

## Cinerama

When moviegoers die, instead of paradise they go to Paris,  
for where else can you find 300 screens  
showing nearly every film you'd want to see, not to mention movies  
like Captain Blood, which bad boy Errol Flynn  
buckles his swash across the seven seas, and through I'm not dead,  
I may be in heaven, walking down the rue St.-Antoine,  
making lists of my favorite movies, number one being Cocteau's  
Beauty and the Beast, but I'm with Garbo at the end:  
"Where is my beast? Give me my beast." Oh, the beasts have it  
on the silver screen—Ivan the Terrible, M, Nosferatu,  
The Mummy—all misshapen, murderous monsters,  
because no matter how beautiful we are, inside we know  
ourselves to be bloodsucking vampires, zombies, freaks cobbled  
together with spare parts from the graveyard,  
and God some kind of Dr. Frankenstein or meglomaniacal director,  
part nice-guy Frank Capra, yes, but the other part  
Otto Preminger, bald, with Nazi tics, because the world  
is beautiful and hideous at the same time,  
an identical Technicolor sky over us all, and the stars. Who came up  
with that concept—the distance, the light,  
the paparazzi flash? And the dialogue, which is sometimes snappy  
or très poétique, as if written by Shakespeare himself,  
then at other times by the most guttural Neanderthal on the planet,  
grubbing his way across the landscape, noticing the sky  
only when it becomes his enemy or friend, dark with birds,  
not Hitchcock's, but dinner, throwing rocks into the sky,  
most of them missing their target, a few bouncing off his prognathous jaw,  
like Kubrick with his cavemen and spacemen existing  
on the same continuum, a Möbius strip to be sure but with Strauss,  
both Richard and Johann, in the background, and though it's winter  
there's a waltz in the air as I walk through the Place des Vosges,  
and I'm still trying to come up with number two,  
maybe 400 Blows or Breathless, because here I am, after all, in Paris  
still expecting to see Belmondo and Seberg racing  
down the street, cops after them, bullets flying, and maybe I am  
in heaven, but I'll always be waiting for Godard.