

# SOUND *and* VISION

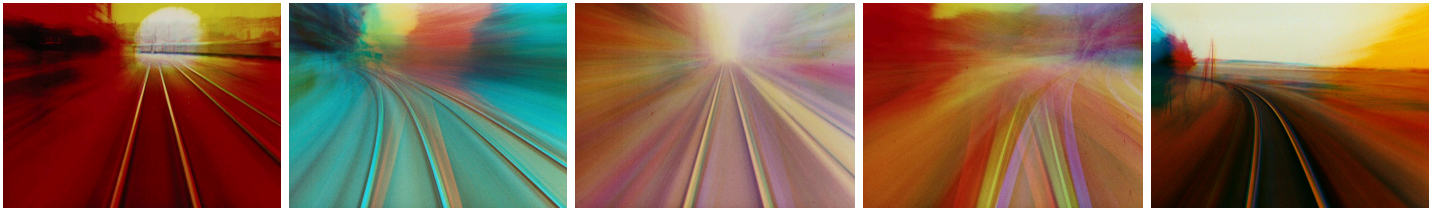
**Who Cares:** Bad Decisions and Good Vibrations in Věra Chytilová's *Daisies*



Anytime is a good time to watch *Daisies*. It's the film I've been searching for since getting serious about cinema.

As with the first two films covered in this column (and hopefully all that will follow) *Daisies* has a pulse that pushes its aesthetic to a level of infiltration that even the least attentive viewer can't escape. It's eye candy for the ages. Pure cinema.

Its unflinching insistence of film as art presents the most easily enjoyable movie that's ever also challenged me. It's so experimental and never stops—as soon as you settle in, suddenly something changes.



You could walk in to this movie at any point with your phone in your hand and your head in your phone, completely engrossed, and I guarantee you'd look up at the screen within thirty seconds. Even in its tamest moments, originality cuts through. But its tame moments are scarce, while originality pervades.

Director Věra Chytilová often rejects her feminist consensus, and I've come to think the best lens to view *Daisies* through is *brat*. International pop sensation Charli XCX celebrated the release of her new album *brat* with a coinciding film series at New York's Roxy Cinema, a move made all the more significant when viewed in the context of her mega-stardom. Anyway...

Charli XCX, a ridiculously famous artist, is programming lesser-known, must-see films (almost all on 35mm to boot) while at the height of her popularity. It is fucking awesome and we need it now more than ever.



It's the most important album of the year, and *Daisies*' inclusion in Charli's Roxy series is a timely reason for my decision to write about it. Using a simple narrative to catapult its style beyond the stars, it's the definitive film of the brat zeitgeist.

A synopsis from Letterboxd: "Two teenage girls embark on a series of destructive pranks in which they consume and destroy the world around them." That's all the story you need to know.



Read Věra's takes on filmmaking, in her own words:



“The story can be whatever. What’s important is the creator’s approach. That’s what’s interesting and unique.”

And:

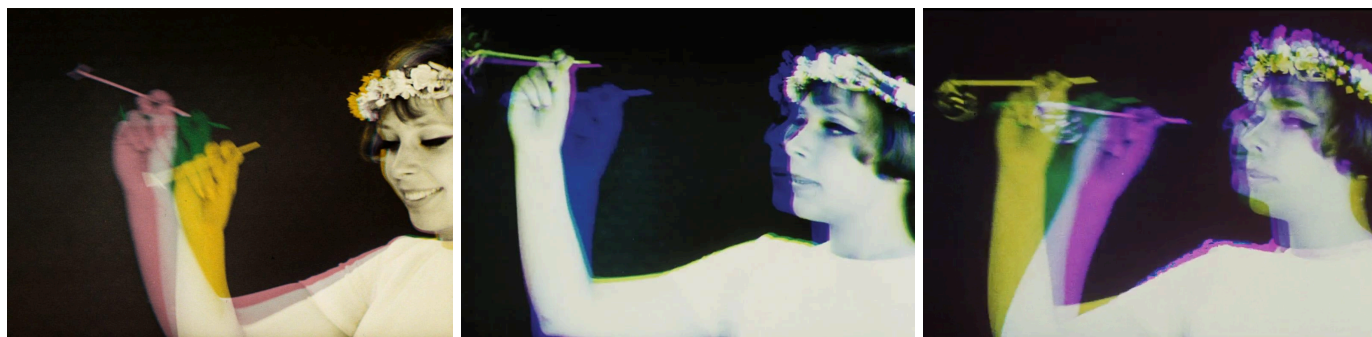
“It’s not about being original at any cost. It’s about finding a stronger way to express your thought.”

And, my personal favorite:

“Some are satisfied not taking risks...They respect the audience by not shocking them, allowing them to understand, entertaining them, making them laugh. I couldn’t care less about that.”

Now, I understand why this might not instantly sound like everyone’s cup of tea. It’s not easy, (quite difficult, really) to recommend a super experimental highly political mid-sixties Czech comedy. Quite honestly, I wasn’t confident enough until Charli did it. So here I am, trying to rise to the occasion, trying to tie this all together for you.

I love *Daisies* because it’s art in every sense. Visually, sonically, thematically...*Daisies* embodies everything about creativity that gives power to abstraction and, meaning to beauty. It simultaneously challenges film history while celebrating it and ultimately reinterpreting cinema altogether. It’s silent film. It’s psychedelic film. It’s experimental film. It’s black and white film. It’s radical new wave film. It’s comedy. It’s drama. It’s art. It’s music. It’s everything.



Analog effects are delivered like a mailman on mescaline, but even if it was black and white, with no manipulation of materials, it would still be a radical film. But with the endless visual and sonic explosions, Chytilová pushes maximalism to its limits, bursting through all barriers in the process.

I love it for much of the same reason I love Kenneth Anger's films. At its best, it's a cacophonous celebration of what makes cinema unique. It's politically minded without a doubt, but in my mind, *Daisies* speaks to the power of filmmaking more than anything, as a quintessential example of cinema as the ultimate artform.

I don't want to get too heady. And I want to wrap up.

I really just want you to watch this movie. There's no doubt you're going to love it. But remember, *Daisies* is special. It truly is a treat, and it should not be taken for granted. Films like this come around once every...well, maybe just once.