

Isidore Isou, letter to Guy Debord
8 July 1952¹

Dear Guy-Ernest,

I respond to you in order.

a) I wanted to say a few words at the beginning of your film.² This would have eliminated any impression of a *lack of solidarity* [*désolidarité*]. You should have asked me to speak to give the impression of spontaneity to what I wanted to say about you, and not let anyone believe that I spoke because someone asked to me to do so. Finally ...

b) Maurice's³ attitude towards you was almost normal. Recall the attitude that people had towards his film (he was obligated to repeat the phrases of separation [*désolidarization*] and Dufrêne insulted him). Then there were those miseries before the radio broadcast. We await the presentation of a film by Dufrêne. Your solitude towards Marco was something you desired.

You have formed a group apart with Wolman and Serge.⁴

Things are this way from a reciprocal lack of deference (which has advantages and disadvantages).

c) Your film was badly made. Such things make us lose what we have provisionally gained. (Cauliez stopped your film in the middle. Wolman at least had his whole film screened. Maurice had been paid, too, etc.)

¹ Published in *Guy Debord: Un Art de Guerre* (BNF, 2013). Translated by NOT BORED! 30 October 2014.

² *Hurlements en faveur de Sade*, screened for the first time in Paris in June 1952.

³ Maurice Lemaitre, a Lettrist and filmmaker, perhaps.

⁴ The Lettrist International, formed June 1952 by Serge Berna, Jean-Louis Brau, Guy-Ernest Debord and Gil J. Wolman. It wasn't until November 1952 that Isou, in the wake of the Chaplin scandal, was "excluded" from this group.

This comes from the speed with which you have entered the field. I know the danger but I also know that practice will develop you faster and that, by being active, you will reach mastery faster.

At the start, newcomers (and me when I was a newcomer) make us lose a little of our time and our “power” but, in the end, they increase our forces. I write this to you because I fear that you take your success seriously. *It is serious* because you are already well known in the Parisian cine-clubs but I hope that you will be more patient and more meticulous in your future creations.

c) There is an “echo” of your film in *France-Soir* (gossip) about the “lettrists thirsty for publicity.” Have you discovered it?

Serge is coming this evening to Cauliez’s place to pick up the reels of *Hurlements*.

c) I am responding to you, not to begin a correspondence but to ask you what happened during my “vacation.”

No word about it in your letter. Therefore . . .

Awaiting a response about what’s essential, I greet you “full of grace” and in the hope that I will see you again in Cannes, I sign this –

Isou
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