Dear Miss Kinder,

Please forgive the tardiness of this reply: I've just returned from Europe and find your letter waiting for me.

And now I'm afraid I must ask for a good deal more indulgence. You are involved in something called Dreamworks, and kindly invite me to contribute to it. I assume your interest is enthusiastic, and this makes it all the harder for me to confess to you that I loathe the whole subject as a subject. I can't and won't talk about my own dreams and am bored speechless by anyone else's.

The waking dream of course, is something else: it touches poetry, magic and the creative act. I'm much occupied with these mysteries, but not as a topic of conversation.

In the hope that you'll understand, I remain yours faithfully.

[Signature]

During a retrospective on Orson Welles sponsored by DKA, the Cinema Fraternity at the University of Southern California, the filmmaker screened his own print of The Trial and then answered questions while his crew was shooting a documentary called The Filming of The Trial.

When asked about The Trial's dreamlike rooms which all seem connected, Orson Welles replied:

"I say in the picture it's a dream. I attempted to make a picture like a dream I have had. I think it's silly and pompous to say what dreams are . . . . But I move from architecture to architecture in my dreams . . . . I had to find a way to make this story accessible to millions of viewers, and the way I did this was to say it was a dream."

When someone else observed, since the film opens with Joseph K opening his eyes, it obviously must be his dream, Welles insisted:

"No, it's my dream. I dreamed about him . . . . This character was born into this world of nightmare. He was born and conceived in the womb of that world. That's why he can never escape. I wanted the audience to feel the doom into which K is born."

Recorded by Marsha Kinder at USC
November 14, 1981
Alejandro Jodorowsky as *El Topo* on the point of epiphany. (Courtesy of ABKCO corporation)

ALEJANDRO JODOROWSKY

Recorded by Beverle Houston in 1980

The following conversation is excerpted from an interview with Jodorowsky, after the screening of his latest movie *Tusk* at Filmex in Los Angeles in March of 1980. The rest of the interview included discussion of the political and spiritual implications of *Tusk*, Jodorowsky's experience with the elephants, his hopes of making a film about Mary, mother of Jesus, his own journey of the spirit, and his life-long study of the Tarot and of Eastern religions.

**JODOROWSKY:** After working for almost twenty years, I finally have the capacity to be awake in my dreams. In the middle of my dreams I know I am awake. In this moment of my life, I can play with my dreams. I can construct whatever I want.

**HOUSTON:** How are you awake in your dreams?

**J:** I am dreaming, and I know it is a dream. For example, I am on the border... a precipice...

**H:** An edge?

*Dreamworks, Vol. 2, No. 1, Fall 1981*
J: Yes, just at the edge. I say: "I will jump," because I know I will not die. I know it is a dream and then I jump. I am able to experience that jump. Or I say, I will make this or that appear. I can change the landscape, or the humans, or the images. I can direct the dreams.

H: That's very exciting, very exhilarating, I imagine.

J: Yes. I can do it. I can make angels in my dreams—make angels from monsters. I enjoy my dreams. But in the beginning, I had temptations, because I could make orgies.

H: In your dreams?

J: Yes. Sexual dreams. I saw that I could do that. So the first thing I said was: "Ah! I can realize erotic dreams!" And then I did it. I made erotic dreams. And then I was trapped, because every time I got closer to full control of a dream, I created my erotic dreams and then I was a prisoner—I started to dream completely, to be completely in the dream.

H: You lost the awareness of dreaming?

J: Exactly. Another time I lost it because of economical problems that came into my dream. I was quite conscious in the dream, but then at a certain moment I came to the possibility of making money, or explaining something about money.

H: And so you went completely into the dream at that point?

J: Yes. I lost my consciousness because of sex and money. Just like every person in the world. But afterwards, I realized my dreams completely, so it was a very good lesson for me. But I was ashamed of myself.
Tusk, Jodorowsky's latest mythic hero, supports his leading lady.

H: No. You are human. And in this culture.
J: I was completely in the reality of sex and money like any businessman. And then I started to break that, and soon I could break it. I will tell you exactly where I am now. I have temptation, and I need to call the Divinity.
H: In your dreams?
J: Yes. To call my own God. My Divinity. I started to call, and at first I wanted to call Jehovah. But this was so enormous!
H: Yes! What if he came!
J: So as I started to dream, I said to myself: “I will die if he comes.” So I started to fight to be awake. The second time, I wanted to call Krishna. I called him, but a blue person came dancing into my dream. This Divinity was really funny. He came dancing, dancing, into the middle of my dream. But then he started to grow, and his movements were so quick and... and so terrible... the dance he did was so quick and terrifying that it also made me think: “I will die.” And again I fought to be awake. And today this is what I am fighting. I am still not able to speak with my Divinity. I am at the same level and the same moment where Jung was. Jung came to that moment where he was frightened to awake the Divinity. I suppose when you are ready to die in the dream, you can do it. Even if you die, you need to do it.
H: Not yet.
J: Okay, but you can see what I am trying to do.
H: I am afraid to wish you success because I certainly don’t want you to die.
J: I can die. It’s not important.
Recorded by Michael Dempsey and Marsha Kinder in 1980

DEMPSEY: Your films seem especially dream-like. And they communicate a sense that we live on a thin crust, underneath which are hellish, disruptive forces, which are not necessarily the products of a particular social system, at least not totally. In *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, Sara was dreaming of being a circus star, and Albert was dreaming of a lost sister, who we are allowed to infer is Sara. The films have a dream-like look. They seem to float on the screen, and there are many visions and fantasies in them, particularly in *The Last Wave*.

