

THE POOL FILMS

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POOL, as a publishing enterprise, was formed by Bryher and Robert Macpherson sometime late in 1926. Although none of the POOL publications listed the members of this loosely-formed collective, Bryher and Macpherson managed most of the editorial duties while H.D. was a more silent, but supportive partner.

From its inception, POOL was as much a publishing interest as it was a film production company. As an ad in the July 1927 issue of *transition* indicated:

POOL
is announced.

It has projects. Pool will mean, concerning books,
new hope.

It has projects. Pool will mean, concerning cine-
matography, new beginning.

New always. Distinguished, and with a clear course.

BOOKS

FILMS

.....

encouragement

There were four POOL films. Although Macpherson is credited as the maker of these films, the contributions of H.D. and Bryher should not be underestimated. The films were, as follows:

<i>Wing Beat</i> (1927)	featuring H.D., Kenneth Macpherson
<i>Foothills</i> (1929)	featuring H.D., Robert Herring
<i>Monkey's Moon</i> (1929)	featuring Kenneth's pet douracouli monkeys
<i>Borderline</i> (1930)	featuring Paul and Eslanda Robeson, H.D., Gavin Arthur, Blanche Lewin, Bryher, Charlotte Arthur

All of the films were shot in and around Territet, Switzerland. The only fully extant film is the feature-length *Borderline*. Fragments of *Wing Beat* and *Foothills* were discovered in H.D.'s papers at Bienecke Library in 1979. They were nitrate-films and hence in unknown, unstable, unprojectable condition. The Museum of Modern Art agreed to

"preserve" these films and process a 16mm acetate version of the nitrate 35mm film. With some input from Perdita and the help of my thesis advisor Jay Ledya, I "reconstructed" to the best of my knowledge the fragments of *Wing Beat* and *Foothills*. Some of the discovered material was clearly not from either film and is more like home movie footage. It is now classified at the Museum of Modern Art as "Macpherson material." No known evidence of *Monkey's Moon* exists. The films are available from the following sources:

(fragments of) <i>Wing Beat</i>	16mm workprints
(fragments of) <i>Foothills</i>	Available to see/but do not circulate at
"Macpherson material"	MoMA
	11 West 53rd Street
	New York, N.Y. 10019
	contact: Jon Gartenberg

<i>Borderline</i>	16mm print
	35mm print
	Available at George Eastman House,
	900 East Avenue
	Rochester, N.Y. 14607
	contact: Chris Horak, 716-271-3361

NOTE

Much confusion has existed over the availability of *Borderline*. As far as I know Eastman House has the only available print of the film in this country. I have heard reports that other sources claim to have the film, but have never heard of anyone actually seeing another print. In the past, Eastman House's policy with the film has been to RENT it only if an Eastman House representative accompanies the film. They will gladly schedule screenings on their premises, but the film does not circulate without paying also for the Eastman House representative (I DO NOT HAVE A PRINT OF THE FILM OR ACCESS TO A PRINT OF THE FILM. Too many people have assumed that if I have written about it, it must be in my possession. It is much more complicated than that!)

The good news is: Eastman House has an arrangement with the Museum of Modern Art circulating film library to make circulating/rentable copies of *Borderline*. When this occurs, *Borderline* will be available for classroom or theatrical screenings through MoMA. Unfortunately, although this has been promised for a year or so, at press time *Borderline* was not yet available at MoMA. It might be worth calling them and inquiring about it if you want the up-to-date report.