

Winkler Film presents
a film by **Conrad Rooks**

CHAPPAQUA

Starring

Jean Louis Barrault

Conrad Rooks

William S. Burroughs

Allen Ginsberg

Ravi Shankar

Ornette Coleman

Photography by **Robert Frank**

Musik by Ravi Shankar, THE FUGS

Silver Lion
Venice Film Festival 1966



**„A mind-blowing
movie - biography.“**
(NEWSWEEK)

**„A work of art!
Superb!“**
(THE NEW YORKER)

**„A confusing, frightening
and weirdly beautiful movie.“**
(PLAYBOY)

**„A brilliant realization ...
... unique and artistically valuable.“**
(NEW YORK POST)



ABOUT

CHAPPAQUA

Chappaqua is as controversial as its **producer-director-star** and financier **Conrad Rooks**.

It is a **frantic psychodrama** built around Rooks's agonizing withdrawal from years of drug addiction and alcoholism.

The cast of Chappaqua is surely one of the most diverse in movie history.

It includes, among many others,

beat poets **Allen Ginsberg** and **William S. Burroughs**,
French actor **Jean-Louis Barrault** (*Les Enfants du Paradis*),
Jazz musician **Ornette Coleman**, and **Conrad Rooks** himself.

Much of the score was composed by India's foremost sitar player
Ravi Shankar, with **Philip Glass** as his consultant.

Rooks also had **extraordinary advisors** such as
Aldous Huxley and **Man Ray**, the latter one a very close friend of his
who looked at rushes daily and did several posters for the film as well.

Robert Frank (*Pull My Daisy*, *Step Across the Border*) served as director of photography
and as such is responsible for some of the **extravagant visual brilliance** of the film.

Eugene Shuftan who worked with Fritz Lang and Etienne Becker
were the two other cameramen working on *Chappaqua*.

The film's basic plot is the addictive disease and cure of its main character **Russell Harwick:**

An evidently wealthy young addict (**Rooks**) flies from **New York to Paris,** where, at a private clinic somewhere in the suburbs, he takes a cure that may or may not prove permanent.

However the real settings are not the Central Park Reservoir, or a plane high over the Atlantic, or the steep-roofed nineteenth-century chateau that houses the clinic, but the wild and terrible moon country of an exploding mind, and the real action of the movie is the disoriented mingling of recollection and fantasy.

This film does not idealize the addict. It shows his dimmed reactions, the non-reality of his black-and-white world juxtaposed with the beautiful colors of the world of others.

It does not ask the audience to worry about how to get the money for the next shot, we are relieved of what most films about „dope“ are about, the struggle to get together enough cash for the next shot.

We can concentrate on where the shot takes the junkie, what it does to his status as a human being.

The highly-praised film - critics called it superb, inventive and important-caused a sensation when in its initial outing at the

Venice Film Festival 1966 it won the **Silver Lion** scoring over competition that included features by Francois Truffault, Agnes Varda, Robert Bresson and Roger Vadim.



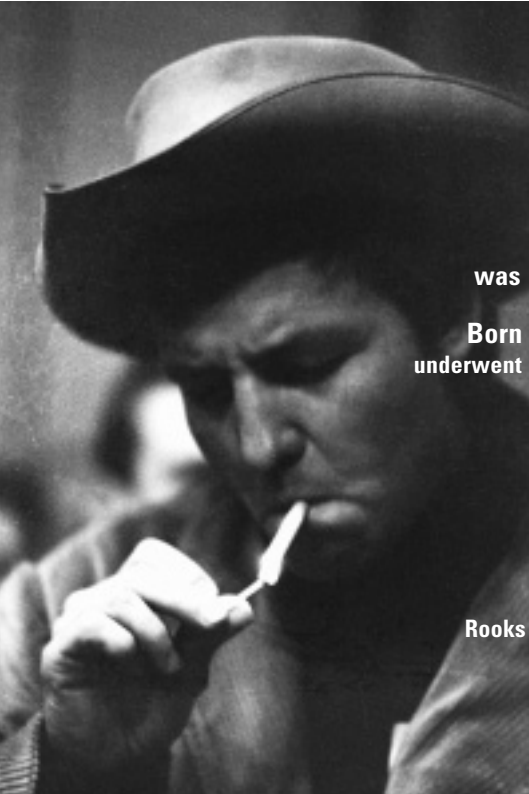


„Wildly
(C U E)



„An outstanding film.“

(T H E C U R R E N T)



CONRAD

ROOKS

was
Born
underwent

Rooks

Conrad Rooks who wrote, directed, produced and acted in *Chappaqua* born on December 15, 1934, but he will tell you that his life really began in 1961, when he decided to end a ten-year nightmare of alcoholism and drug addiction. in Kansas City but raised in New York, Conrad fell ill at the age of nine and a series of operations which left him with a taste for the narcosis produced by drugs. By the time he was 14, he was an alcoholic.

