James Joyce loved movies, and he seems from the first to have thought that *Ulysses* could be successfully translated to film. At various times in his life he actively thought about the possibilities. He considered the great Russian filmmaker, Sergei Eisenstein and the German documentarian Walter Ruttman as superb candidates to make such a film,1) and favored the actor George Arliss over Charles Laughton as a possible cinematic Bloom.2) But *Ulysses* was never filmed in Joyce’s lifetime, and it wasn’t until Joseph Strick secured the film rights that the first *Ulysses* film, made in black-and-white, was released in 1967. More than thirty years later, in 2003, the Irish director Sean Walsh made a second independent film of Joyce’s


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Ulysses. Titled Bloom, this recent film was made in color. We will, of course, never know how Joyce would have liked these two films of Ulysses that are now available. But it is probably safe to say that he might have been pleased that the films were made by independent filmmakers who produced them not to make money, but as labors of love. Bloom is Sean Walsh’s first feature length film, but Joseph Strick had behind him a distinguished record of making experimental films when he undertook the filming of Ulysses in 1966, including a cinematic adaptation of Jean Genet’s play The Balcony, which was released in 1963. The financing of the Strick film came through a consortium of British producers called British Lion Films, and cost only about a half a million dollars to produce. Strick insisted on complete artistic control and final director’s cut. His Ulysses was made in black and white over a four month period in the city of Dublin in 1966, with some additional footage — notably the Barbary apes — shot on the island of Gibraltar. After some difficulty, Strick obtained approval from the British Board of Film Censors, although he ran into censorship problems at the Cannes film festival, and the film remained banned in Ireland until the year 2000. But it was shown in England, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. And Joseph Strick and his co-scriptwriter, Fred Haines, were eventually nominated for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay in 1967. Unlike Strick, who had no formal film training, Sean Walsh has a diploma in film and television from London’s South Thames College. In the late 1980s he returned to Dublin and transformed a failing audio-video company into Milbrook Studios. He began by making a number of Irish documentaries, including one on Gaelic games, and another on Irish soldiers who fought for the British Army in World War I. Walsh spent years trying to obtain funding for his film. Although he finally received some help from the Irish Government Tax Scheme