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| **Your article** |
| Hammid, Alexander (1907-2004) |
| Alexandr Hackenschmied |
| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| Alexander Hackenschmied (17 Dec. 1907, Linz, Austria-26 July 2004, New York City), Americanized as Alexander Hammid, created and promoted the artistic avant-garde in both Czechoslovakia and the United States. In 1930 he organized two Prague avant-garde exhibitions, “Nová ĉeská fotografie” [“New Czech Photography”] and the “First Week of Avant-garde Film” (during which he showed his own short film *Bezúčelná procházka* [*An Aimless Walk*]). He later worked in Zlín for the Baťa Film Studio, which hired young artists to make advertising films, such as *The Highway Sings*. Hammid collaborated with American filmmaker Herbert Kline on the feature documentaries *Crisis* and *Lights Out in Europe*, both about the early years of World War Two. After fleeing Czechoslovakia, Hammid came to the U.S. and helped Kline adapt John Steinbeck’s *The* *Forgotten Village*. With his first wife Maya Deren he made, among other films, the American avant-garde watershed *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943). While making industrial films, he continued directing and editing art films, such as adaptations of Gian Carlo Menotti’s opera *The Medium* and Martha Graham’s dance composition *Night Journey*. Among his later noteworthy films are the three-screen *To Be Alive* and the early IMAX documentary *To Fly*. Considered one of the first Czech avant-garde filmmakers, Hammid provides evidence of the transnational cross-pollination of documentary, avant-garde, and advertising modes in the early twentieth century. Hammid’s large-screen films can be seen as an extension of his interest in experimentation. WorksWritings ‘Film and Music’ (1933), ‘The First Screening of Avant-Garde Film in Prague at the Kotva Cinema’ (1930) and ‘*The Forgotten Village*: A Report on the Filming in Mexico’ (1947), translated from the Czech and published in *Film Culture* no. 67-68-69 (1979): 238-49. Films -*Bezúčelná procházka* [An Aimless Walk] (1930)  -Ze soboty na neděli [From Saturday to Sunday] (1931) (art director)  -Na Pražském hradě [Prague Castle] (1932)  - Zem spievá [The Earth Sings] (1933) (editor)  -Silnice zpívá [The Highway Sings] (1937) (co-cinematographer) (advertising film shown at the 1937 World Exposition in Paris)  -Crisis (1938) (cinematographer and editor)  -Lights Out in Europe (1939) (cinematographer and editor)  -The Forgotten Village (1941) (co-director, cinematographer and editor)  -Meshes of the Afternoon (1943) (with Maya Deren)  -At Land (1944) (with Maya Deren) (co-cinematographer and co-editor)  -A Study in Choreography for Camera (1945)  -The Private Life of a Cat (1945)  -Library of Congress (1945) (director) (nominated for the 1945 Academy Award for short documentary subject)  -Valley of the Tennessee (1945) (director)  -Ritual in Transfigured Time (1945-46) (co-cinematographer and co-editor) (with Maya Deren)  -The Medium (1950) (co-director and editor)  -Angry Boy (1951) (director)  -Night Journey (1961) **(**director)  -To Be Alive! (1964) (co-director and cinematographer) (won 1965 Academy Award for documentary short subject)  -To Fly (1976) (editor) |
| Further reading:  (Anděl, Alexandr Hackenschmied)  (Anděl, Czech Modernism, 1900-1945)  (Clark, Hodson and Neiman)  (Drubek)  (Omasta)  (Shattuck)  (Valasek)  (Willoughby) |