

In memoriam

Ron Holloway

Honorary Life Member of INTERFILM

26.11.1933 – 16.12.2009

Born 26 November 1933 in Peoria, Illinois, at his grandmother's house during a visit, baptized at St. Michael's Lithuanian Church in Chicago, Ronald is the third in a family of six children, father Yankee Baptist, mother Lithuanian Catholic. Raised in a farm community in Momence, Illinois (100 km south of Chicago), he attended a one-room rural schoolhouse until he moved to Chicago at the age of 9. He spent his youth on near North Side of Chicago – also known as Humboldt Park and Polish Broadway – the same area associated with youth of writers Saul Bellow and Nelson Algren, composer Jule Styne, actress Kim Novak, publicist Studs Terkel.

Ron then studied at the Loyola University Chicago – St. Mary of the Lake Seminary. He received his B.A. in Philosophy and M.A. in Religious Philosophy, and was ordained Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, 9 May 1959. With Msgr. Daniel Cantwell he worked at adult Education Centers, co-founded the National Center for Film Study in Chicago and served there as Chaplain. His summers he spent in Latin America (in Mexico at Ivan Illych Institute in Cuernavaca, tramps through Panama, Colombia, Venezuela).

Committed to civil rights, Ron marched with Jesse Jackson in Chicago and was living in Harlem when Martin Luther King was assassinated in April 1968. That same year he received a two-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to research the religious aspects of cinema. He lived nine months in Paris during the Student Revolt in Europe.

Ronald Holloway was the first Catholic to complete a doctorate in Evangelical Theology at the University of Hamburg, writing on the films of Carl Dreyer, Ingmar Bergman and Robert Bresson. "*Beyond the Image. Approaches to the religious dimension in the cinema*" has been published in 1977 by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva in co-operation with INTERFILM.

For over 30 years Ron served as a Berlin-based correspondent in film, television, and the media for Variety, the Hollywood Reporter, Moving Pictures International and International Film Guide. He wrote articles on film, theatre and cultural affairs for the Financial Times and the Herald Tribune, and was author of several books on film history and criticism. He has researched and originated a databank on film directors from the republics of the ex-USSR.

He taught cinema for the University of Maryland Overseas Program and conducted film seminars for the Evangelische Akademie in German. He held lectures at European Universities, lately at the Konrad Wolf Film and TV School in Babelsberg at invitation of Lothar Warneke about "Religious Motifs in American Entertainment Films".

It was during a visit of the International Film Festival Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad), when he met the German actress Dorothea Moritz and decided then to move to Berlin. As a member of INTERFILM he became for many years co-editor of the INTERFILM-Reports in collaboration with Jan Hes, the former General Secretary of INTERFILM. Together with Dorothea he initiated in 1985 the INTERFILM-Jury at the Max Ophüls-Festivals in Saarbrücken, and served in many other juries. He

was elected as member of the Steering Committee from 1993 as correspondent for Eastern Europe and North-America and Honorary Life Member from 2004.

Ron published several books (Beyond the Image, 1977; O is for Oberhausen, 1979; Goran Paskalkevic. The Human Tragicomedy, 1996; additionally publications Slovenian, Bulgarian and Macedonian Cinema). Ron and Dorothea also collaborated on four documentaries. 1985: Film – Made in Germany (TDF tv documentary); 1986 Sundance (ZDF tv documentary on Sundance Institute); 1988 Klimov (Channel 4 tv documentary on Elem Klimov); 1994 Parajanov (documentary on Sergei Parajanov, invited to Venice festival).

For 30 years together with his wife Dorothea Moritz he published without public subsidies the journal KINO - German Films. He personally handed them out at the major international film festivals in Cannes, Berlin and others. But his support of German cinema went well beyond that publication alone. INTERFILM's president Hans Hodel wrote on the occasion of the 30th anniversary in the last No 96/2009, edited by guest editor Martin Blaney:

„KINO-German Films existed since 1979 with constantly new and interesting contributions on German films and international festival reports. Despite changing colors, the graphic of the front cover has always stayed the same, and that is a sign of great esteem and loyal friendship from Ronald Holloway and Dorothea Moritz for John Taylor who unexpectedly passed away in 1982! The filmmaker John Taylor, who had run an art studio in New York, came to the Ecumenical World Council of Churches (WCC) in Geneva in 1954 to become the head of the department for film and audio-vision and visualized his goals with original caricatures, sketches, posters and films, for an international audience. In the 70s, he was also the president of the International Church Film Organisation INTERFILM which was founded in 1955 and whose goals were also supported by Ron and Dorothea. I am deeply moved and pleased, that by retaining John Taylor's graphic design for the cover, they are honoring a pioneer of the ecumenical movement and preserving his memory to this day.”

25 years ago, when Ron Holloway accompanied German filmmakers to America, he introduced them to important people, organized screenings, and reported on them as correspondent for the “Hollywood Reporter”. Werner Herzog, Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Wim Wenders could present their films in America with Ron's help and through the contacts he supplied for them. Such wellknown names as Wolfgang Petersen and Hans-Jürgen Syberberg are among them too.

From 1977-1979, Ron served at the Berlinale as a member of the Selection Committee, and from 1992-2002 he was a Creative Consultant for Ziegler Film Berlin.

As a journalist Ron received several awards, including: Polish Rings (1982), together with Dorothea (awarded by Andrzej Wajda, Association of Polish Filmmakers); Verdienstkreuz am Bande des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (1999), awarded by the Berlin Senator for Cultural Affairs on 21st April 1999 in the Amerika Haus Berlin); Golden Medal Cannes (2000), awarded by Gilles Jacob and Pierre Viot; American Cinema Foundation Freedom Award „for opening our eyes to the East“, (2002), presented to Ron and Dorothea Holloway in Los Angeles at the Freedom Film Festival (21-26 February 2002), awarded by Gary McVey; and the Berlinale Kamera, awarded by Dieter Kosslick (2007).