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Books in Brief



FROM "THE MAGIC HOUR"

A scene from the Soviet movie "Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors," directed by Sergei Paradjanov, saluted by J. Hoberman as "the genius of 'Carpathian-Armenian-Azerbaijani Ethno-Funk.'"

All One Great Movie

In his new collection of criticism from *The Village Voice* and other publications, J. Hoberman comes across as one of the few film writers whose work has no expiration date. It may even be better read after the fact because he takes the long view every time. Hoberman compares the Warner Brothers cartoon "Duck Amuck" to "The Truman Show"; reviewing "The Contender," he sees a shot that he believes to have been inspired by "The Passion of Joan of Arc." **THE MAGIC HOUR: Film at Fin de Siècle** (Temple University, cloth, \$69.50; paper, \$19.95) is arranged under five loose headings, and only the 10 pieces touching on President Bill Clinton and his role as "entertainer-in-chief" feel a bit stale. When Hoberman strays too far from the screen, he sounds plenty smart but cannot capitalize on his uncanny ability to see connections among films past and present.

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