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AMERICAN INDEPENDENTS &  
FEATURES ABROAD

Edward James: Builder of Dreams

Directors:

Avery Danziger and Sarah Stein

Producers:

Avery Danziger and Lenore Danziger

Format:

Documentary, video, color, 1996, 58:30 min.,  
Original format: 16mm and video

This film will take you on an extraordinary journey into the world of the Surrealists as the life and accomplishments of the Surrealist collector, poet and architect Edward James unfolds. For the last 20 years of his life, aided by 40 full-time laborers and craftsmen, he built one of the biggest and yet least known architectural monuments of the 20th century, dedicated to Surrealism and hidden in the jungles of Mexico. He created over 36 concrete structures, some over 100-feet high, at a personal cost exceeding \$5 million.

Production Company:

Top Drawer Productions, Attn: Avery Danziger  
Ocampo #105, Xilitla, S.L.P. Mexico 79900;  
tel: (011) 52 136 5 00 38, fax: (011) 52 136 5 00 55,  
e-mail: 72417.3362@compuserve.com

International Sales:

Lynda Hansen (see company listing)

Market Screenings:

2/18, 14:30, Studio 1;  
2/21, 09:30, Studio 1  
Los Posas - The Pools

Walking through Los Posas, it is sometimes hard to see where the jungle ends and the concrete structures begin, they are blended so well with the environment. James was truly an eccentric and it shows in all of his works. The habitat is bordered by a river where large pools well up in several places; a refreshing respite for the local folk.

The structures are enigmatic. Stairs go up and end in nothingness. Some go up just to return to the earth, while others are blocked at the top. The concrete columns, 15 feet

high and less than 6 inches in diameter, blow in the breeze and sway as birds alight on them. All the concrete was poured from wooden molds, handcrafted by the craftsmen in Xilitla. Because James and Plutarco were so into perfection, these delicate structures have lasted this long.

The paths weave throughout the area, with seemingly organic buildings rising into the air. Many of these buildings have names, such as

"Homage To Max Ernst", "House of Three Stories That Might Be Five", and " Plaza Don Eduardo". There is a lot of water, which is always a place for another one of James' creations. James died in the mid 80's, leaving his legacy, which has been said to be "among the significant creative works of man". Next

Sandy's Homepage  
Los Posas - The Pools

There is a small fee to enter, and I think this was being

put toward rebuilding the crumbling structures and general upkeep. Most cavers I know always return here when taking a trip to Mexico. Don't miss seeing this if given the chance!

I actually found 2 articles written about Los Posas for anyone interested:  
Smithsonian April 1994, Volume 25, Number 1  
"Mr. James Builds His Dream House" by Fred Hapgood

World Architecture, April 1991, Volume 2, Number 5  
"Concrete Poetry" by John Warren

Most of the pictures were taken by Steve Conner - my camera broke shortly before that :-)

last updated July 15, 1997  
Sandy's Homepage

[;H[2JMessage #9 (9 is last):[K  
Date: Thu Oct 2 18:31:45 1997[K  
From: JungleGossip@compuserve.com (AVERY DANZIGER)[K  
Subject: Las Pozas go-ahead date?[K  
To: as768@lafn.org ("INTERNET:as768@lafn.org")[K

DEAR BUD,[K

THE CHECK WAS SENT OUT LAST WEEK FROM COLUMBIA MO, AND SHOULD HAVE ARRIVED BY NOW ....

LET ME KNOW WHEN IT DOES ARRIVE....

AS TO COMING HERE TO RESEARCH, THAT WILL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL WE FIND THE MONEY TO PAY YOU FOR THAT PART, AND THERE IS NO TELLING HOW LONG THAT WILL BE....

WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO USE YOUR PRELIMINARY STUDY TO FIND SOME FUNDING TO COMPLETE THE NEXT STEP BUT IT IS A SURE THING THAT KACO WILL NOT BE SPENDING ANOTHER CENT ON THIS PROJECT. HIS FEELING (AND I AGREE WITH HIM ) IS THAT IT IS ENOUGH THAT HE IS WILLING TO DO ANTE THE PROPERTY, HE CANNOT ALSO FUND THE PROJECT. WE HOPE, WITH YOUR CONNECTIONS IN THE RESTORATION WORLD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP US ALONG WITH SOME SOURCES OF FUNDING .....

FROM NOW ON, ANY FUNDS THAT ARE PAID OUT TO ANYONE WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND FIRST. AS I MENTIONED BEFORE, WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HOST YOUR EXPENSES HERE, HELP WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHY (I TAUGHT PHOTOGRAPHY FOR 20 + YEARS) AND VIDEO DOCUMENTAION ETC. AS FAR AS ANY OTHER CASH OUTLAYS, FOR ANYTHING, WILL HAVE TO COME FROM SOME SORT OF FOUNDATION OR GRANTS AGENCY ?

PERHAPS THE GETTY WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP, ONCE YOUR STUDY IS DONE....

SINCERELY YOURS,

October 5, 1997

Avery Danziger

Dear Avery,

The clock is ticking on us, now. The check for our study arrived today.

You may expect the study results by November 7 via email. Our goal is to assist in doing what it takes to further the cause of saving Las Pozas for the ages. Zuleyma and I are going to work toward that end starting tomorrow.

Should we write to Kaco Gastelum also or may we assume that this message and others will also get to him?

Best wishes,

Bud Goldstone