millennium
FILM WORKSHOP INC. 66 EAST 4th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

DECEMBER 4 (Sat.) HOLLY FISHER

BULLETS FOR BREAKFAST (77 min.-1992) Holly Fisher has been an active filmmaker since the Sixties, as an independent producer, as teacher, and as editor of feature documentaries including the 1989 film, WHO KILLED VINCENT CHIN. She received her BA Degree in Chinese Art History from Columbia University and an MA in Cinema Studies from New York University.

BULLETS FOR BREAKFAST
by Holly Fisher (16 mm, color, 77 mins., (c) 1992)

One of the interesting developments in independent cinema during the past decade or so, at least in North America, has been the synthesis of filmmaking approaches and traditions that, in earlier decades, developed in isolation from one another. Holly Fisher's Bullets for Breakfast is a distinguished instance. It is, simultaneously, an "experimental film" in which Fisher demonstrates, as she has so often in earlier films, her mastery of the optical printer; and a documentary of a small town--Lubec, Maine--and the people Fisher has grown to know during her visits there, including western "pulp" novelist Ryerson Johnson, poet Nancy Neilson, and several women and men who skin fish at the local smokehouse. Bullets is, at once, a work in the "structural" tradition of Ken Jacob's Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son, Michael Snow's Wavelength, and Larry Gottheim's Mouches Volantes; and a feminist response to the ("masculine," "phallic") rigidity of the structural tradition. In its reframing of images from Ford's My Darling Clementine and in its use of visual and auditory layering within which viewers continually detect subtle, complex, ambiguous connections and dissonances, Bullets for Breakfast could have been inspired by Luce Irigeray's The Sex That Is Not One.

Serially organized, but so that the audience is never sure which particular visual and audio motifs will be juxtaposed next, Bullets for Breakfast combines a sense of the familiar, the everyday, and of the mystery and evanescence of experience. It is both theoretically sophisticated and sensually engaging. It pays homage to pervasive visual and narrative myths of Western culture, even as it "skins" them in preparation for our cinematic consumption and digestion. In her attempt to synthesize traditional cinematic disparities, Fisher defines herself as a filmic progressive, a democrat in her choice of subject and formal options--without

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Scott MacDonald (c) '92 - Author of A Critical Cinema 2. University of California Press, 1992.