TRANSCRIPT

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

A PINEWOOD DIALOGUE WITH **SIDNEY LUMET**

Serpico may be the quintessential Sidney Lumet film. A gritty blend of urban realism, character study, and concise storytelling, *Serpico* is also a great New York City film that makes expressive use of its numerous locations in Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. Al Pacino gives a riveting performance as the idealistic yet eccentric New York City cop who exposed corruption in the police department. Lumet's engaging, unpretentious style is on full display in this wide-ranging discussion, which took place following a special screening of a new print of *Serpico*, just a few months after Lumet received an Honorary Academy Award.

A Pinewood Dialogue with Sidney Lumet following a screening of *Serpico* moderated by Chief Curator David Schwartz (October 5, 2005):

SCHWARTZ: Please welcome Sidney Lumet. (Applause) How often do you get to watch your own films? Because there's so many of them out there, and they must show up all the time?

LUMET: I never watch them. I don't think I've seen... It's got to be, minimally, twenty years since I've seen this.

SCHWARTZ: Seen *Serpico*? Really? It's an amazing production. And one of the things that is remarkable about it is that to me, it has all the strengths of your filmmaking, but it's not a showy film. You almost don't notice the style. And you're not a flashy director, but it's very clear what your films are, the way that you capture New York City, the performances. Could you talk a bit about your approach?

LUMET: Well, I always feel that if you see the technique, it's bad technique. My kind of movie making, as opposed to—well, if you want a better example, I don't know how many of you have ever seen... What was that French movie with Anouk Aimée, everything shot on a 600 millimeter lens?

SCHWARTZ: *A Man and a Woman*?

LUMET: Yes. That's the one. You see, that kind of movie is just silly to me. (Laughter) So it's a question of what you believe in, in terms of work. I'm not right. There are terrific stylists in movies. And sometimes, you hit movies that are just so beautiful that that's enough. They don't have to say anything; they don't have to be clear; they don't have to be about anything. But they're just terrific, great—some of them—in some instances—great movies. I would say for me, Fellini is that kind of a director. He always struck me as a little boy looking for a mama, which is what all the pictures seem to be about. And yet the unbelievable beauty of what he did was deeply moving, and had a resonance that allowed you to really just investigate everything. It just meant a lot. It's just a question of what kind of worker you want to be.

SCHWARTZ: And clearly, one of the things that you're most interested in your work is working with actors. I'll just read something that Paul Newman said when we honored you back in 1985, almost twenty years ago. "Sidney's allure lies not in his technical proficiency, which is enormous; nor in his nose for good stories and dialogue, which is legendary; but in his real, actual, fearless, frenzied love for actors." And this movie is a great example of that, because, it's really [Al] Pacino, that character and that performance that totally carry the film.

LUMET: Well, you know, I get a lot of credit on things like that, "Oh, the performance you 'drew' from..." so on and so forth. You never draw anything from anybody that isn't there. We're not alchemists. And Al is one of the best actors we've got, period. What

he picks, his choices, are so brilliant and original. So the best thing you can do is get out of his way.

SCHWARTZ: You are making a film that's topical, in a way. I mean, the Watergate hearings are going on at the time you're shooting this, the Knapp Commission had happened. But you focus on the character study, and this is a portrait. You decided not to get too wrapped up in the plot or statements.

LUMET: Well, I think the only way you're going to understand the situation is to understand the man. My admiration for people like that is boundless. It's a kind of bravery that… is just insane to me! (Laughter) I did a picture, another picture, a true story, about a detective named Bob Leuci: *Prince of the City*. And, I don't know how he did that. Seven years? With four of those years with three marshals with him around the clock, outside his door? What it meant to just—there was no way to take a cab ride. There was no way to take a bus ride, get in the subway. Life is over, as you would possibly know it. And even when he was moved to another state, the marshals were always there. Funnily enough, the way out was really by making a movie about it, because then it became too dangerous to kill him. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: Did you meet the real Serpico? What was that like?

