

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOUR FILMS NOMINATED FOR 1956 GOLDEN LAUREL AWARD

Richard Griffith, Curator of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, and Chairman of the Nominating Committee of the seventh annual Selznick Golden Laurel Award, announced today that four films have been nominated for this year's GOLDEN LAUREL AWARD. The four films will be awarded Golden Laurel Medals at a ceremony to be held on September 2, 1956 at the Tenth International Edinburgh Film Festival. Of these films, one will be chosen for the Selznick Golden Laurel Award by a jury consisting of The Hon. Ellis Arnall, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, Mr. Gardner Cowles, The Hon. William O. Douglas, Mr. Otto Harbach, Mr. René d'Harnoncourt, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Mr. Herbert Bayard Swope who are now viewing the films and casting their ballots. The four films nominated, all released in this country during the period of June 1, 1955 to May 31, 1956, have been chosen for their contribution to international understanding in accordance with the terms of the award which was founded in 1949 by David O. Selznick, "to pay tribute to those motion pictures produced anywhere in the world (except films made in the United States, or by Americans abroad) which make the greatest contribution to mutual understanding and good will among the peoples of the world."

Of **THE DIVIDED HEART**, produced in England by Michael Balcon, the Nominating Committee said, "It is a moving document, made with great intelligence, depicting an almost impossible human decision - the fate of a war orphan claimed by two mothers. The direction, acting and script are superb."

THE LAST TEN DAYS, a German film, directed by G. W. Pabst, relates the final hours of Hitler. It was nominated "for its impressive plea against the unquestioning obedience of irrational authority and for its brilliant cinematic treatment."

Also nominated was the Italian film **MADDALENA**, produced by Titanus Films, Rome, and considered by the Committee as "an excellent portrayal of certain aspects of Italian life with all its considerable emotional complexities which forms an admirable background to its plea for tolerance among men."

The final selection, also from Italy, was **UMBERTO D**, directed by Vittorio de Sica. Considered by many to be de Sica's greatest film, it was praised by the Committee particularly for its direction and acting. "This film goes beyond most other films to the small events of everyday life on the outcome of which depends the understanding between people and their sympathies for one another."

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The Nominating Committee which selected these films included Kate Cameron, motion picture editor of the New York Daily News; Alton Cook, film critic of the New York World Telegram and Sun; Janet Graves, contributing editor of Photoplay Magazine; Otis L. Guernsey, Jr., head of the New York Herald Tribune Amusement Department; Philip T. Hartung, film critic of the Commonwealth Magazine; Arthur Knight, film critic for The Saturday Review, Scholastic and Dance Magazine; Donald LaBadie, formerly film critic for The Film Daily; and Eric Larrabee, associate editor of Harper's Magazine and member-at-large of the American Council of Learned Societies.

Speaking of the nominations in general, Richard Griffith praised them for the exceptionally high level of cinematic achievement which they attained, and added, "It is the hope of the Nominating Committee that these films will gain the wide audience they deserve, for no other medium today has quite the ability to bring people closer together, and these films should all help to create better international understanding."
