



# JOE'S MOVIES

**A retrospective of the work of independent  
film director Joseph Strick.**

*Available from January 2010 onwards.*

# BIOGRAPHY



Rip Torn, Joseph Strick and Henry Miller on the set of *Tropic of Cancer*

**Joseph Strick** (b. July 6, 1923 in Braddock, Pennsylvania) is an American director, producer and screenwriter. He learned film making when serving as a cameraman in the US Air Force in World War II. In 1948, he shot *Muscle Beach* (edited by Irving Lerner) while working as a copy boy at the Los Angeles Times. For several years in the 1950s, he, Ben Maddow, and Sidney Meyers worked part-time on the experimental documentary *The Savage Eye* (1959). A science student before the war, he founded a group of technology companies including Electrosolids Corp (1956) Computron Corp. (1958) Physical Sciences Corp (1958) Holosonics Corp. (1960) and sold these companies to fund his films. In 1977 he invented the usage of six-axis motion simulators as entertainment systems and applied this to new machines used now in Disney theme parks as STAR TOURS.

## FILMS IN THE RETROSPECTIVE

**MUSCLE BEACH**  
(1948 - 9mins)

**THE SAVAGE EYE**  
(1960 - 68mins)

**THE BALCONY**  
(1963 - 84mins)

**ULYSSES**  
(1967 - 132mins)

**TROPIC OF CANCER \***  
(1970 - 87mins)

**INTERVIEWS WITH MY LAI VETERANS**  
(1971 - 22mins)

**ROAD MOVIE**  
(1974 - 88mins)

**A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN**  
(1977 - 92mins)

**CRIMINALS**  
(1996 - 73mins)

*The Savage Eye* won the BAFTA Flaherty Documentary Award, the Venice Festival Critics Prize and the Mannheim Goldduktar. His films have had five Academy award nominations and an Academy award for best documentary for his movie *Interviews with My Lai Veterans*. His films include the adaptations of the James Joyce *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* and Gavin Maxwell's *Ring of Bright Water*. Original scripts have been the sources of *Muscle Beach*, *The Savage Eye*, *Road Movie*, *The Darwin Adventure*, *Criminals*, and *The Hecklers*.

His volunteer collaborators include Igor Stravinsky, Oscar Niemeyer, Fred Haines, Ben Maddow, Sidney Meyers, Helen Levitt, Lewis Allen, Irving Lerner, Betsy Strick, Haskell Wexler, Judith Rascoe, Larry Kramer, Robert Montgomery Jr, Sylvia Sarnier, Richard Pierce, Jack Couffer, David Chasman and Barney Rosset. He has taught most recently at Harvard University, University of California at Irvine, New York University, the Australian National Film School, the State University of New York at Purchase and the University of Salford. In Britain he has directed plays at the Royal Shakespeare Company, *Thesmophoriazusae* (1966) and the National Theatre *Renaissance Farces* (2003). His current project is the making of feature films with palm-size digital cameras and no money.

\*Not available to North American venues except by special request.

He has five children and lives in Paris with Martine Rossignol, a paleobotanist.



Shooting *Ulysses* in Dublin

**THIS RETROSPECTIVE IS AVAILABLE TO VENUES FOR A FLAT RENTAL FEE.**

*For more information & booking requests please contact:*

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*Additional materials, including screeners and stills are available on request.*

*Joseph Strick may also be available for personal appearances. Details on request.*

# CRITICAL REACTIONS

## The Balcony

**The Times** *"The Balcony is one of the most appealing entertainments to emerge from America and (physically if not spiritually) Hollywood in a very long time."*

**The Observer** *"The Balcony is about people's need for ritual and their need to understand things with their skins as well as their minds. It is a fine film to have made."*

**The Sunday Times** *"I say that it is in its ferocious way funny but not bawdy. But the flavours of vinegar and cheese, the ironic handling of the self-betraying characters, and the curious feeling of a presence within a presence, all these give it a quality of bitter comedy."*

**The Guardian** *"The film is a remarkable achievement from any point of view. All in all, The Balcony is not to be missed."*

**The Sunday Telegraph** *"They have turned Jean Genet's play into a magnificent film."*

## Criminals

**LE FIGARO** *"A documentary on crime in the United States. Interview-interrogations of a clinical coldness alternate with lyrical thoughts on the state of society and the world. Impressive."*