LUMET: Yes. I met Frank, and, he's a fascinating guy. I always had a feeling about him. I don't know, Al and I talked about it; I don't know whether Al agreed with me. I always felt he was a rebel, period. That he would've behaved that way if he'd been a baker. (Laughter) That anybody above him was his automatic enemy. Thank God he was in the work that he was. But you know, again, Bob Leuci said a fascinating thing that—I believe it's true, because Bob said it, and I believe him. Speaking of corruption, he said, "At any given moment, five percent of the police force is hopelessly corrupt; five percent will never be corrupt; and the other ninety percent will go by the atmosphere in the department." And by that he meant, who's police commissioner. Starting with that, and filtering down. And I always thought that was fascinating, because as it applied to Serpico's situation, it was a terrible time. I mean, something like the Knapp Commission was not reported lightly—it was not organized lightly. Nor did they function lightly. And of course, nor were there any results. You know, for three years people kept their noses clean, but that was about it.

SCHWARTZ: What about for you? I mean, what about making a film? That seems like an act of courage, too, to be making a film.

LUMET: They love it! (Laughter) Everybody wants to be in the movies. I think they all want to direct. No, it was amazing, because, on this movie, I was shooting in precincts, working precincts, working hospitals. And not only no problem, *loads* of help, in every way. And you know, between this and *Prince of the City* and *Dog Day* and so on, people said, "Oh, you've done so many anti-cop movies." The fascinating thing I found is that they don't think they're anti-cop. They not only like them, they feel terrific about them because, as they've said to me over and over again, "That's the way it is, that's the way it really is." Because I'm careful not to make it melodramatic. I don't over-dramatize it; I don't put a score in with crashes and things. And they understand that.

Serpico never ratted out any friends, because he didn't have any friends. (Laughter) But Leuci ratted out the guys that he worked with for seven years.

SCHWARTZ: You said in your book that you're sort of ambivalent about the character, somebody who was such a pain-in-the-ass and always kvetching—this is the character Pacino played—but that Pacino made you love the character. And you sort of showed his odd eccentric side at the same time.

LUMET: His eccentric side and his pain-in-the-ass side. It was very sad, because Al hung around with him for about a month, before we started shooting. And I came on the picture late, I replaced another director. So I only had five weeks of preparation. No locations had been picked, nothing had been done. But I knew one thing. I said to Al, "You know, Al, don't get too close to him. Because he's going." And Al said, "What do you think?" I said— "you're going to get whacked, with him watching from the sidelines?" And of course, he saw the point of that. And when I told Frank, I said, "Frank, I can't have you there during the shooting, or the rehearsals. It would just make everybody, including Al, so self-conscious. And I broke his heart. He walked away. He hasn't talked to me since.

SCHWARTZ: Oh really. So you never got his reaction to the movie?

LUMET: No, I was there when he saw it. I figured I owed him that much. And, he liked it.

SCHWARTZ: One of the things that really gains over time is the portrait of the city itself, the locations. You're everywhere in the city in this film. You're in Queens, right nearby in Astoria; you're in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan. Could you talk a bit about the location scouting and working in New York?

LUMET: You know, you decide when you're starting a picture, not only what it's going to be about, but the way you want to tell that story, which is a very simple way of that terribly complicated word they keep using called "style". Style is: how do you want to tell the story? The great thing about New York is that it allows you—staying totally on location, without even going into a studio—to pick any style you want. The city is capable of so many different feelings, so many different moods, so many different statements. Even today, I've got seven hundred locations up here that I've never used.

SCHWARTZ: What's the location scouting process like? Do you…

LUMET: Boring. (Laughter) You drive around in the car, and you go to this block and this block, "Stop here." Get out, look, make a note of it. Back in the car and, you know, it really is boring. *Except*. Except that it's exciting when you start getting the accumulation of what you've looked at. There's a point in a picture, when you're working on it, where you want—you hope—it doesn't always happen, by any means—you hope it's going to start telling you. And one of the terrific things about location looking is when it tells you. If I have to change things, I just go onto another location. I don't want to change it, I want what's there to work for me. In almost every instance, any location I've wound up with allowed me to do more than I had in mind originally, gave me more than I thought of.

