"Rango" (Paramount, 1930; released 1931) Directed by Ernest B. Schoedsack; edited by Schoedsack; Camera, Alfred Williams; 1 reel excerpt.

"Rango", made by Schoedsack alone, without Merian C. Cooper, was a fairly minor, short (six reel) and unemotionalised documentary which failed to repeat the commercial and artistic success of "Crash" and "Chang". It was soon forgotten, although its monkey "stampedo" footage and other scenes were to be constantly on view in such Paramount epics as "The Jungle Princess". Since we have run both "Chang" and excerpts from "Silent Enemy" fairly recently however, this one reel of highlights does make for interesting comparison with those other and better works.

"CONGOHILLA" (Korro Films-Fox-1932) Produced by Martin and Osa Johnson; Camera, Richard Naedler and Martin Johnson; Editors, Richard de Rochemont and Sidney A. Mackie; 7 reels.

Although the structure and narration of films like "Congovilla" tend to date nowadays, thanks to years of intervening imitation and satirisation, the basic footage remains impressive indeed, even transcending its partial familiarity through constant re-use in other compilations and as stock footage in everything from farzan epics to "Mighty Joe Young". Some of it - the pygmy material for example - tends to run too long, while one could do with substantially more of the hippo sequence - but on the whole it's a remarkable collection of obviously authentic footage. Some of it is来源 from the silent "Simba" of only a few years earlier, and quite a lot of it was amusingly tricked-up with fake back projection effects in the much later "I Married Adventure". Osa Johnson, who tended in later years to be as irritating a posthumous non-silent partner as Irene Castle, tends to get on one's nerves a bit and one's sympathy goes out to poor Martin, trapped in the wilds with this rather over-bearing mate. But the footage itself dominates, and is much more simply and effectively presented than in the Frank Bock documentaries for Eko, which were prone to over-dramatisation and were not above staging many of their "authentic" highlights.

--- intermission ---

"PALOKA" (Bellance-United Artists, 1934) Directed by Benjamin Stoloff; Produced by Edward Small; Screenplay by Gertrude Purcell, Arthur Kober, Jack Jevne, Ben Ryan and Murray Roth, suggested by the Ham Fisher comic strip; Camera, Arthur Edeson; Editor, Grant Utchock; 8 reels.


For an elaborate film based on a highly popular comic strip, "Palooka" and its five scenarists go a rather considerable length to fabricate an entirely new framework and basic character. Durante is close to Ham Fisher's original conception of the fight manager (though William Frawley came even closer later on, and Leon Errol wasn't bad either). Clearly there was no thought that this could become a movie series, and indeed it wasn't until some 15 years later that Monogram did turn it into a rather good "B" series. Like all Edward Small productions, it is economically made, but every dollar spent shows up on the screen and it's a good-looking film. The ladies - particularly the misses Todd and Velez - have little difficulty in stealing all of the limelight, and some of Lupe's dresses are both eye-catching and eyebrow raising. It's a time-killer, no more and no less, but an extremely pleasant and able one, with enough plot, comedy, music and action to keep it rolling along very snappily.

--- Wm. K. Evers ---