**LIBERATION** *"Compulsive viewing. For a tough subject, a tough film. Strick interrogates the guilty, (thieves, matricides, pedophiles rapists...) using sequences he shot, or were confiscated by the police, for an edifying end result: demonstrating that a super-consuming America ends up by throwing a part of its population into the garbage. A traumatising work."*

## Interviews With My Lai Veterans

**New York Times** *"The film is a series of interviews with five of the men who participated in the My Lai action and all of whom are out of the army. The effect of the testimony - rueful, factual, unsentimental - is terrifying, and almost indescribably sad."*

**Variety** *"The matter-of-fact 'average Joe' behavior of the interviewees is a vivid contrast to the stories they have to tell, which clearly establish that a 'search and destroy' mission had been ordered, the carrying out of which destroyed the village of My Lai and its inhabitants."*

**Cue Magazine** *"This is only a 22-minute short but it overpowers as the most jolting, powerful film I've seen pertaining to Vietnam. What they say so nonchalantly raises horrendous and far-reaching questions."*

**Philadelphia Inquirer** *"It would take some doing to top the impact of this film, which won the Academy Award. And technically, the film is a model of cutting, switching from one face to the other as new questions are brought up."*

# CRITICAL REACTIONS

## A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man

**The New Yorker** "One remembers many things: the beguiling performance by Luke Johnston as the ten year-old Stephen Dedalus; the keenness of spirit that cuts through the film; the vivacity of thought; the clear air of Joyce's insight into Dublin's fustiness, exemplified by Simon Dedalus. This book is in our bones, and Strick makes us know that Stephen is indeed an artist, civilization's lay soothsayer".

**Toronto Globe and Mail** "Joseph Strick has done it again. The director who ten years ago did the seeming impossible by transferring James Joyce's Ulysses to the screen has topped himself with his vivid version of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man ..Portrait is a fully realized work of art by an acknowledged master".

**Toronto Star** "Spoken language as music attains soaring eloquence and is effectively supported by visual glories in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man the glowing movie that the American director Joseph Strick has made from James Joyce's famous 1916 autobiographical novel".

## Road Movie

**New York Post** "An Americana H.L. Menckin would have made if he'd been in movies rather than in words. Director Joseph Strick zeroes in on the truth and lets nothing dismay him. Three extraordinarily good performances."

**McCall's Magazine** "A tough, honest and almost devastating film".

**After Dark** "A tough, explicit and altogether brilliant film which dares to deal with a squalid segment of life without pulling any punches".

## The Savage Eye

**The Sunday Times** "Documentary is somehow not the right category. The Savage Eye is not a document. It is a muffled explosion.. The picture is funny, pathetic, cruel, terrible and it is worth going miles to see."

**The Chronicle** "It is a revealing, horribly real and human film . It is a film like no other, worth traveling miles to see.

**Daily Mail** "Make a point of seeing this film, which is a work of staggering brilliance."

**Daily Express** "It is all very breathtakingly good."

**Daily Mirror** "This disturbing off-beat film remains hauntingly in my mind."

# CRITICAL REACTIONS

## Ulysses

**The Sunday Times** *“Joseph Strick’s Ulysses honourably attempts to transfer to the screen an enormous literary experiment, an excursion into districts of thought and feeling never before explored in fiction. The general shape has been miraculously preserved, the voyage of the central characters through time and memory against the background, both scummy and beautiful, of Dublin in 1904. The achievement of Mr. Strick’s film is to make the relations clear and often moving. Anyhow, the film and particularly the soliloquy, faultlessly delivered by Barbara Jefford, and brilliantly accompanied by visual narrative, has something valuable not only to teenagers but to us all: a knowledge of life, vulgar, lusty, squalid and rebellious, tender, passionate and, goodness knows, funny.”*

**Washington Post** *“Joyce Evokes a Superb Film”*

**San Francisco Chronicle** *“Superb Filming of Joyce’s Ulysses”*

**Sacramento Bee** *“Ulysses Comes Out a Superb Movie”*

**International Herald Tribune** *“A Superb Screen Translation of Joyce’s Ulysses”*

**Boston Record** *“Ulysses, Finally Accepted, Makes a Superb Movie”*

**Life Magazine** *“Joyce’s Great Novel Becomes a Movie Masterpiece”*

**Cue Magazine** *“A literary masterpiece is now a screen masterpiece”*

## Tropic Of Cancer

**La Movie Boeuf** *Director Joseph Strick is not one to shy away from tough literary adaptations.*

*In 1967 his camera wandered the streets of Dublin, following Milo O’Shea as Leopold Bloom, the central figure of James Joyce’s masterful Ulysses. A dozen years later Strick took another stab at adapting an immortal Joycean tome for the screen, the author’s first novel, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*