SCHWARTZ: And I guess this goes also for costume. I don't know how much you remember the selection of costumes or hats, but it's a great part of this film. And you've talked about the importance of costuming for an actor to find his character.

LUMET: Anna Hill Johnstone—who did this movie, and so many of my movies until she retired—one of the joys of her was she also had the ability to accomplish the style of the movie, without you ever seeing the style taking place. Thank God it runs a long time, so you never see the style taking place, because it changes over the time of the movie. But there, for example, after long discussions, Anna Hill came up with an incredible solution. And I'm thrilled that nobody has ever noticed it, which is that as we get into the further and further courtroom scenes, people appear blacker and blacker and blacker; the clothes all get darker, until finally in one courtroom scene, everybody's in black. Except you never see it happen.

SCHWARTZ: It struck me that the lighting also gets—that you use shadows more throughout the film.

LUMET: Well, there's a limit to your control on location. Interiors, you can do whatever you want, but on exteriors, obviously, it's going to be dictated by sun or no sun and so on. There was no deliberate attempt to do that in the picture. There was an attempt, as you can see with Al, to get him darker and darker.

SCHWARTZ: You've made three films with Dede Allen; I just want to ask about working with her. She's a brilliant, brilliant editor. You did *Dog Day Afternoon* and *The Wiz* with her.

LUMET: Well, what's there to say about Dede?

SCHWARTZ: And I'm assuming you're very involved in the cutting process. I'm assuming you're very involved with every part.

LUMET: They can't take the sticks off without me being there. (Laughter) But Dede is something else. You know, it's fascinating. I don't know how many of you are film students or get the more esoteric magazines and so on. People are always talking about editing. There're only three people who know whether a movie is well edited or not: the director, the cameraman and the editor. Nobody else knows. Because it can look wonderfully edited, but God knows what was left on the floor; it can look terribly edited, but it was shot so badly that it's a miracle that the story even makes sense. (Laughter) So you can't know that. I remember once—I've

forgotten what picture I did—a review came out, and talked at great length about Dede's editing, and that they could see "The Dede Allen Style of Editing." Well, the person who would've thrown herself off the Empire State Building would've been Dede, because she prided herself in becoming the editor that that particular director wanted. She worked totally different[ly] with George Roy Hill than she did with me. She worked totally different[ly] with Warren Beatty than she did with either of us. She became whatever the picture and the director were. And where she was brilliant was that if I had an image of the way I felt the scene should be edited, she could recreate my intention better than what I had. But it was my intention that she divined. It wasn't out of left field, or something that *she* wanted to get into the movie. She saw what I was after, and she could get it better than I could, which is pretty hard.

SCHWARTZ: How much of that work had to do with performances, looking at different takes and picking best performances or with more structural things?

LUMET: Well, the selection of which take for a performance happens very early. We'll sit in the rushes, and Dede will be sitting next to me, and we see the two takes or three takes that we've printed, and I'll say, "Take one, take three," you know. And that'll be the selection. And the only reason we'll ever change it is for a technical reason.

SCHWARTZ: There's been a lot of talk now, looking back, about the 1970s, and this period in the early seventies being a golden age, a very amazing moment in filmmaking. And as somebody who's worked from the fifties till now, do you see it that way? Were you able to make more provocative, interesting films? Was there an openness in this early seventies period?

LUMET: I don't think so. It seemed to me that the same crap went on then as does now. (Laughter) The problem now is a very serious one, which is that it's all corporate, that every studio is owned by something so much bigger than the studio. It's kind of ridiculous, isn't it, that Columbia Pictures has rescued the Sony Corporation? Sony Pictures of that year provided the profit margin for Sony, which was losing money, with all of its iPods and whatever they do, their television sets. In fact, by now, after the sale of armaments, the biggest factor in the balance of payments in the United States is entertainment: armaments, number one; entertainment, number two. That means books, records, movies, DVDs, et cetera. But that's how enormous it is now. That today, that a picture can gross—one picture—can gross a billion dollars: as the guy said in the movie, "That's serious money." (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: Well, one of the things that is said about the seventies is that there became a point when Hollywood really started looking for blockbuster movies. Do you feel that Hollywood was able to make more modest films before that?

