



UNITED STATES PAVILION

NEWS

HEMISFAIR '68

U.S. Department of Commerce/U.S. Expositions Staff

Erna S. Hallock
Information Officer

Biography: ALEXANDER HAMMID

Alexander Hammid, documentary director and cameraman, collaborated with Francis Thompson in producing the unique documentary film "U S" shown in the Confluence Theatre of the United States Pavilion at HemisFair '68.

His association with Francis Thompson began in 1962, with their joint production of the Academy Award-winning film "To Be Alive," shown in the Johnson Wax Company's pavilion at the New York World's Fair.

Born in Czechoslovakia, Mr. Hammid began his career in the late 1920's as an architectural student in Prague. There his work as a set designer introduced him to many of the experimental films then originating in Europe and this led him into camera work. By 1937, he had shot several documentaries and traveled to India to make films on his own.

"Crisis," a documentary about the Nazi infiltration of Czechoslovakia, was his first important film, co-directed with Herbert Kline in 1938. "Lights Out in Europe," about the Nazi invasion of Poland, was another Hammid-Kline film.

"Forgotten Village," written by John Steinbeck, was filmed by Mr. Kline and Mr. Hammid in Mexico in 1940. Mr. Hammid also continued to work on experimental films, making "Meshes of the Afternoon" in association with Maya Deren, and his amusing short film, "The Private Life of a Cat."

Mr. Hammid directed "Hymn of the Nations" for the Office of War Information in World War II. Following this success, he directed many other films related to music, including one on Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic, and two television series, one on Pablo Casals, and another on Yasha Heifetz, both produced for the National Educational Television Network.