

Michael Baker

The Opening Scenes of My First Foreign Film

Fade: a smoky, potentially profitable den of French midgets and mucky-mucks, freshly-emigrated dipsomaniacs from South America, filibustering, scissorkicking the stale aqua air with Cuban cigars, and kissing ass about who will be this year's model, the blonde with her poleaxing pelvis, or the straight-jacketed red, someone's Brazilian cousin, refusing to surrender to the public her breasts' red bullets, keeping back her showboating tongue that could lift newly-minted pennies out of God's black loafers. Next: suddenly, it's August and Yugoslavia, bomber pilots zeroing in on churches, museums, and our heroic couple flashing honeymoon smiles, advancing toward the cafe for souvenirs. Alertly in love, they must miss nothing. The man thumbtacks his blocking directions to his London Fog; the wife, the blonde, deepsixes the director's next vision-- a slow aerial pan of an empty square--

(Cont.)

("The Opening Scenes," cont., no break)

by throwing her expired passport
into the dry and cracked fountain,
and, optimistic as an atheist, heckles
the locals with a pantomime of love,
the summer afternoon's deathly vacation.
If and when the West Coast antes up
everything will then be finished.