WEIR: Well, you can think how many times the cinema itself has been described as the closest thing to dreaming. Dream-like imagery. The lights dim, and up come the flickering images. So there's that possibility anyway. I always find it slightly embarrassing when you do point out themes like that in a film. I mean, I can see them quite clearly, those sorts of imagery, because they occur quite spontaneously, naturally. I didn't construct that as a sort of theory.

DEMPSEY: It's not a case of literally putting your own dreams on film?

WEIR: Not at all, no. Also, to answer the question a little more fairly, I have lost interest in certain themes. You know how a film comes out, and it's already two years after I got the first idea. And I think you can see me moving away from it. This film we're working on now, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, has moved in another direction. It's about a very real situation, but in an extraordinarily hallucinatory setting. The film is entirely set in Java during the mid-sixties. Anyone who has travelled in the East, particularly anywhere in Indonesia, Bali perhaps or wherever, will find that it is extremely disorienting, that particular ambiance and culture. So I drew off that. There was a period when I read a tremendous amount of Carl Jung and was just swept away by his writing. I was dazzled, overwhelmed, and I thought that didn't happen anymore, you know, because it was some time in my early thirties that I first read some of his writing. And, hell, I really read very little of it now. I don't have anything like his collected works, nor do I either agree with or understand all of his theories.

KINDER: Even if you don't use your dreams in your films, do you ever write them down or pay much attention to them?

WEIR: I began collecting dreams after I had seen a film at the 1974 Cannes Film Festival. It was unusually complete, with strong visual images. I wrote it down. Since then I have written down only those dreams that don't seem linked to current concerns—I mean, dreams from the depths. I have collected only about four since 1974. I thought how wonderful it would be to find the dreams of my grandfather, so I decided to collect these dreams and leave them behind after I die. But I'm not sure how it would be to publish them.

*Picnic at Hanging Rock* opens with a quotation from Edgar Allen Poe: "What we are and what we seem are but a dream, a dream within a dream." Courtesy of Atlantic Releasing Corporation © 1979.
The films of Spanish director Carlos Saura focus on the crippling influence of social and political forces on individuals, particularly during childhood—an influence that is revealed through a return to the past or a reunion with family. His films achieve extraordinary subtlety in their psychological realism. He makes unusual demands on his actors, whose facial expressions and physical gestures must simultaneously convey both the masks required by the Franco society and the underlying passions and ambivalences. His works are masterpieces of repression in which the subtext is developed, not with the surreal wit or grotesquery of a Buñuel, but with the emotional intensity and psychological astuteness of a Bergman. As in Bergman’s canon, Saura’s films are woven together by recurring names, faces, characters, situations and images that create a tapestry of recurring dreams.

KINDER: Do your films draw directly on your own dreams?
SAURA: Yes, of course I use dreams. Not complete dreams, but fragments and images—especially certain atmospheres. I try to reconstruct the images that are clear in my mind. I think this process is clear in my films. I believe film is a medium that is particularly well constituted to deal with dreams and memory. The fantastic power of movies is its capacity to show different images at the same time and its ability to play with time and space.
Geraldine Chaplin peels off her mask in Elisa, Vida Mia.

KINDER: The memories in your films always seem to be drastically altered. I am thinking of Cousin Angelica where one of the characters frequently talks of a vivid childhood memory of a film called The Eyes of London, which showed blue eyes everywhere. But when we actually see the film it is in black and white and the eyes are covered by goggles. Is this kind of distortion inevitable?

SAURA: The Eyes of London is a movie I saw in school when I was a child. I was very impressed by it, but I have transformed the images in Cousin Angelica and have created an entirely different film from that memory.... The mechanisms of memory are different in every person. One day I looked in the mirror and said, 'My goodness, what did I look like as a child?' I can't remember myself as a child in the mirror. I have photographs, but when I look at them, I feel it's someone I don't know. When I've tried to reconstruct my past, I don't do so with the mentality of a child. Mostly I see myself as I am now, but going back 20 or 30 years. That was one of the fundamental ideas that made me make this film—that you cannot see yourself as a child.

KINDER: Do dreams help you reconstruct your past? Are they part of this autobiographical impulse? Or does the same kind of reconstruction take place in your memories of dreams?

SAURA: I don't like autobiographies that are like diaries. What interests me is the imagination working on one's own life—naturally, this offers a wide leeway for creation.

KINDER: Is that why you use only specific images or fragments from dreams? Perhaps, to lead you back to an earlier reality?