„By the time I was 21, I was a drunk and a pot-head. Hallucination was my reality.“ During this time he married former Russian princess Zina de Rachevsky, a member of the Romanov family. She introduced him to the Russian nobility in Paris (where the Romanovs were in exile), and the „Beats“ in New York, such as Kerouac, Ginsberg and Corso.

At the same time Rooks became friends with Andy Warhol and it was through Rooks that Warhol learned how to operate a movie camera.

traveled constantly from place to place. His restless Odyssey led him to places such as Paris, Rome, Tangier, London, the Greek Islands, and Bangkok.

Finally, after having tasted virtually all the dregs but death itself, he responded to a telegram to return home to his ailing father's bedside.

In 1961, spurred by the death of his father, a successful New York business executive, and the realization that his own life was losing all meaning, Rooks volunteered for a „sleep cure“ in a rest home in Switzerland. When he came out he was „By the time I emerged from the clinic in Switzerland, somewhat shaky, but at least healthy, I decided to go to Greece and think things out.

My marriage had busted up and I had made a botch of everything up to that point, so I began thinking about making a movie about it all.

I bought a lot of equipment and started experimenting with film, meanwhile working on the script for what I had decided to call

Rooks worked four years on the film and financed it with his inheritance.

Rooks's second film *Siddhartha*, based on the best-selling novel of German Nobel Prize winner Hermann Hesse once again won the Silver Lion in Venice (1972).

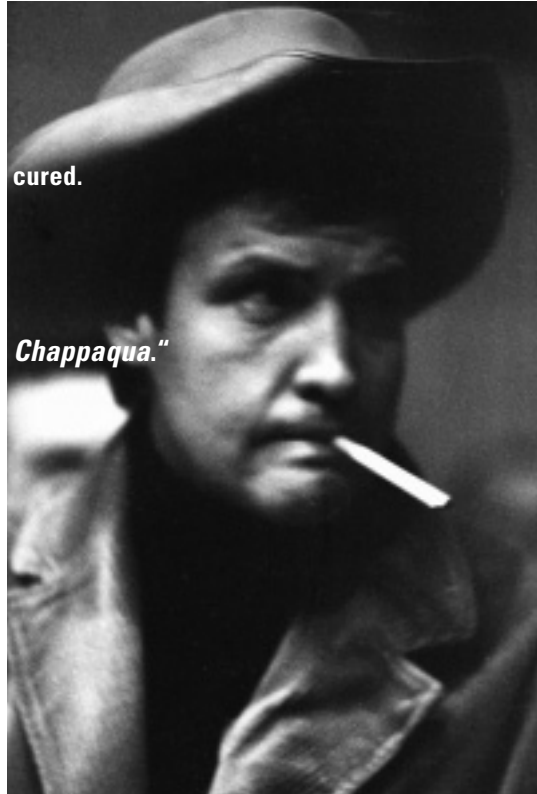
Rooks produced, directed and wrote the screen adaptation for *Siddhartha*. The film was photographed by Sven Nykwist, who shot almost all of Ingmar Bergman's films.

After the film's completion Rooks left the United States and moved to India where he married again (his former wife had died in 1968 during meditation in a monastery in the Himalayas).

He now lives as a total recluse in Pattaya, Thailand and is currently working on a book about his life.

cured.

Chappaqua.“





WILLIAM S.

BURROUGHS

„Burroughs is not only a great writer but also a great actor.

His performance of **Opium Jones**, the spirit of addiction, is the creepiest characterization since the late great **Bela** appeared as the Transylvanian Count.“ (EAST VILLAGE NEWS)

Poet William S. Burroughs who was born in Kansas City in 1914, was living in Tangier in the 50s, where on **September 6, 1951** his life changed dramatically: That night Burroughs tried to shoot a glass off his wife's head and killed her instead. „I would never have become a writer but for Joan's death ...

So the death of Joan brought me in contact with the invader, the „Ugly Spirit“, and maneuvered me into a lifelong struggle, in which I have had no choice except to write my way out.“

Naked Lunch, created in the early 60s, is the most acknowledged result of that struggle.

It earned worldwide praise. **Norman Mailer** called Burroughs „the only American novelist living today who may conceivably be possessed by genius.“ Rooks first met Burroughs in 1961 after having carried on a literary correspondence throughout the previous year.

Burroughs plays the the role of **Opium Jones**, a character out of his own fiction.

Burroughs now lives in Lawrence, Kansas.





JEAN-LOUIS

BARRAULT

Although
Debureau
and is among the

André

Barrault's main involvement with art was in theater, he became famous for his role as in Marcel Carné's film *Les Enfants du Paradis* best French actors in the 30s and 40s.