LUMET: Not at all. People's memories are short. As you may know, the terms under which a picture plays in a theater or with a theater chain are all negotiable, always. It can vary everywhere from the studio getting ten percent and the theater getting ninety, to the studio getting ninety and the theater getting ten percent. And all of that's open to negotiation, on every picture. So that for example, when I was growing up, when I was a kid, if you wanted your picture to play Radio City Music Hall at Christmas, they got ninety percent; you got ten—because they didn't need your picture! They had the Rockettes. (Laughter) No, this is serious. And what it did give you was it gave you advertising over the rest of the country, "As seen in Radio City Music Hall." But the theater itself was that powerful a factor in the release and the distribution of a movie. So the chaos today in exhibition is no worse than it always was. I went to see *Capote* the other day and in an eight-theater complex, it was playing in four of the theaters. You could see the picture ever half-hour, (Laughter) which was wonderful. But, that's rough on the other pictures.

SCHWARTZ: What was Dino De Laurentiis like as a producer?

LUMET: Oh, ah. Great affection for him. He was gonif, and he was charming; and had great taste; was a good cook; and *loved* movies, *loved* movies. We had a terrific time on the movie, up until I'd finished it. I didn't want any music for the movie. And I did not, in those days, have final cut. Dino wanted music, and I knew that if I didn't do something about this, he'd take it back to Italy and Nino Rota would lay in a score like wall-to-wall

carpeting. (Laughter) I found out by sheer accident that a wonderful composer and a great political activist by the name of [Mikis] Theodorakis, a Greek composer, had just gotten out of jail. The Greek government at that time was pretty much a fascist government, and he had served over a year in jail. And so I figured, well, what the hell, he has got to need money. (Laughter) And I found him in Paris, twenty-four hours after he got out. He left Greece right away. And I found him in Paris, and I told him the truth. I said, "Mikis, I don't think the picture needs a score, but I'm terrified of what happens if I don't put one in, because then Dino will put one in. And I thought this could be marvelous for you, because I know what's in the budget and you could pick yourself up a fast seventy-five thousand bucks here." And he said, "I'm taking the next plane." (Laughter) And he arrived in New York the next day; his plane was late. I was waiting for him up at Technicolor, in the screening room; he arrived about two a.m. We ran the movie. He loved it. He said, "You're absolutely right, it shouldn't have music…however..." (I was hustling him, and he was hustling me at the same time. He was charming.) (Laughter) From his pocket, he took out a cassette. He said, "Many years ago, I wrote a little thing that might be right for the movie." (Laughter) And I said, "Oh, great, great, great." He said, "But there's a problem. I wasn't expecting this movie, and so I've arranged to make a tour in America with a small Greek orchestra, and we're going to be gone for about four months." He said, "So I won't be able to be with you in the cutting room. I won't be able to sit—" what we call a 'spotting session,' which is where we sit at the movieola and we go through the movie, and I say, "We should have music here," and he says, "I'd like to try something here," et cetera. We call that 'spotting.' He said, "So I can't do a spotting session because I'm leaving the day after tomorrow…and I can't be at the recording session…" In other words, he was going to—that was it. (Laughter) And I was charmed by it, and I said to him, "I don't think you know him, Mikis, but we have a wonderful arranger here by the name of Bob James. He's basically a jazz pianist, a brilliant musician. And I know he'd be honored to work with you. So I can do the spotting session with Bob, and as he does his arrangements, I'm sure Dino would be happy to fly him out to whatever city you're in with your band, and..." He was also a great pianist, James, "And he'll—I'm sure—play the arrangements, and you…" See, and that was the way we worked it out. The reason I wanted Theodorakis so badly was, number one, he had just come off a tremendous hit on the Jules Dassin picture *Never on Sunday*, (Hums the tune) that was his; and I knew that he had great panache in Europe, a solid left-winger, and served a jail sentence; (Laughter) and I knew that Dino would be so flattered that he would do this picture. And as you see, I think there's about fourteen minutes of music in the whole movie.

