

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Even a school of the movies has examinations. The only such school conducted by any museum has just closed the first semester of its third year at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. Part of the examination was in the form of a questionnaire given to the forty students. Among the questions asked were:

(1) Who is your favorite director?

Answers to this put John Ford and Frank Capra into a tie lead with Alfred Hitchcock and René Clair close runners-up.

(2) Who gave the most illuminating lecture of the course?

Answers to this put three men at the top: Rouben Mamoulian, who talked on direction in the movies; Aaron Copland, who spoke on music for the motion picture, and Joris Ivens, whose subject was film composition and editing.

Other questions were answered by pages of manuscript analyzing what various students had learned from the course. Many students indicated that one of the most helpful things was the free admission to the Museum's film programs that are open daily to the public. All course students were admitted to these, and although they were shown special movies during the lecture periods they felt that the Museum's regular programs greatly increased their opportunity for observation and analysis of outstanding film technique.

The formal name of the course is The History, Technique and Aesthetic of the Motion Picture conducted by Iris Barry, Curator of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library for the Department of Fine Arts, Columbia University.

Registration has begun for the second semester, which will start February 14. The class is limited to forty students, but as several had to drop out at the close of the first semester there will be room for additional students. Of those who are leaving, one has been called to the British Army and four are going out to colleges as professors and instructors, each including among the subjects he

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teaches a course in the motion picture. Students in the course have included college and university professors, the director of a cultural, educational and religious foundation, a nurse, the president of an advertising company, a manuscript illuminator, a textile research worker, the head of the foreign department of a large motion picture company, the president of a slide film concern, a short-wave radio film commentator, the president of a stock exchange statistical bureau, a lawyer, a free lance writer, an engineer from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, a worker in a bank and members of the staffs of a motion picture publicity department, a newsreel company and a broadcasting press bureau.

The Course provides a general survey of the practice and appreciation of the motion picture. Detailed consideration is given to all outstanding stages in the progress of the film, both as an art and as a technical development. Beginning with the origin of the film in 1895, its growth is traced, both in the United States and abroad, to the present day. The survey includes the scenario, studio architecture, settings, costumes, camerawork, lighting, cutting, editing, color, sound and music. Special consideration is given to the social significance of the film, the film as an art, the function and influence of the director and producer, the star system and its implications, and the film as a record of contemporary life.

Each lecture is illustrated by the projection of interesting and significant films from the collection of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, which is the most complete as well as the most highly selective in the world. It comprises, with minor exceptions, the important films of all countries from the first tentative efforts of Edison and his contemporaries, up to the complex film of today.

Experts and authorities on every phase of the motion picture appear as guest lecturers, and through the valuable cooperation of the Motion Picture Industry trips to a motion picture laboratory and studio are arranged to acquaint the student with the methods and intricacies of production, cutting, processing and dubbing of films.

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