

Entertainment

SUNDAY

LIFE-OPT SECTION



Marathon man

Film Critic Robert Denerstein gives you the lowdown on the latest edition of that annual orgy of film, the Telluride Film Festival. Read all about it on page 11-E

TELLURIDE/from previous page

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a Nazi, Kohner, a Jew who fled Germany during the Hitler years, once produced a film in which Rosenblatt appeared.

Telluride's third tribute — to the fiery West German actress, Hanna Schygulla — seemed a validation of a talent that has been widely recognized by audiences and critics alike. A mixture of defiance and sensuality gives Schygulla the kind of vivid screen presence that makes an international star.

I DON'T MEAN to belittle Telluride's rummage through a trunk full of movie memories. The past, after all, is where some of Hollywood's most preposterous ambition can be most clearly seen.

A program on Cinemascope, the wide-screen process introduced in the '50s to combat the pernicious influence of television, was full of trailers proclaiming Hollywood's innovation: "the modern movie miracle you see without glasses."

Telluride is also conversation, a mixture of formal and informal talk that takes place on movie lines and in restaurants and bars. This year's seminars didn't produce the usual scintillating chat, no surprise when you consider some of the titles: "Manifest destiny: the power of Hollywood doctrine in world cinema" and "Changing images of women behind and before the camera." (Yawns.)

The expected denunciations of Hollywood school against the jagged mountains that ring the town. Paul Leder, who presented a film about Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, said the world's best films were made by filmmakers who turned their "backs to Hollywood."

Schygulla managed the neat trick of evaluating her career from

a feminist standpoint without infusing that perspective.

"WHEN I WAS a teen-ager, I was a heavy imitator of Brigitte Bardot," Schygulla told an outdoor panel as a gentle rain began to fall. "They called me the Marilyn Monroe of the suburbs. For Germany, after the war, the men were the losers. After everything was done to ruin, the women had to become men."

Of the new films at Telluride, several were interesting — if only for their conservatism.

In "Desert Hearts," a movie that includes a love scene between two women, a young woman (Patricia Carboneau) falls in love with a college professor (Irene Shaver) who comes to Reno for a quickie divorce.

Conservative? In this way. The movie, a competently directed first feature by Donna Deitch, doesn't seem to be about anything more than putting a lesbian relationship on display.

The most popular film at Telluride was Peter Wang's "A Great Wall is A Great Wall." The movie is basically an "I'm OK, You're OK" comedy that opts for interpersonal rather than political insights.

A CHINESE-AMERICAN family returns to Peking for a reunion with the mainland side of the family. Wang infuses the story with infectious humor and warmth, but this Chinese-American co-production veers dangerously close to sitcom.

Documentary filmmaker Les Blank, who has a palpable affection for eccentric subjects, showed up with several unfinished works, a movie about New Orleans music

with Rockie's Sydney the Toot-Toot Man, a movie about Serbian Americans and a movie about gap-toothed women. The latter was an impressionistic documentary about (you guessed it) women with gaps between their two front teeth.

The best film I saw at Telluride was "Chaos," directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani. The movie is based on four stories by Luigi Pirandello. Each is exquisitely told and bursting with life.

"Chaos" is about simple things: the relationship between a mother and her least favorite son, the story of a young husband who goes mad when the moon is full, the story of an arrogant olive grower who orders a giant clay jar and a fair about a peasant who wants to start a cemetery on a nobleman's land.

But even the Taviani brothers broke no new ground. Their film is a memory movie that takes a fabulist's approach to the irretrievable past.

IF THIS YEAR'S festival wasn't as exciting as some of its predecessors, it did maintain the usual level of happy stitium, appropriate in a year when tickets to the Sheridan Opera House rose from \$100 to \$250.

Included in this "purest" of Telluride years was a trip to town by Alice Waters, grande dame of California cuisine and operator of the legendary Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley.

On the eve of the Festival, Waters arrived with 11 boxes of groceries to prepare an intimate dinner for a group of Telluride's largest donors.

That, my friends, is as trendy as it got.