SAURA: The mechanics of the mind are very complicated. What we call reality may be everyday life, dreams, memories, obsessions. That's the material I like to work with. I try to find a luminous window or open door to this kind of reality.
JOSE LUIS BORAU
ON MOVIES AND DREAMS

Recorded and translated by Katherine Kovacs in April, 1981.

I think that the influence of cinema on the ideas and behavior of the audience, on human consciousness, has been sufficiently studied. One might even say that this focus has tended to exaggerate the importance and permanence of the cinema's influence. On the other hand, very little if anything has been said about the impact that movie images have on our subconscious as it is usually manifested—in dreams.

We use the cinema in order to dream “better” and more easily (which does not mean more frequently). Our dreams and their images have been enriched by the movies. This enrichment occurs both in the theme or content and also in the form or visual terms. Nowadays, our minds are filled with indirect experiences—ones we do not really live (which makes them somewhat comparable to dreams) but which come from movie screens. In movies we witness events that would be difficult to live out in daily life (an incursion into the ocean floor) or which are patently unreal (the rebellion of an entire galaxy against the central power). Such indirect experiences, which were once impossible, now offer the subconscious suitable vehicles for expressing our eternal yearnings and preoccupations. On the purely formal level, they provide new ways of visualizing our dreams—camera angles, slow motion shots, combinations of colors and of black and white—techniques we have learned only in movie theaters.

In my own case, I see the influence of movies on my flying dreams, a common mode of dreaming which I have more frequently during periods of creative exaltation than during times of professional setbacks and disappointments. I can remember perfectly seeing certain images in my dreams that were conceived from camera angles and with frames that I later identified, in a curious round-trip flight of memory, with specific scenes from some of my favorite movies—such as Hitchcock’s *The Birds*, or going back to childhood, *The Thief of Bagdad*.

I find it surprising that more work has not been done on this rich and suggestive phenomenon.
An influential image from Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (Courtesy Universal-International). “During my flying dreams I do not exactly assume the identity of a sea-gull (it could have a very rich meaning, by the way), nor do I feel I am a poor kid in trouble (which sounds more realistic). This image merely illustrates the text.”

JLB
BERTRAND TAVERNIER
Recorded by Marsha Kinder in 1980

*Death Watch* (1980), the latest film by French director Bertrand Tavernier, is a science fiction melodrama set in Glasgow in the near future. It focuses on the media exploitation of Katherine Mortenhoe (Romy Schneider), who is told by her doctor that she has only three weeks to live. Since disease has been destroyed in this society, the TV coverage of Katherine’s last weeks draws millions of viewers who want to experience vicariously the old natural form of dying. She subverts the series by running away, but is pursued by a candid cameraman (Harvey Keitel) who films her last days without her knowing it. In the opening sequence we watch a mini-television camera being implanted in his brain, transforming him into a bionic cinematographer and rendering quite literal Allan Hobson’s idea of the brain as a camera-projector.

**KINDER:** What drew you to this project?

**TAVERNIER:** The idea of a man with a camera implanted in his brain, that’s the dream and fear of all people connected with making films. It has great possibilities for point of view. That’s one of the main things that attracted me to David Compton’s novel. Harvey plays a man who sees so much that he can’t sleep. He’s the unsleeping eye. All of his life he’s seeing and looking. He can’t dream any more because he spends his life recording, he has no privacy or secrets. Without privacy, you can’t dream. The media destroy a lot of dreams, it’s a great danger. The unknown parts are essential. At the moment when Harvey becomes blind, he becomes human again. He immediately falls asleep. The great tragedy for him is that he doesn’t see Katherine’s death. He has spent all this time following her, watching her so that he can record her death, and then he doesn’t see it.

**K:** The film contains many wonderful inset stories. What is their function?

**T:** I love inset stories … In *Death Watch* the whole film is a strange flashback—a story being told by Keitel’s ex-wife. I am filming a story about a woman telling a story about a man filming a story. In one scene, Keitel goes to a supermarket and films himself watching what he had shot in the past. So it’s even more like my filming what he has filmed.

**K:** Where did the story about the pygmies come from—the one where they are disappointed to learn that the strangers visiting them also dream? It reminds me of Kilton Stewart’s marvelous book Pygmies and Dream Giants.

**T:** That story came from David Rayfiel, who collaborated with me on the screenplay. He told me not to put it in the film, but I wanted it. I can’t say why. Somehow it gets at the heart of the story—about the specialness of dreams. I don’t know Kilton Stewart’s work, but maybe Rayfiel does.

**K:** Do you use your own dreams in creating your films?

**T:** No. I don’t use my dreams. I have problems remembering them. Sometimes I have a powerful souvenir—strong images from a dream. But then I forget them. I think that dreams in the cinema rarely satisfy me. The worst is Hitchcock’s *Spellbound*. It shouldn’t be all surrealism. Many dreams aren’t surrealistic. The surrealism works in Buñuel’s *Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, which is a great film. It’s also great in John Huston’s *Freud*, and it works in Fellini because he’s so fantastic. But so often dreams in cinema are so naive. I haven’t tried to film dreams.