Perhaps it should be stressed at the outset that there is no particular significance to the dates bounding tonight’s compilation, nor to the choice of subjects. It is not designed as a history of Disney, merely an excuse to show some new acquisitions and repeat some old favorites. Most of the repeats haven’t been shown at the Huff for at least seven years; the two exceptions were shorts shown at very sparsely attended programs. Some of the more famous or more notable Disneys — “The Three Little Pigs”, “The Mad Doctor”, “The Band Concert” — are excised from this compilation only because we have run them comparatively recently.

Files are shown in rough chronological order, but with occasional slight re-arranging in the interest of variety and program balance.

“PUSS IN BOOTS” (1922) Not particularly Disneyesque in its drawing, but a straightforward and quite charming little work, using both subtitles and balconettes. It’s a mild spoof on “Blood and Sand” and coincidentally a partial look-forward to elements of “Ferdinand the Bull”; “TOUCHDOWN MICKEY” (1932), carrying it a home-movie title of “All-American Mickey” is a fast, early b/w from the United Artists period; “MAIL PILOT” (1933), a rather washed-out print, but an enjoyable rarity, one that doesn’t seem to be around over here, and it’s good to see Disney’s old Wallace Beery-ish villain Pegleg Pete once more; “THE WHOOPSEE PARTY” (1932), one of Disney’s best from this early period in terms of near-surrealistic action and absolutely maximum animation throughout; “ALPINE CLIMBERS” (1936), shown out of context because it is a black-and-white print of a color subject. Typical comedy-thrill stuff of the mid-30’s and a good one, with Disney’s then established formula of taking the three characters — Donald, Mickey, Pluto — giving each one a basic gag sequence that is milked for all its worth, and drawing all three together again, Griffith fashion, for an exciting climax; “THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS” (1933), one of Disney’s earliest forays into Technicolor, and a charming little fantasy with notes of healthy vulgarity — Disney in those days was still fond of the accidentally exposed bottom!

--intermission--

“ON ICE” (1935), an exceptionally good Donald-Mickey-Pluto entry, with a Griffith-Way Down East climax; “MODERN INVENTIONS” (1937) — Donald Duck now moving into starring vehicles of his own, with slicker, more violent gags than Mickey House had used; “LITTLE HIWATHA” (1937), a most enjoyable pastel-colored Silly Symphony; “WINDOW CLEANERS” (1940). Mickey, Donald and Pluto in a Harold Lloyd-flavored adventure; “THE UGLY DUCKLING” (1939), one of the loveliest of all the Silly Symphonies, superb in its coloring and drawing, sophisticated in its limited comedic content.

“CAKOUTLAGE” (1942) a 2-reel Disney wartime training film, the more effective for being entertaining and soft-sell, with a particularly enjoyable Japanese stereotype! ; “NO SAIL” (1943), one of the increasingly satiric and morbid “black” cartoons that Disney went in for from the late war years on; “UP A TREE” (1945) in complete contrast from the same year, a comedy of frustration but with real speed and sight gags, one of his best from this period; “CONFESSIONS IN BROADWAY” (1946), abstract impressions illustrating contrasting pieces of music. For some reason this short is never well-received, but I think it serves a useful function in today’s compilation. Apart from illustrating Disney’s versatility, it also breaks up an unavoidable concentration on Donald Duck in the later stages of the program. “DONALD’S DILEMMA” (1947) is one of the best of Disney’s usually rather heavy-handed satires. Here he is spoofing both psychiatry and the sweepers-exorcist craze. Finally, two excerpts from the Disney feature “Make Mine Music”, abstract impressions illustrating contrasting pieces of music. For some reason this short is never well-received, but I think it serves a useful function in today’s compilation. Apart from illustrating Disney’s versatility, it also breaks up an unavoidable concentration on Donald Duck in the later stages of the program. “DONALD’S DILEMMA” (1947) is one of the best of Disney’s usually rather heavy-handed satires. Here he is spoofing both psychiatry and the sweepers-exorcist craze. Finally, two excerpts from the Disney feature “Make Mine Music”.

Approx. running time, exclusive of intermission: 2 hrs 20 mins.