In 1958 Charles de Gaulle's Minister of Cultural Affairs, Malraux, appointed him director of France's prestigious State Theater, the „Theatre de l'Odéon“.

Ten years later he lost this position because he sympathized with the youth movement.

Barrault was at first reluctant to star in Rooks movie.

However, he soon became intrigued by Rooks' theory of total improvisation, spontaneity of filming and the concept of exorcism.

Finally Barrault accepted the role of the modern witch doctor, psychoanalyst Dr. Benoit who seeks to exorcise the Evil Spirit.

In 1984 Barrault died in Paris at the age of 83.



ALLEN

GINSBERG

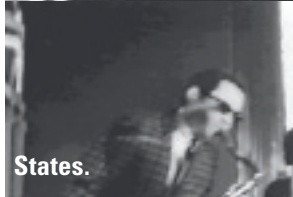
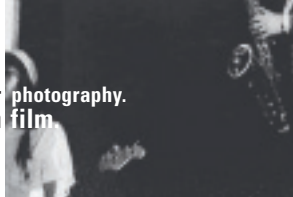
The poet, Buddhist, and gay activist **Allen Ginsberg** was born in 1926. Along with **Jack Kerouac** and **William S. Burroughs** he is one of the foremost „beat writers“, who are known for expressing publicly what they believed was the repressiveness of American society. Ginsberg first met Rooks through **Zina de Rashevsky in the late 50s.** They carried on a correspondence for years and were both vitally interested in **Eastern culture.** Out of this friendship grew the sequence of **mantra chanting in Central Park.**



ROBERT

FRANK

The Swiss-born cameraman Robert Frank started out with photography. His book *The Americans* was one of the pivotal events of postwar. In the late 50s Frank gave up photography for a while to concentrate on film. Besides *Chappaqua* the gifted director of photography was working on such memorable films as *Pull My Daisy*, *Step Across the Border*, *Candy Mountain*, and *Cocksucker Blues*. Frank met Rooks through filmmaker Harry Smith. They began shooting *Chappaqua* in 1964 and continued until 1966. Rooks and Frank managed to find convincing pictorial equivalents for an extraordinary range of mental states. These images were found in France, Mexico, India, England, Ceylon, Jamaica and the United States. Frank's unique gift is his eye of a painter seeking to transform light into intense portraits of the human situation. Today there are exhibitions of Frank's work at every important museum around the world.



photography.
film

States.



RAVI

SHANKAR

Shankar, India's gift to the world of music, is known for his film scores for Attenborough's *Gandhi*, and some of Sayjajit Ray's masterpieces such as *Pather Panchali* and *Aparajito*. His several cross-cultural excursions into other musical traditions have enriched his palette and made the foremost sitarist in the world known to a wide range of people. His collaboration with Beatle George Harrison served to introduce Indian music to a generation of rock fans. Shankar first met Conrad Rooks in the winter of 1959, when Rooks was still under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Shankar encouraged Rooks to express his ideas in the medium of cinema and promised that he would one day create a score for his film. He kept his promise and they began their collaboration in 1965.



PHILIP

GLASS

Philip Glass has emerged as one of today's most significant and innovative American film composers (*Koyaanisqatsi, Mishima, A Brief History of Time,...*). He was introduced to Conrad Rooks by Ravi Shankar. As he puts it: "They needed someone to work as Ravi's assistant, transcribing his music in Western notation for the French musicians who would be recording the sound track. I spent the next seven months with Ravi and his drummer, Alla Rakha. This encounter with one of the great traditions of world music and one of its foremost practitioners had a profound effect on me."



THE

FUGS

The beatniks of the violent rock THE FUGS -led by singer Ed Sanders- typified the anarchist attitude of the lower East-Side of New York. „We did our best to stay close to the streets of the lower East Side - to the rebels cafés, the poets, the painters, and to the antiwar and civil rights workers.“ (Ed Sanders). They performed with Jimi Hendrix and socialized with Janis Joplin. Rooks, fascinated by the young band's wild performances put them in *Chappaqua* even before they had produced their first album.



