothing but Harlem shadows on an August afternoon: Shadows of shoppers, pot-smokers, gossipers, basketballers leaping in an empty lot, and finally the shadows of two horses hitched to an old-fashioned ice-wagon. Peering through our camera’s view-finder, I couldn’t quite decipher the horse-team’s sparkly, silent, blue shadow slanting down and in across the frame; not until the shadow of the high-wheeled, flat-bed wagon itself followed, rolling slow, sun-spoked ovals atop its emerald glow of ice-blocks.”* Alexander Eliot

### **27<sup>th</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>** (1960. b&w. live action. 22 min.)

Directed by Emil Antonucci

### **Some Fables** (1962. b&w. live action. 9 min.)

Directed by Emil Antonucci

### **Oedipus** (1962. color. drawings. 3 min.)

Directed by Emil Antonucci

### **Thought** (1967. color. drawings. 3 min.)

Directed by Emil Antonucci

### **New Film** (1969. b&w. live action. 21 min.)

Written by Robert Lax

Directed and Photographed by Emil Antonucci

Voice: Giordano Bruno

Contents: “one stone ...” [slow zoom on a stone sitting on a black background] /

“darkness, oh the darkness ...” [blank]

“the air and the dream ...” [open window with curtains being blown by wind]

“the maximum capacity of this room ...” [close-up office area & woman’s face]

“word, word, word ...” [talking on a telephone]

“forms, forms, forms ...” [street scene showing shop window]

“push, pull, push ...” [man’s head (front), woman’s head (back)]

“the first goodbye ...” [woman’s face fading in & fading out]

“is, is ...” [white teacup on white background, fading in & fading out]

“even a lie ...” [people walking on street, teens dancing, people standing in a line]

“1 2 3 ...” [hand opening & closing]

“love & death ...” [woman’s head & her reflection, smoking]

“in the dark ...” [park scene in winter (long-shot)]  
“no, no, no, yes, yes, yes ...” [man’s head, speaking; woman’s head in profile  
moving in & out of the frame]  
“never, never ...” [woman’s face in profile, reading]  
“what does it matter if I am an insomniac? ...” [slow reverse zoom of crumpled  
pillows on an unmade bed]  
“never a root without a tree ...” [pan along busy street with many marquees]  
“in me, in me ...” [cars seen through tree branches]  
“into the heart of the city ...” [man hole cover, fade-in to various buildings,  
some office buildings, some wrecks]  
“the first thing to do, ...” [sunset scene]  
“are you a visitor ...” [bearded man]  
“i do not wish to touch thee ...” [pan up on woman sitting on park bench]  
“he was following a hero ...” [pan along a street scene]  
“hurry up ...” [woman sitting at a table looking at pictures]  
“every night in the world ...” [pan along building]  
“things into words ...” [piles of books]  
“all of us in the darkened half ...” [slow reverse zoom from the “Flat Iron  
Building”]  
“You will dissolve before me ...” [slow reverse zoom from man smoking pipe  
& his reflection]  
“my son, my son ...” [slow reverse zoom of man, dissolve, cut]  
“life, life ...” [pan around head of a woman]  
“i am thinking as i lift one stone ...” [slow reverse zoom from stone in first  
shot fade]

### **The Lion and the Unicorn (1970)**

A film by Emil Antonucci

The Lion: Jack Medoff

The Unicorn: Bob Roca

Journeyman Films

### **The Man With the Big General Notions (3 min.)**

Written by Robert Lax

Directed & Photographed by Emil Antonucci

The man: Joseph Messina

Journeyman Films

### **Some Short Films (10 min.)**

Written by Robert Lax

Photographed & Directed by Emil Antonucci

Contents: A & B / Joy & Pathos / Thought / Drama II / Movie / All Pretty Much in the  
Dark / She Finally / A Moment

### **One Stone (11 min. b&w. 1972)**

Based on an untitled poem by Robert Lax

Photographed, edited & directed by Sandy Heblad & Freeman Crocker

Poem read by Charles Ault

The man: Charles Ault

Description: *A man is shown walking across a countryside (filmed near Watkins, Colorado) and although there is a musical background, we hear no voice until the man stops to pick up a stone. As the man looks at and begins to contemplate the object in his hand, we hear a voiceover reciting the Lax poem.*

**Robert Lax: Neue Staatsgalerie Exhibition & Reading (1985)**

A video assembly by Michael Lastnite

**Robert Lax: Word & Image (57 min. color. 1988)**

A Judith Emery & Michael Lastnite production.

**In the Middle of the Moment (80 min. b&w. 1995)**

Produced & directed by Werner Penzel & Nicolas Humbert (CineNomad)

Contents: Sections featuring Robert Lax

**Why Should I Buy a Bed When All I Want Is Sleep (55 min. b&w. 1999)**

A chamber film with Robert Lax by Nicolas Humbert & Werner Penzel (CineNomad)

Contents: “a single room ...” [description of house on Patmos]

On writing poems (“...put yourself in the place where grace can flow to you”)

“our dreams ...” (Lax reads to camera, ends with shot of the moon)

[7:26-10:35]

Lax goes to town

“One Island” [13:14-24]

tracking shot of feet walking away along rocky path

man with donkey stopping at well

old bearded man working on stone wall

dark countryside with white smoke in foreground

opened book on Lax’s lap

Lax in profile on train

peasant talking with his hands

door of Lax house on Patmos

Lax’s face reflected in window of train

Lax’s hands drawing (shot from over his shoulder)

man riding donkey (in longshot) showing stone walls

old couple sitting in their house

[segment ends with the couple talking in Greek]

Lax sitting on floor of his house, talking about the importance of the present moment, dream & reality ... cut to black ... hear his voice saying “I have spoken” ... cut back to Lax laughing in the same room [26- ]

Lax talking about art (Schopenhauer: “all art aspires to the state of music”) ... here & gone ... permanence of some art forms is not something necessarily in their favor [29:20-

Scene on boat. Importance of the moment. drawing all things into a single line

Scene on train: camera behind Lax walking in the direction the train is going ...  
we see the outside rushing by through windows on both sides.

Back at home. [30:30- ]

Home on Patmos [33:28-38:06]

“...sounds come and go, but the silence remains”

Scenes: wading into the water / typewriter / reading poem / talking on  
telephone / shopping.

Five Years Later [46:36- ]

### **Three Windows**

Homage a Robert Lax: a video installation by Nicolas Humbert & Werner Penzel (CineNomad)

Description: *Three simultaneous films that run continuously in 45 minute loops, interwoven with each other.*

Bibliography: Three Windows. Munich: Distributed by Belleville Verlag, Michael Farin.

Published Bernhard Moosbrugger & Cine Nomad, 1999.

[part of the Robert Lax Box]

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