

Subjectively, one could, for instance, read both films in a sexual context, as exploring a fear of women. Both films are set in a closed interior, evoking a closed ego. Both hinge on irony. In *Angsst* the young man ignores the undressing woman (with connotations of fertility and procreation) only to be confronted with death on the other hand. In *Die Moord* the intrusion of the woman in the intimate space of the bedroom seems to present an unbearable invasion of the man's privacy. But precisely through trying to get rid of her by killing her, he becomes again irrevocably possessed by her. His privacy is invaded by an enormous guilt, and "society" itself bears down on him in full force in the form of the policemen who trample into his house and tauntingly confront him with the body.

But the value of Pretorius' experiments lie not so much in what they say as in exploring - successfully or unsuccessfully - an alternative way of saying it.

## Angsst — Same Time, Same Place

John van Zyl

If one wanted to be unkind, one could say that *Angsst* could only have been made in South Africa. To be as hung up on sex as the young hero is could only happen in a society in which certain sections have not even begun to experience the permissive society in any form - visual, verbal or physically. If I had known how, this would have been the film I would have made in my childhood in Kroonstad in the Forties.

The sense of Woman being Other, if not The Other, reifies her visually into a squirming wet dream, and verbally into what Lawrence would certainly have identified as "sex in the head". Even the last glimpse of the woman as she sheds her blouse and discreetly shows her naked rump to the camera as she disappears around the door frame is the way out of any adolescent male's dreams - after the lubricious offering of herself the female leaves before her offer can be tested.

Apart from a content then that is neither anarchic nor Expressionist, the actual time sequence in the film gives the lie to any attempt to see the images in any terms other than in the strictly realistic.

The cigarette that the young man lights and smokes, he smokes in real time, both the action and the causality contained within the visible expression of lighting and smoking a cigarette remain obstinately undreamlike. This makes the attempted atemporality of the long takes impossible to maintain. The fact that Warhol's experiments in perception (especially cinematic perception) involving the Empire State Building and an ice-cream sundae have been invoked regarding Pretorius' style is misleading. Warhol's point is a cognitive one, Pretorius' is an artistic one - a muddled artistic one.

In an Expressionist film like *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, the mise-en-scene is uniformly unreal, in *Angsst* the mise-en-scene is inconsistently symbolic and realistic. The man in the mask is neutralized by the actions and reactions of the young man with the cigarette, the girl's auto-eroticism by the self-censorship of the director. It is finally, neither porno nor poem, thorough-going experiment nor homage to Expressionism.