THE WORLD MOVES ON (Fox, 1936) Directed by John Ford; produced by Winfield Sheehan; written by Reginald C. Berkeley; Camera, George Schneiderman; Music, Max Steiner, Hugo Friedhofer, Louis de Francesco, David Buttolph and George Gershwin; 90 mins. NY premiere, Criterion Theatre.

With Madeleine Carroll (Mary Warburton); Franchot Tone (Richard Girard); Erik (Reginald Denny); Baron von Gerhardt (Sig Rumann); Louise Dresser (The Baronesse); Haoul Julien (Carlos Girard); Lumsden Hare (Sir John Warburton); Dudley Digges (Mr. Manning); Frank Melton (John Girard); Brenda Fowler (Agnes Girard); Hubert Wilcox (Notary); Walter McGrail (Frenchman); Marcelle Corday (Madame Girard); Barbara Stanwyck (Miss Stanwyck); George Gershwin (Gershwin); F. Schuman-Heink (Fritz); Georgette Rhodes (Jeanne); Claude King (Brathwaite); Ivan Simpson (Clumber); Frank Moran (Culbert); Stepin Fetchit (Fetchit) and Francis Ford, Jack Pennick, Torben Meyer, Harry Cording, Mary Gordon, Frank Heicher, Paul McVey.

We last ran this film at the New School in 1972, and to my knowledge it has not resurfaced in NY since. In a filmed BBC-TV interview in the 60's, John Ford (the food ran out during this film, not naming it, but leaving plenty of clues) described a film that he had been unsympathetic to from the start. It was badly over-written and the producer, proud of the property, insisted that Ford shoot it exactly as written. Ford did just that - absurdly long speeches intact - and turned the subsequently much over-long film to the same producer, refusing to cut, re-shoot, edit or work on it further. Apart from its theme of family unity, loyalties, separations and reunions, it is hardly typical Ford material either in theme or in treatment. It's something of a weird mating of "Cavalade", "Show Boat" and "The House of Rothschild", and its one-hundred-year storyline lends itself to post-production cutting without the eliminations being too obvious, although the Stepin Fetchit character does seem to have suffered a bit, and was probably more prominent and more motivated originally. It also has far more technique for its own sake than was usual with Ford - a constantly moving camera for example - suggesting again that he adhered with rigid obstinacy to a weak script just to prove his point! As always with Ford in this period, there are echoes of Griffith, but the magnificent battle scenes are largely lifted from the French classic "Wooden Cross" (which we showed some years ago). Howard Hawks' later "The Road to Glory" also used huge chunks of that French footage. Although disappointing as a Ford, it's a handsome and interesting film, quite undeserving of its shunted-aside fate, and also a reminder that Madeleine Carroll was well served by Hollywood a full year before "The 39 Steps" supposedly brought her to Hollywood's attention!

-- Ten Minute Intermission --

SLAVE SHIP (20th Century Fox, 1937) Directed by Tay Garnett; produced by Darryl F. Zanuck; Ass. Producer, Munually Johnson; Original story by William Faulkner; Screenplay by Sam Hellman, Lamar Trotti and Gladys Lehman; Camera, Ernest Palmer; Music, Alfred Newman; 95 minutes; NY premiere, HiVo! Theatre; last shown at NS, November 1973.

With Warner Baxter (Jim Lovett); Wallace Beery (Jack Thompson); Elizabeth Allan (Nancy Marlone); Mickey Rooney (Swifty); George Sanders (Lefty); Jane Darwell (Mrs Marlone); Joseph Schildkraut (Danelo); Arthur Hohl (Grimes); Minna Gombell (Mrs. Gombell); Frances Benson (Atkin); Fredric March (Scrap); J. Farrell MacDonald (Proprietor); Paul Hurst (Drunk); Holmes Herbert (Commander); Edwinn Maxwell (Auctioneer); Miles Mander (Corey); Jane Jones (Ma Belcher); DeWitt Jennings (Snodd); Lon Chaney jr (workman); and Douglas Scott, J.F. Mcgowan, Dorothy Christie, Charles Middleton, Dewey Robinson, Herbert Heywood, Winter Hall, Marilyn Knowlden, Arthur Aylesworth, Fred Kelsey, Edward LeSaint, Eddie Dunn, Dale Van Sickle, Tom Kennedy, Bob Kortman, Lane Chandler, John Bieffer.

"THE HIGHEST LOVE... THE LOWEST MEN THE SEVEN SEAS HAVE EVER KNOWN. MUTINY! Gold-mad, blood-mad out-throats defying the gallows, doomed unless they smash a love that dared a HONEYMOON OF HORROR!"

They don't write advertising copy like that any more (and that was just the opening blast of only one of Fox's standard ads) and more to the point, they don't make the films that go along with them. "Slave Ship" was intended as a "Mutiny on the Bounty" of 1937. A $400,000 budget, another "Mutiny on the Bounty", this time, more than 50% of the budget, and the addition of such fine photographic and other production values in a film of relatively routine importance. Despite some slow spots in the middle, it's still a lively and impressive piece of melodrama. (Those of you who remember 1956's "Dante's Inferno" may note the same overlapping photographic treatment with the slaves in the hold, as well as a re-use of the musical motif from that film. Beery has a grand time re-doing his Long John Silver, and reciting delightful lines about the native boys he once had to eat when they ran out. While Tay Garnett fanatics will enjoy watching some of his favorite characters and compositions (the saloon trio for example) recycled from other films.

Program ends app. 10.45.