SCHWARTZ: Let's take some questions from the audience, about this or other movies.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you talk about the efficiency of the way you shoot?

LUMET: I work with two cameras, and three cameras, when I can.

The basic rule of thumb is, with a shift of more than fifteen degrees, you have to relight. Well, suppose you're shooting. Dave and I are having this conversation; there's one camera here and there's one camera there. Well, we're shooting a-hundred-and-eighty-degrees. However, if I keep us static, if it's going to be him in his chair and me in my chair, I shouldn't have to sacrifice too much in lighting quality. Maybe a fraction, but really, not even that, because the problem is solved because it's his lighting and my lighting. Most good cameramen work from a single source, which is that if this was the window, the heaviest light would be coming from behind us. And whatever he would need for fill, he can manage it without any sacrifice in quality. If I get up and walk around and so on and so forth, it becomes more difficult.

SCHWARTZ: (Repeats audience question) If you remade *Serpico* and *Dog Day* today, how would they be different? Because those movies have such a 1970s flavor.

LUMET: I don't know how to answer that, because I was never aware of them having a 1970s flavor. (Laughter) I just did the movie. You know, it's that thing that happens—which is lovely, actually—people see things in your movies that you never saw, or even intended. Paul [Newman] and I were once at a discussion of *The Verdict*, and somebody pointed out something about the way he was dressed and the changes in his clothes as the

picture progressed. I never even knew it, and it was not deliberate. The person was absolutely right. That's the lovely thing that happens when everything is working well. Then all of the mistakes, (Laughter) all the un-thought-of things are working for you. Because finally, no matter which way you cut it, you've got to trust the unconscious. Or I have to. Maybe there are directors who can do it all from here, but I don't think so.

SCHWARTZ: (Repeats audience question) Okay, if you could talk a bit about *Network*… How much did that have to do with your own experience of television?

LUMET: Well, Paddy and I both began in television. In fact, I think I did his first script on television. Chayefsky, I'm talking about. Not a bad writer: (Laughter) God, I wish he'd lived to see George Bush! (Laughter, applause) And what would've happened if he'd lived to see Bush is what happened on that movie. People keep saying to me, "Oh, what a brilliant satire." And Paddy and I always said, "Satire, hell, it's sheer reportage." (Laughter) The only thing that hasn't happened is that nobody's shot anybody. Live. Yet. You know, give Fox another year of reality shows... (Laughter, applause.)

Network's a wonderful movie, and it's all Paddy. I did some good work, too. I know when I do good work. But basically, that's Paddy's movie. It's so incisive, and so human. That's what's amazing—that in this whole thing about television and all the attitudes that are expressed in the movie—how much else is in there. Paddy's whole feeling about black power, which was very prevalent in those days. I think, for me, the funniest thing in that movie is that negotiation scene, when they're negotiating for the secondary rights to the revolutionary army. (Laughter) He saw something. We carried it out very well, because Paddy Chayefsky is hardly a naturalistic writer, or even a realistic writer. I mean, *Marty* was a totally naturalistic piece, but he left that a long time ago. And as his work went on, he became more and more stylized. Stylized, in his sense, meant following what that story was about—that story was about corruption. And so What I did about it was I corrupted the camera. We start first the opening scene with Bill and Peter on Sixth Avenue, and then into a bar. It's completely naturalistic photography; I don't think we added a lamp. Put a 10K two blocks away, just so you could see their faces on the street. The last scene, when they're sitting around that office, and Duvall says, "Well, how do we get rid'a this son of a bitch?" And if you look at it, it looks like—it was shot like, lit like—a Ford commercial. Faces don't matter, nothing matters, just the look matters: slick. And that happened very gradually over the body of the movie. I was just happy to serve Paddy on that movie.

