

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## MUSEUM'S FILM COORDINATOR OFFERS NEW COURSE AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Lillian Gerard, who has been The Museum of Modern Art's Film Coordinator in the Department of Public Information since June 1968, has also been appointed to the faculty of Columbia University in the Film Division of the School of the Arts.

Last year Mrs. Gerard gave a course on Contemporary Cinema at the University with the participation of members of The National Society of Film Critics. She was formerly Executive Secretary of the Society.

The course Mrs. Gerard is conducting this year is called Comparative Cinema and deals with "a critical analysis of the cinema of several countries, with emphasis on style, theme and content as related to historical development and national character," according to the Columbia course catalogue. Among the guest speakers will be Vincent Canby, Archer Winsten, Dwight Macdonald, Marya Mannes, and Donald Richie, presently Visiting Curator in the Museum's Department of Film.

Recognized for her contribution to art films and their wide acceptance, and to the development of art theatres in this country, Mrs. Gerard has worked in this field for many years. She was Managing Director of the Paris Theatre when it opened in 1948, later became its Vice-President. She was also associated with Rugoff Theatres and acted as consultant to Times Films, Lopert Pictures, Magna Pictures and Films Around the World. Previously, she and her husband Philip Gerard, New York production executive for Universal Pictures, handled specialized pictures through their own public relations firm, Gerard Associates.

Because of her background in the art films of many nationalities, Mrs. Gerard is well equipped to serve as a catalyst cooperating in and making known the multiple activities of the Museum's Department of Film to the press, universities, and general public.

"When you consider the long years of struggle that went into building an audience for art

(more)

pictures from abroad, the present renaissance in art theatres (not to mention the flourishing 16 mm market) is a wonder-not-to-be-believed," Mrs. Gerard said. "The limited appeal of art films always made them slightly speculative, whereas now a film without artistic merit has little chance. The barrier of nationality has virtually disappeared, making film a universal medium."

Art films and innovations, according to Mrs. Gerard, have always had a special appeal for young people, but "nowadays the young are statistically predominant, and more affluent, so that the film-maker who ventures into untried ideas has a built-in audience thirsting for his 'product.' The new audiences who fill the Museum's Auditorium daily are evidence of the insatiable curiosity about the film's past and future."

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