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CINEMA

Can I recommend one of the most remarkable pieces of cinema seen hereabouts for some time, Graham Coleman's *Tibet: A Buddhist Trilogy* (Tyneside Cinema Two, certificate A), four years in the making, and more than four hours in length?

Please don't run for cover. This three-part documentary on Tibetan Buddhist culture, though just occasionally over-reverent in commentary, transports the viewer so forcibly into an entire new world that our own Western culture looks decidedly odd thereafter.

The film concentrates on almost all aspects of the Buddhist life. The inhabitants are occasionally self-conscious of the camera, and quirks among this Eastern beauty include a Singer sewing machine and a religious ceremony spoken into microphones. Among the most memorable sequences is the beautifully sad ritual response to death in a community where what should be horrific — close-ups of the corpse slowly burning — is rendered noble by the accompanying prayer.

What remains in the mind is the sense of spiritual searching, and of a society motivated by an entirely different consciousness. If that cuts no ice with you, try the aesthetic appeal — the film is extraordinarily beautiful. Whatever, do see it.

PETER MORTIMER