„The psychedelic cinema art
 perfected in one giant step,
 a visual banquet with **COURSE** after course
 of naked lunches...“
 (EAST VILLAGE NEWS)

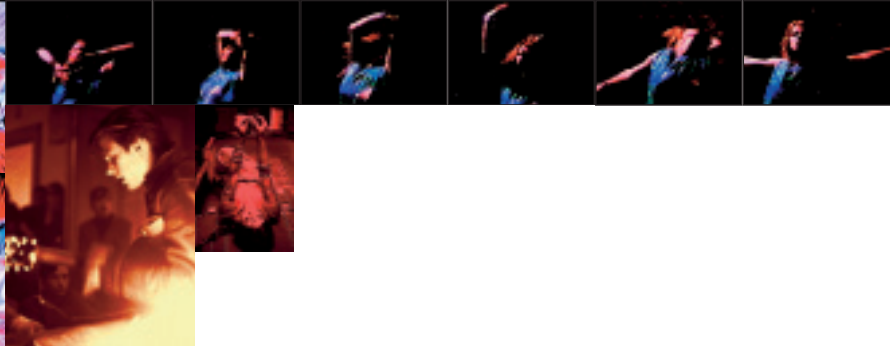
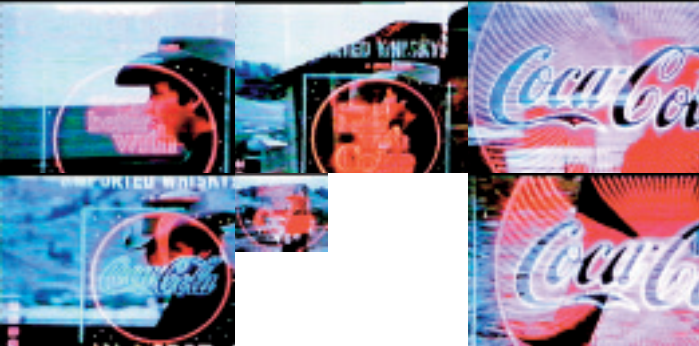


„The picture’s use of sound,
 the compositions of
Ravi Shankar
 are uncommonly
 evocative and right.“
 (NEW YORK POST)



„It has a compelling purity
that makes it **universal.**“

(NEWSDAY)





ORNETTE COLEMAN

As a composer, multi-instrumentalist and bandleader **Ornette Coleman** has not only predicted, but realized the shape of jazz to come well before his so-titled album in 1959. With unassuming, neo Socratic audacity he has upended conventions and crossed boundaries world wide, attracting uniquely talented collaborators from every medium. He has written some of the loveliest, spriteliest, most affecting melodies in memory. Although **Coleman's** soundtrack for *Chappaqua* was finally not used, he gives a memorable performance in the film as a black hipster eating peyote.



PAULA PRITCHETT

Pritchett was a Ford **supermodel** in the mid 60s. She appeared on the covers of magazines such as „*Look*“ and „*Cosmopolitan*“. **At the time** she met Rooks, her experiences in theater and film were **non-existent**, *Chappaqua* being her first screen experience. Rooks chose her on the basis of her **beauty** and **natural poise**.



SWAMI SATCHIDANANDA

Swami Satchidananda was born in **1914**, in South India. He is a member of the priestly caste, and a disciple of **Siva Ananda** the founder of the Divine Life Society and one of the greatest gurus of Rishikesh. **While filming**, Conrad Rooks met Swami Satchidananda at the **Ceylon Branch of the Divine Life Society**. He became a **devotee** of Satchidananda and received instruction in yoga and meditation for four years. Rooks introduced the figure of the guru into the hallucinations of Harwick as a **key to recovery methods**. Rooks later brought him to the United States where **Satchidananda** starred in *Woodstock* and is now running **Yogaville**, a big organization in Buckingham with thousands of **devotees**.

CREDITS

Doctor Benoit
Russel Harwick
Opium Jones
Messiah
Sun God
Water Woman
Peyote Eater
Guru
The Prophet
Sacrifice One
The Connection

Jean Luis Barrault
Conrad Rooks
William S. Burroughs
Allen Ginsberg
Ravi Shankar
Paula Pritchett
Ornette Coleman
Swami Satchidananda
Moondog
Jill Lator
John Esam

The Fugs
Rita Renoir
Penny Brown
Jaques Seiler
Moustique
Sophie Steboun
Elder Wilder
Peter Orlovsky
Pascal Aubier
France Cremieux
Mr. & Ms. Serisier

Produced, directed and written by **Conrad Rooks**

Photography **Robert Frank**

Art Director **Regis Pagniez**

Unit Management **Luis Emile Galey**

Music Consultant **Philip Glass**

Sound **I.M. Sommerville**

Original music composed and directed by **Ravi Shankar**

Performed by Ravi Shankar, Alla Rakha, Keshav Sathe

Other music:

Johann Sebastian Bach's „St. Mathew's Passion“

Trude Heller's „Buttercups“

Camera **Robert Frank, Etienne Becker, Eugene Shuftan**

Film Editor **Kenout Peltier**

Makeup **Jean et Jaqueline Pipard**

Wardrobe **Claudine Merlin, Claude Le Gallou, Catherine Peltier**

Photographer **David Larcher**

US 1966 / 82 min / Color + B & W

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