*Like those two unassailable works, Henry Miller’s once-banned, now-legendary Tropic of Cancer was considered “unfilmable” by many but in 1970 Strick took a shot at translating it too, and while the nudity is prevalent yet tame by modern standards, the sexual explicitness of the situations (and, especially in Miller’s case, the language) sets Tropic apart.*

*Miller’s 1934 semi-autobiographical novel about a bawdy expatriate in Paris during the Great Depression was referred to by Ezra Pound as “a dirty book worth reading,” and Strick’s film version, updated and told mostly in unrelated vignettes, supports that observation by keeping most of the author’s brilliantly shocking passages – and imagery – intact.*

*It stars a startlingly handsome Rip Torn as Miller and a flagrantly nude Ellen Burstyn as his estranged, revolted wife.*

*Whereas Burstyn’s hair and makeup date the then 38-year-old actress, the film itself doesn’t seem dated at all simply because the colors of Miller’s worlds coupled with his colorful expressions of desire make the experience a timeless one.*



## Muscle Beach

On a beach in Southern California acrobats and muscle-builders flaunt their skills and poses. A singing narration takes note of their obsessions.



## The Savage Eye

A woman comes to Los Angeles to wait out her divorce and interprets the madness of the city as background for her deep feeling that she has failed as a woman. The crazy aspects of a crazy city stop haunting her only when she has suffered an accident that she can accept as a punishment that she can now overcome.



## The Balcony

Here the world is a warehouse of illusion where the customers act out, in detail, their fantasies. But the city they are in is in the middle of a revolution. The major figures of the government are killed. The warehouse customers take over the roles of the dead government officials and the world goes on. The next revolution has already begun.





## Ulysses

The saga of one day in Dublin when a cuckolded husband who has lost a child in infancy meets a poor student who desperately needs a father figure and for the first time in eleven years it becomes probable that the husband and his frustrated wife will begin to enjoy the lovely intimacy of their well-remembered youth.



## Tropic Of Cancer

Henry Miller has left his boring job in New York, gone to Paris and without resources devotes himself to becoming a writer. His wife to whom he has been faithful, visits and repelled by his poverty leaves him. He is devastated and takes up chasing women, living on borrowed money and hoping for the best.



## Interviews With My Lai Veterans

Five ex-soldiers, veterans of the atrocity in My Lai, Vietnam, tell what they did and why they did it. Two of them would do it again. Two refused to kill and left the scene of the genocide unharmed.



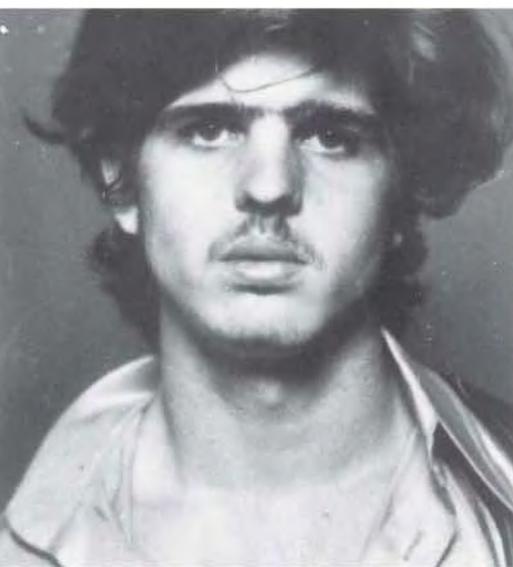
## Road Movie

A hooker is picked up by two long-haul truckers. She is abused and she destroys them.



## A Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Man

Stephen Dedalus, a student in Dublin, has to overcome poverty, snobbery and a crushing religious culture to find some freedom for his literary and sexual expression.



## Criminals

This a fierce documentary about crime in America featuring the action of decoy squads police videotapes of crimes in progress, unimaginable confessions and some heroic resistance.



(FX3-Feb. 5) SUSPECT SEIZED--David E. Mason was booked Wednesday for questioning in connection with four unsolved East Bay murders and for the murder of an Oroville man last month. Mason, an ex-convict, was arrested without a struggle at a Livermore motel. (AP Laserphoto) jp51041chr) 1981 SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND OUT Slug:MASON



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