

quietly, what I had written. I was so moved that the tears came to my eyes. It wasn't something to show an editor: it was something to put away in a drawer, to keep as a reminder of natural processes, as a promise of fulfillment.

Every day we slaughter our finest impulses. That is why we get a heartache when we read those lines written by the hand of a master and recognize them as our own, as the tender shoots which we stifled because we lacked the faith to believe in our own powers, our own criterion of truth and beauty. Every man, when he gets quiet, when he becomes desperately honest with himself, is capable of uttering profound truths. We all derive from the same source. There is no mystery about the origin of things. We are all part of creation, all kings, all poets, all musicians; we have only to open up, only to discover what is already there.

What happened to me in writing about Joey and Tony was tantamount to revelation. It was revealed to me that I could say what I wanted to say—if I thought of nothing else, if I concentrated upon that exclusively—and if I were willing to bear the consequences which a pure act always involves.

2.

## miscellany

FEDERICO FELLINI

*In a fascinating series of reflections, legendary filmmaker Federico Fellini uncovers his heart as he describes his feelings about such subjects as the passion required for creativity, the exact moment he became a director, the sadness of laughter, and the joy of despair. Fellini was a man known for his enormously fertile, mythical imagination, and these brief statements provide us with a glimpse of his unique world view.*

1. ONE DAY I NOTICED THAT I WAS A DIRECTOR. I think I can remember the exact moment. It was the first day of shooting *Lo sceicco bianco*. It is a true story but every time I tell it everyone looks at me as though I'm dishing up a piece of pure fiction. In fact it was like this: one morning I found myself on a boat taking me from Fiumicino to a motor-cutter which was out at sea with the cast and crew of *Lo sceicco bianco* on board. At what was still almost crack of dawn I had said good-bye to Giulietta with that same accelerated heart-beat and that same anxiety with which one goes in to an exam. I had even gone into a church and had tried to pray. I was driving my little Fiat and, on the way to Ostia, one of the tyres burst. The cast and crew, as I said, were already on the ship, and out there in the middle of the ocean I could see my fate awaiting me. I had to shoot a particularly complicated scene between Sordi and Brunella Bovo. As I approached the motor-cutter I could see the faces of the film-crew, the lights and the props. I couldn't stop asking myself: What am I going to do? I couldn't remember the film, I couldn't remember anything. I only had a strong desire to run away. But I had hardly set foot on the ship than I was giving instructions, demanding this that and the other, looking through the camera. Without knowing anything, without being aware of any objective. In the few minutes' voyage from the harbour to the ship I had become an exacting, pedantic, self-willed director with all the faults and all the merits which I had always loathed and admired in real directors. . . .

2. I LOVE BEING ALONE WITH MYSELF, and thinking. But I can be alone only among people. I can think only if I'm pushed and shoved, surrounded by difficulties, with questions to answer, problems to solve, wild beasts to tame. That warms me, sets me up.

I haven't always been like that. Before I started directing, the very idea of having to create in the middle of uproar seemed alarming. I felt like a writer who decided to write in the street, in the middle of a crowd: someone peers over your shoulder to see what you've written, someone else profits from a moment when you've decided to concentrate to get away with your pencil or paper, a third keeps yelling obsessively into your ear. That's the kind of thing that scared me at the start. And that's the stage I've reached today—I can't do anything unless I've got uproar all around me. . . .

3. I NEVER MAKE MORAL JUDGEMENTS, I'm not qualified to do so. I am not a censor, a priest or a politician. I dislike analysing, I am not an orator, a philosopher or a theorist. I am merely a story-teller and the cinema is my work.

I have invented myself entirely: a childhood, a personality, longings, dreams and memories, all in order to enable me to tell them.

I love movement around me. That is certainly the main reason why I make films. To me the cinema is an excuse to make things move. Some years ago I set up a production unit to make films by people who were young and unknown. A year later it went bust, but I'd had a lot of fun during that year. I loved the place, the atmosphere of it all: half like an English club, half like a convent. . . .

4. FOR AN ARTIST, EVEN THE LIFE OF THE FEELINGS IS ON THE SURFACE: I don't think I am capable of deep feelings, except in order to make films. I have an easy-going nature, but in order to get an artistic result I am capable of being harsh and cruel.

5. I DON'T WANT TO DEMONSTRATE ANYTHING; I WANT TO SHOW IT. I don't think I could live without making films. If you want to say that it's a good thing to have regrets (which, incidentally, I don't think it is), then I regret not having made more films. I should like to have made every kind: documentaries, advertising films, children's films, melodramas to show in public parks. . . .

I can watch things in a detached way, through the camera, for instance. I never put my eye to the camera. To hell with the objective. I've got to be in

the middle of things. I must know everything about everyone, make love to everything around me. I don't like being just a tourist; I don't know how to be one. Rather, I'm a vagabond, curious about everything, entering everywhere, and all the time running the risk of being thrown out by the police. . . .

6. I HATE LOGICAL PLANS. I have a horror of set phrases that instead of explaining reality tame it in order to use it in a way that claims to be for the general good but in fact is no use to anyone.