SCHWARTZ: You know, we have one of your script supervisors in the audience; I don't know if she worked on this film, Martha Pinson.

LUMET: Martha, where are you?

PINSON: I'm here, hi!

LUMET: Hi, sweetheart.

SCHWARTZ: What do you do all day?

LUMET: When I'm not working. Sleep a lot. Big sleeper. (Laughter) Cook. Read. That's it.

SCHWARTZ: What kind of books do you like to read?

LUMET: I haven't read... I'm reading Edgar Doctorow's book now [*The March*], and it's the first fiction I've read in about twenty years. Yeah. I find myself going to nonfiction.

SCHWARTZ: (Repeats audience question) How many scripts do you get offered, versus how many you actually make?

LUMET: It depends on whether your last picture was a hit. (Laughter) If your last picture was a hit, you get a lot of scripts offered. If you last picture wasn't a hit, you get some scripts offered. If your last three pictures weren't a hit, you get a script offered. (Laughter) And I've been lucky, which I think you'll find anybody who's had a good working career will constantly remind you and them of that word. Luck has a lot to do with it. Also, because I'm not greedy, I don't hold out for a price or what have you. If I want do it, I'll do it. It's not hard to find stuff you want to do. It really isn't. There's so much talent around. I don't know, how many movies have I done, David? Do you know?

SCHWARTZ: I don't know the number, but it's more than thirty, thirty or forty.

LUMET: Oh, it's more than forty.

SCHWARTZ: And it was said even in the 1980s that you at that time, were the most prolific; you were making more films than any of your contemporaries from that period, from the fifties up to the eighties; that there was nobody else working at your level who'd made as many films.

LUMET: I think it's true, I don't know. (Laughter) I think Woody [Allen] works at a pretty heavy clip. But other than Woody and myself, I don't know, people coddle themselves. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: And of course, your reputation, which I said before, that you come in, you shoot a film ahead of schedule. And just about anybody who's worked with you has said that you always know exactly what you want, you're incredibly fast and economical. Where do you think that came from?

LUMET: Well, it comes from a very simple place, really. I was brought up in the theater, and live television. Now, in both of those, you make your dramatic selection in advance. This is what it's going to be about, this is what we've got to direct it toward, aim it toward. And you know, you can't go up to Boston on an out of town trial on a play and say, "Let's see if it works this way," you're committed. And so there's nothing wrong with the other way of working, God knows. But my upbringing, my upbringing was just different. I shoot very little ratio. What do I shoot, Martha? If I expose 100,000 feet, that's a lot for me, or 110,000 feet.

PINSON: I think in—probably, in a sense that people could understand, your shooting day is usually six hours, as opposed to the average shooting day on a film is probably more like thirteen. And you rehearse for—as you say, you make your choices in advance. You usually do three or four takes, where a lot of people would just be—the first three takes would just be their rehearsal, and then they would, start printing at take five or six, something like that. I mean, there's almost like an ethos of certain people—they just want it to be fresh and feel natural, so they don't prepare.

LUMET: Which is nonsense, of course, because the more prepared you are, the freer the actors will feel. Because they're secure, and therefore they're open to whatever happens during the take. They don't feel like, "Ooh, I mustn't go in that place." Yeah, go in that place, see what happens.

SCHWARTZ: Just summarizing, Martha said you work more than twice as fast as most directors, and you have more time for rehearsal; you're able to spend more time...

LUMET: And more time to sleep. (Laughter) I think I shoot about a 120,000 feet. Now, a movie is about 12,000 feet. Now, I mean, exposed; that's not even printing. I print maybe 40,000 or 30,000 feet. But there's nothing wrong with Willie Wyler's work. Or George Stevens' work. And they would each shoot a minimum of 1,200,000 feet on a picture. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: You did a great tribute, when you got your lifetime Oscar this year, to all the directors that have influenced you. Tell us about your movie viewing? You know, we hear about Marty Scorsese always watching movies.

