Theodore Huff Memorial Film Society

Announcing two programs for October, both in the Marine Room on the 5th floor, Capitol Hotel, Eighth Avenue and 51st Street, New York City.

Important: Please note the change in our program for October 16th. Since "Old Heidelberg" is available to us for a short time only, it was obviously safer to play it off right away and make sure of it! This re-shuffle does not affect any of our other forthcoming programs, which remain as announced for the rest of the year.

We are planning one or two extra shows, as well as another all-day session, and the films originally announced for October 16th will be played off over these additional shows.

Tuesday October 16 at 7:30.

"THE HEART OF AN INDIAN" (Thomas H. Ince, 1912-13) 30 minutes

Our print is a brand new copy in flawless condition, but unfortunately from a British negative from which the credits have been deleted. Thus we are not sure at the moment who directed this fine little film, although we hope to be able to announce this at the screening. The director may well have been Ince himself; certainly the film is from his most interesting, and most creative, period. One of the early cycle of westerns in which the Indian was depicted as a human being instead of a savage with unexplained warlike tendencies (a cycle that was to disappear until re-introduced by "Broken Arrow" in the late '50s), "The Heart of an Indian" was one of the films in which Ince used the facilities of the 101 Ranch wild west show — wagons, horses, cowboys, indians, buffalo. And it's one of Ince's better subjects, both thrilling in its elaborately staged action, and moving in its more personal elements. The climax is done in an especially touching fashion, and beautifully photographed. J. Barney Sherry is the only player billed in the credits, but lovely Ann Little plays the Indian girl, and Ince's first big star, William Eggleston, can also be seen in a few scenes. The rugged hills of Inceville are well photographed as usual in the exciting buffalo hunt and Indian attack scenes; sadly most of these hills are now paved over by highways and gas stations, although the Santa Ynez canyon country remains relatively untouched.

"UNCENSORED MOVIES" Hal Roach—Pathe, 1923. 30 mins.

Starring WILL ROGERS, with Marie Nesquini, Earl Mohan, Big Boy Williams, Noah Young Directed by Roy Clements; photographed by Robert Dorn and Otto Himm; titles by H.M. Walker; edited by T.J. Grizor.

This is one of the very best of a group of comedies Will made thoroughly kidding the movies. As an investigator sent to report on Hollywood scandal, he provides some delicious satire on the mores of the today — and more especially on the clichés of Hollywood's most popular films — and personalities. D.W. Griffith, William S. Hart, Valentino and DeMille all come in for some merciless kidding — but the most devastating satire of all is that on Tom Mix and the modern streamlined westerns. This is really a hilarious reel!

"OLD HEIDELBERG" Fine Arts/Triangle, 1915 70 mins.

Produced by D.W. Griffith; directed by John Emerson; based on a novel by W. Meyer-Forster, and a play by Richard Mansfield. Technical director on military detail: Erich Von Stroheim.

Starring: DOROTHY GISH, Wallace Reid, Erich Von Stroheim, with Francis McDonald, Harold Goodwin and others.

Griffith's Triangle period, between "The Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance" was notable more for its quantity than its quality. Which is not to say that Griffith made poor films in this period; rather that as a production supervisor, rather than director, he was responsible for a staggering output of generally high quality, but largely unimportant, pictures. Among the most interesting of these Griffith-supervised productions were "Kings", shown by this society a few months ago, and "Old Heidelberg", more familiar today perhaps under the musical guise of "The Student Prince".
For the most part, "The Student Prince" is a charming but straightforward picture, directed in competent style by Emerson, but relying more on the basic theme, and the pleasing playing of Dorothy Gish and Wallace Reid, than on any contribution of his. There are moments, however, which indicate quite plainly that N.W. himself took an active hand in the production — most notably the extremely well staged and edited mass riot scenes, which seem to foreshadow the similar scenes in the modern episode of "Intolerance"; and above all the great battle scenes. These are so identical to the battle scenes in "The Birth of a Nation" — great vast panoramas of armies in action — that they seem almost like stock shots from that picture. Needless to say they are not! Although they occupy only a fairly brief portion of the film, they are afforded the epic treatment in every sense of the word.

Historically the film is especially interesting in its fervent preaching against war; America, under the leadership of Woodrow Wilson, was still determined to keep out of World War One, and the film's anti-war theme was introduced especially to cater to that national feeling. The original story had no such ingredient. Too, the film was generally sympathetic to the Germans, and suggested that as a nation they wanted peace too. Although the film was a popular hit initially, these ingredients immediately made it very unpopular when war was declared on Germany, and its distribution thereafter was curtailed considerably.

Trich Von Stroheim is listed as "technical adviser", and the film certainly bears this out! Even the students' drinking parties are conducted to a rigorous military ritual, while scenes of court protocol and a duel suggest that Von Stroheim cracked the whip pretty constantly throughout. In a supporting role, he is quite unnecessarily unpleasant. True, the role is not a sympathetic one — but it does not call for the positive venom that Erich injects into every scene!

It's interesting to note Harold Goodwin, then a child actor, in the role of the younger student prince. You may remember him as Len, Hadge Evans misunderstood boy friend, in "Hallelujah I'm a Bum", screened earlier this year.

"OFFICER LIL" — episode five — our serial is now at the half-way mark, and is continuing on its merry way in fine style, steadfastly refusing to introduce anything remotely resembling plot, logic or sane movie-making.

COUR NEXT PROGRAM — TUESDAY OCT. 23rd at 7-30 p.m.

LILLIAN and DOROTHY GISH : RONALD COLMAN : WILLIAM POWELL

— in "ROMOLA" (1921-25, directed by Henry King)

A lush, lavish romantic drama from the novel by George Eliot; location work in Italy, a huge cast, and all eleven reels of it! A really stylish production in the grand manner of the twenties. "ROMOLA" is really quite a rare item, and is rarely screened today, so our acquisition of this print in quite an event. It was also quite an expensive acquisition, so we hope we can count on a good audience to justify it!

Plus: "A FLIGHT FOR A FORTUNE", an exciting little Majestic two-reeler of 1924, directed by Christy Cabanne; and extracts from "SOUL OF THE BEAST", a 1923 Thomas H. Ince production for Metro, directed by John Griffith Wray, and starring Gullen Landis, Hadge Bellamy and Noah Beery sr.

Please note:

there will be no further notification of this program through the mail. Very elaborate program notes are currently being prepared for this show — notes which will incorporate an index to Henry King's films, prepared for us by Charles Shibuk — and these will be available at the screening, or on request to any member who is unable to attend.