I don't approve of definitions or labels. Labels should go on suitcases, nowhere else.

Myself, I should find it false and dangerous to start from some clear, well defined, complete idea and then put it into practice. I must be ignorant of what I shall be doing and I can find the resources I need only when I am plunged into obscurity and ignorance. The child is in darkness at the moment he is formed in his mother's womb. . . .

7. NOTHING IS SADDER THAN LAUGHTER; nothing more beautiful, more magnificent, more uplifting and enriching than the terror of deep despair. I believe that every man as long as he lives is a prisoner of this terrible fear within which all prosperity is condemned to founder, but which preserves even in its deepest abyss that hopeful freedom which makes it possible for him to smile in seemingly hopeless situations. That's why the intention of the real—that is, the deepest and most honest—writers of comedy is by no means only to amuse us, but wantonly to tear open our most painful scars so that we feel them all the more strongly. This applies to Shakespeare and Molière as well as to Terence and Aristophanes. On the other hand there is no true tragic poet—I'm thinking of Euripides, Goethe, Dante—who does not understand how to keep a certain ironic distance from even his most terrible sufferings.

That is why it is absurd to want to classify great creative men, to differentiate between comedians and philosophers, actors and authors, clowns and poets, painters and film-makers.

I have always taken Toulouse-Lautrec as a friend and brother, because, even before the invention of cinema by the brothers Lumière, he anticipated the attitudes and images of the film; also perhaps because he felt himself constantly drawn to the disinherited and the despised, to those who are designated as depraved by "respectable" people. It's rather difficult to be certain whom one has been influenced by during one's career. But I do know for sure that as long as I've been alive I've been thrilled by those Toulouse-Lautrec paintings, posters and lithographs. This aristocrat abhorred the "World of

Beauty"; he was convinced that the purest and loveliest flowers thrive on waste land and rubbish heaps. He loved men and women, people who were hardened, battered, unaffected by social constraints. He despised painted ladies, because he abhorred hypocrisy and artifice more than any other vice. He was simple and open, a magnificent man in spite of his ugliness. That is why he is not dead—he lives on in all our hearts through his pictures. . . .

8. YOU ALWAYS NEED AN EXCUSE TO SET OFF ON A JOURNEY. In the same way you need an excuse to start a film. A creator always needs excuses. Creators should almost be forced to create. It would be a good idea to have a state organisation that would make artists work without respite from morning till night. . . .

9. AS I DON'T CONSIDER MYSELF EXCEPTIONAL, BUT SIMPLY A STORY-TELLER, each of my stories is really a period of my life. Deep down I feel that criticism of my work—which is the most sincere and authentic vision of myself—is unsuitable and immodest, whether it is favourable or unfavourable. Because, since I am identified totally with my work, it is as if someone were judging me as a man. I feel that my work is being judged by intruders who have no right to . . . yes, but they do have the right. But for myself, I always have the feeling that they're lacking in respect, in consideration. In the same way, I would never allow myself to criticise the human being before me: on the contrary, I try to understand him. I have a feeling that I never criticise anyone. . . .

10. I AM NOT YET HUMBLE ENOUGH TO MAKE MYSELF AN ABSTRACTION IN MY FILMS. I try in them to throw light on what I don't understand in myself, but as I am a man, other men can no doubt see themselves in the same mirror too. What is autobiographical is the story of a kind of call that pierces the torpor of the soul and wakes me. I should very much like to stay in that state, in those moments when the call reaches me. I feel, then, that someone is knocking at the door and I don't go and open it. Of course I shall have to make up my mind to open it, some day or other. Basically, I must be a spiritual *vitellone*. . . .

11. AS A MAN I AM INTERESTED IN EVERYTHING, and as far as what you call problems are concerned I go in search of them, because I am curious, and anxious to learn. But as a film director, I am quite indifferent to abstract problems, those which are now called ideological. For an idea or a situation or an

atmosphere to kindle my mind or my imagination, to amuse me or to move me, it must come to me as a concrete fact. This may be a certain person or character that comes out to meet me; it may be the memory of a particular adventure or of a particular coincidence of human beings in a landscape or a situation. Then my imagination is kindled. If I were a composer I would then start writing down notes, if I were a painter I would scribble on the canvas. As a film director, I find my means of expression in the film image. I am a storyteller in the cinema and I can't honestly see what other qualification can be attributed to me apart from this—which may seem modest but, to me, is terribly demanding.

12. I BELIEVE—PLEASE NOTE, I AM ONLY SUPPOSING—THAT WHAT I CARE ABOUT MOST IS THE FREEDOM OF MAN, the liberation of the individual man from the network of moral and social convention in which he believes, or rather in which he thinks he believes, and which encloses him and limits him and makes him seem narrower, smaller, sometimes even worse than he really is. If you really want me to turn teacher, then condense it with these words: be what you are, that is, discover yourself, in order to love life. To me, life is beautiful, for all its tragedy and suffering, I like it, I enjoy it, I am moved by it. And I do my best to share this way of feeling with others.