

## Cinema Song

### WHY I LIKE MOVIES- Patricia Smith

I like movies

Because people get to mug their faces in movies, and no one yells:  
“STOP THAT MUGGING OR STAND UP STRAIGHT!”

I like movies because faces become monuments to promise.

I like movies because they spark nationalistic conversations, such as:

“I never go to French movies. They’re so pretentious and intellectual” or  
“Italians must be terribly affected by sex. Just think of all those voluptuous women>  
Anna Magnani-What a face!”

Or there’s nothing like an American movie musical.

All that razzle, dazzle, disguising the anguish beneath the smiles  
Blah Blah Blah

I like movies because I never saw myself in them.

I saw the dreams of a people who looked like spooks, saints  
And acted like children.

I like movies because as the last reel winds back upon itself

Image on image, time turns away-a revolution terrified of the dark.

### THE BLUE ANGEL-Alan Ginsberg

Marlene Dietrich is singing a lament of mechanical love

She leans against a mortarboard tree on a plateau by the seashore.

She’s a life-sized doll-the doll of eternity.

Her face is powdered, white-washed and immobile like a robot.

Jutting out of her temple is a little black key.

She gazes through dark blue pupils set in the whites of her eyes.

She closes them, and the key turns by itself.

She opens her eyes and their blank, like a statue in a museum.

The machine begins to move. The key turns again.

Her eyes change. She sings...

“You’d think I would have thought a plan to end the inner grind.

But not ‘til I have found a man to occupy my mind.”

### MOVIE HOUSE-John Updike

View it by day from the back to the parking lot in the rear.

For from this angle only, the beautiful brick blankness can be grasped.

Monuments wear one face in all ages.

No windows intrude real light in this temple of shades,

And the size of it measures breadth of the dreams we have had there.

Stark closet of stealthy rapture-vast introspective camera

Where-in our most daring self-projections were given familiar names.

Stand, stand by your macadam lake and tell of our extinction  
That we too could serve our gods.  
Could secrete a pyramid to watch the stars by.

LIFE IS A SCREWBALL COMEDY-Ishmael Reed

Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
It's Cary Grant leaning too far back in a chair.  
It's Bill Cosby with a nose full of hair.  
It's Richard Pryor with his heart on fire.

Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
It's the adventures of Hope and Bing  
It's Bert Williams doing a buck and wing.  
It's Steppin Fetchet sauntering before a mule.  
It's matches in your shoes. It's April fools.

Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
It's Scatman Cruthers with his sexy grin.  
It's W.C. Fields with his mouth full of gin.  
It's Desi and Lucy having a doozy of a fight.  
It's Pigmeat Markham and Slappy White.

Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
It's Will Rogers twirling a rope.  
It's Buster Keaton wearing his famous mope.  
It's Fatty Arbuckle in a leaking boat.

Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
It's Eddie Murphy's howl. It's Whoopie Goldberg's stroll.  
It's Fred Allen's jowls and Pee Wee Herman's clothes.  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
Life is a screwball comedy!  
And the jokes on us!

PROVIDE, PROVIDE-Robert Frost

The witch that came, the withered hag  
To wash the steps with pail and rag  
Was once the beauty Abishag.

The picture pride of Hollywood  
Too many fall from grace and good  
For you to doubt the likelihood.

Die early, and avoid the fate

Or if predestined to die late  
Make up your mind to die in state.

Make the whole stock exchange your own.  
If need be occupy a throne  
Where no one can call you crone.

Some have relied on what they new-  
Others on simply being true.  
What worked for them might work for you.

No memory of having starred  
Atones for later disregard  
Or keeps the end from being hard.

Better to go down dignified  
With boughten friendship at your side  
Thank none at all  
Provide, Provide.