LUMET: I know, Marty's crazy. (Laughter) It can't be that good. (Laughter) There can't be that much good work.

SCHWARTZ: Maybe he doesn't sleep so much.

LUMET: That for sure!

SCHWARTZ: But you must watch... (Laughs)

LUMET: I go a lot. I don't generally like to go to screenings, except in the fall, starting in the late fall, as the theaters start to get very crowded, I'll go to screenings. But generally, I go to theaters. We went last night to see *Capote*. And—good movie, good movie—and an unbelievable performance, wow! But, I don't know what I do with my time, really. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: Okay, we'll take a few more questions. But then we'll let you go to sleep. (Laughter)

LUMET: I'll tell ya, when I fall asleep, then you'll know it's time... (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: (Repeats audience question) Could you talk about how your political values have affected your choice of material?

LUMET: I've been, in the past, very politically active. I'm considerably left of center. And yet, I don't consciously pick a movie on the basis of what it's about politically. Clearly, I'm open to being moved more by certain subject matters. When I do a picture like *Daniel*, there is an enormous political resonance in that, even though to me, it isn't about politics at all. To me, it's about the price children pay for their parents' passion. Which is true also for *Running on Empty*. Now, it's interesting, of course, that in both those movies, the parents are very left wing. And that's because I'm a New Yorker, and I've spent my life here. On a political level, the most passionate people I've known have been left-wingers. If I lived in Kansas…or Texas…they might be of another political persuasion. But I think the same thing would apply. I would hate to be Jerry Falwell's kid, for any number of reasons. (Laughter) But just on that basis. I'm sure the children of right-wing people suffer as much as the passionately committed ones, or workaholics! Or artists! That's really what those pictures are about. Bach may have had, what, seventeen or eighteen children. He was only paying attention to one thing…Two things. (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: I guess he didn't sleep much either. (Laughter)

LUMET: No, I think he slept like a bandit! (Laughter)

SCHWARTZ: You do obviously have an interest in the American system, the workings of the American system, because of your many movies about the police system, the trial system. You know, the Museum of the Moving Image uses *Twelve Angry Men* as a way to teach and get students to think about that. So I'm guessing that this must be an interesting and difficult time for you to be living through.

LUMET: Well, I think...I think for all of us. I think all hell's breaking loose. I'm an old man now, and... I think it's the most dangerous time I've lived in. And I've been through McCarthy and all that. This is worse. It's a terrifying time.

[Inaudible audience question about many of the great actors with whom Mr. Lumet has worked, particularly Paul Newman and Katherine Hepburn.]

LUMET: I can't give you anecdotes, because there are none. There really are none. You know, work is very sacred. First of all, if I could, I wouldn't. I have no bad stories about people, actors I've worked with, because I don't get involved with lunatics. And, you know, we pretty well know who the crazies are. And if you stay out of that, there's no reason why you shouldn't have a swell time—if you know what you're doing. The reputation of actors as being difficult—whether it's Katie Hepburn or Marlon [Brando] or what have you—it's usually, I've found, they just want somebody who knows their job as well as they know theirs. And if they don't have that, they get nervous. They get nervous, they get unhappy, because... Well, I've told this story before, but you know, Marlon used to very often test a director. In the first two days, he'd give you two takes. Identical. Not a hair different. And he'd listen for which one you printed. Now, in one take, he was really working. And in the other take, he'd be what we call 'indicating,' which is giving you the result, without any real process going on inside. And he'd listen for what you printed. And if you printed the wrong one, you were fucked... (Laughter) You'd had it for the whole picture, because he wouldn't trust you. And in a way, he's right. Because why should he pour that out to somebody who doesn't see it? It's very hard. I mean, when he works, it takes a lot out of him, as any actor. They are tired at the end of the day. And to pour that out to a person who can't see it is very frustrating.

SCHWARTZ: Well, now we know why you get so many great performances, because they know that you know what you're doing. I want to thank you. This was film school in an hour for everybody here, so we appreciate it. And I really want to thank you for being with us tonight.

LUMET: Thank you. (Applause)

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