

## **Tempo Libero / Tempo Lavorativo**

“Tempo Libero” and “Tempo Lavorativo” (translated: “Free Time” and “Working Time”) are two early, experimental short films by Tinto Brass. In less than ten minutes runtime each, they manage to pack more images and visual ideas than some feature-films do in two hours.

In 1964, Tinto Brass was a fresh director who had already done his first two films: A feature-film (“In Capo al Mondo”), and a documentary (“Ca Ira!”). Next to their unconventional and new narrative-techniques, these films were also noted for their innovative style – which would become Tinto Brass’ trademark, as he always edits his films himself.

Umberto Eco invited the young director to do “something” for the Triennale in Milano of 1964. With full creative freedom, Tinto Brass started working on two short films: “Tempo Libero” and “Tempo Lavorativo”. They were both projected at the same time in a kind of “glass pyramid”, so that visitors inside this structure were “surrounded” and overwhelmed by picture and sound.

And indeed, picture and sound are intense in these short films: Tinto Brass uses entirely archive-footage of “Free-Time” and “Working-Time” related topics, which he edits in a rapid fashion, leaving each shot on the screen for mere fractions of a second. All the meaning of this film derives from the editing of the pictures, and often, we get comical implications: For example, quick shots of a Catholic cleric kissing the ground are intercut with flashes showing a couple kissing passionately, making the two images almost become one in the viewer’s mind due to the rapid intercutting.

One can probably best describe the style of these short films as an extreme evolution of Eisenstein’s 1920s editing-ideas. As in Tinto Brass’ shorts, his ideas for an “intellectual montage” were to create a meaning through the editing of shots. But to the author’s knowledge, hardly any experimental film of the 1920s went so far to have shots reduced to 3-4 frame long “flashes” for multiple minutes. Even avant-garde soviet films of that time that only relied on editing to create a story (like e.g. Dziga Vertov’s “Man with the movie camera”) had an overall editing-style that seems calm in comparison with Brass’ frenetic cuts.

The audio enhances the visual overload: We hear sped-up music (e.g. a concert of Stravinski), that picks up and enhances the hectic mood of the visual layer.

Watching the films, viewers will feel overwhelmed by both the audiovisual aspect, as well as by the many – often funny – editing ideas. While “Tempo Libero” gets quicker and quicker showing all kinds of organized “Free-Time-activities” like sports-events, parties etc., “Tempo

Lavorativo” presents many aspects of hard work, and even side-effects like an injured worker in the hospital.

Both short films are linked by their endings, in which we see and hear insane people laugh, while a threatening-looking, probably also insane man crawls towards the viewer. Both working-time and free-time lead to craziness and are therefore linked towards each other.

Tinto Brass’ later 1960s films would also use segments with this rapid editing style: Most notably “Col Cuore in Gola” and “Nerosubianco”, where the story is sometimes told in brief flashing montages like in these earlier shorts. Brass’ only Western “Yankee” most likely also used such rapid montages in the now lost, original director’s cut. Unfortunately for Tinto Brass, it was re-edited by the producers prior to release, deleting many experimental visual ideas. But watching it closely, even there we can still see short traces of this editing-style.

Both as a researcher and as a personal friend of Tinto Brass, it makes me very happy that Hollywood-audiences will be able to see these two short films in December 2012. They will be presented in best possible picture-and sound quality, deriving from Tinto Brass’ personal copies of these two film.

After the screening, we will hear Tinto Brass talk about these films, mentioning never-before heard anecdotes and facts.

When the films were screened in Milano 1964, they caused a lot of interested discussions and cemented Tinto Brass’ reputation as a rising, promising director. Now, almost 50 years later, the films’ topics are as recent as back in the 1960s, and we also can look at these works as the root of Tinto Brass’ later 1960s and 1970s editing style.

### **Alexander Tuschinski**

Alexander Tuschinski studied “Audiovisual Media” at Stuttgart Media University in Germany, and graduated in 2011. He graduated with a reconstruction and analysis of Tinto Brass’ originally intended version of “Caligula”.