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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	AHB	I. A. 46

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART FILM LIBRARY

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

From Miss Barry

Date May 7, 1941

Date May 12, 1941

**To:** MISS BARRY

**Re:** \_\_\_\_\_

Allen and I were so distressed as you over the appearance of the

**From:** MR. BARR

"Film Index" card, but the E. W. Wilson Co. paid for it and did it, so there was nothing we could do when they refused to change it.

Dear Iris:

I don't know what you'll think of the Film Index itself; the first copies have just arrived (the odd ones were earlier were trial copies with imperfect plates) so I am sending one of our six for much for sending me one.

Would it not be possible to anticipate the bad typography of our co-publishers? I am thinking of the bad jacket which Norton did, as well as the blurb for the "Index". Perhaps as a matter of routine we could arrange to approve typography. Incidentally, the typography of the "Index" seems to me very decent.

ahb;vs

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART FILM LIBRARY

M T H E M O O F M O D E R N A R T

From Miss Barry

To Mr. Barr

Date May 5, 1941

Allen and I were as distressed as you over the appearance of the "Film Index" blurb, but the H. W. Wilson Co. paid for it and did it, so there was nothing we could do when they refused to change it.

I don't know what you'll think of the Film Index itself; the first copies have just arrived (the odd ones here earlier were trial copies with imperfect plates) so I am sending <sup>you</sup> one of our six for keeps.

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*Miss Barry*

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date February 12, 1941  
May 1, 1941

To: MISS BARRY  
c.c. Mr. Wheeler

From: MR. BARR

Re: \_\_\_\_\_

I am delighted to hear that the "Film Index" is out. Though I haven't seen a copy I am sure it must be a fine job and a very useful one.

After all the work which you and Allen Porter put into it it would seem carping of me to say that the brochure seems to me deplorable as a typographical job. Monroe thinks that this can be blamed on the H. W. Wilson Company and doubtless he is right. But the fact is that "H. W. Wilson Company" occurs only on the back page, whereas "The Museum of Modern Art Film Library", together with your name as Curator, in the front of the pamphlet would lead any ordinary reader to suppose that we had published the book and had, as a matter of course, prepared the messy pamphlet.

ARB:vs

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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*B. Barry*

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

July 13, 1942

To: MISS BARRY

From: MR. BARRY

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1895—Lumière's LUNCH HOUR AT THE FACTORY

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library presents

## THE FILM INDEX

### I. The Film As Art An Annotated Bibliography

Compiled by the New York City WPA Writers Project

780 pages

51 illustrations



The screen debut of the Gish Sisters in AN UNSEEN ENEMY, 1912

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## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

*Barry*



Chaplin during the filming of THE GOLD RUSH, 1925



Drawing by Méliès for A TRIP TO THE MOON, 1902



Greta Garbo in ANNA CHRISTIE, 1930

Since films attract an audience of millions, the need and appetite for information about them is enormous.

This Index for the first time makes accessible to the layman the vast accumulation of information about films housed in the many libraries all over the country.

The task of creating such a bibliography was a formidable one. This was a new field of study, new rules and methods of classification had to be found both for the numerous categories of films and for the many types of film literature.

In actual fact the Film Index is much more than a bibliography. Its carefully written digests of books and articles are an invaluable guide in themselves and include a great deal of biographical and other information, often culled from the unlikelyst quarters. Notices in trade journals, interviews in fan magazines, and the catalogs of forgotten companies have been combed. Industrious research has unearthed a wealth of material, hitherto largely overlooked or inaccessible, imbedded in obscure or extinct quarterlies, in short-lived magazines. Now through this sturdy compendium it is at last a simple matter to ascertain how many times a given novel or play has been adapted to the screen and by what company, to follow the work of directors, or discover

what the contemporary opinion was upon some historic film. The information thus made available is curiously varied, and ranges from colorful detail on personalities to abstruse arguments on aesthetics. There is food for a dozen essays in any single section of this volume. It is unusually readable. But to librarians, journalists, publicists and workers in the film industry it will become a daily necessity.

The WPA has already performed a notable service in creating its fine series of state and city guides, embodying a wealth of information, historical fact, oddity and folklore which are a source of pride as well as of pleasure to every citizen. Since in the realm of the motion picture the United States has long been paramount, this new guide to the literature of the most popular of all entertainments also gives cause for pride and is a source of enlightenment and service.

IRIS BARRY, *Curator*  
Museum of Modern Art Film Library

### Arrangement

The work is divided into two major parts: *Part I—History and Technique*, lists critical and aesthetic studies, histories of the film in America and abroad, discussions of some 13 departments of technique, from acting through writing, and biographical material on the screen's outstanding craftsmen. *Part II—Types of Film*, is devoted to material on individual films classified according to story content or cinematic form under more than 40 fictional, factual, or animated film types, and to general discussions of these types.

Where entries contain material falling properly under more than one heading, a general entry is made for the overall subject. Supplementing these are entries, annotated in detail, for the subjects of individual parts. The difficulties of each classification, particularly vexatious in regard to films, have been met by a flexible system of cross references.

**ANNOTATIONS.** All entries carry full digests, useful as sources of direct information. Citation is made of all films discussed at length, together with the year and country of their production. Reference is also made to the leading persons, companies, film types, or other key subjects dealt with. In the sections devoted to reviews of individual films, film titles are accompanied by data on the essential creative personnel of the film. Early films, little-known films, and foreign films are given synopses or descriptions.

**INDEX.** A separate index lists in one alphabet the names of authors represented, titles of books, titles of films, names of important persons cited in digests, and headings of classifications. Also included in the 25,000 index entries are more than 500 variant film titles.

Pabst's THE LOVE OF JEANNE NEY, 1927



LITTLE CAESAR with Edward G. Robinson, 1930



Cameramen on location





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# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

July 13, 1942

*Barney*

To: MISS BARNEY

From: MR. BARNEY

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## From the Contents:

### PART I—HISTORY AND TECHNIQUE

The World of the film  
The Screen and the stage  
The Art of film criticism  
Aesthetics of the film  
Pre-screen history — The American film  
The Foreign film — Acting and Actors  
Color — Dance  
Directing and Directors — Editing  
Music — Photography — Set design  
Sound — Writing

### PART II—TYPES OF FILM

#### THE FICTIONAL FILM

Adaptations from drama, fiction, opera,  
poetry and songs  
Animal films — Children's films  
Comedy — Crime and detective films  
Fantasy and trick films  
History and biography — Musical films  
Occupational and milieu films  
Religious films — Serials  
Social films — Spectacle  
War films — Westerns

#### THE FACTUAL FILM

Documentary films — Interest films  
Newsreel and record films  
Travel films

#### MISCELLANEOUS TYPES OF FILM

Animated cartoons  
Animated model films  
Animated silhouette films  
Experimental films

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*Barry*

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date February 13, 1942

To: MISS BARRY c.c. Mr. Wheeler  
From: MR. BARR Mr. Abbott

Re: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Iris:

The long memorandum which I wrote Monroe, sending you and Allen copies, in July doesn't seem to have had any effect at all on the pamphlet cover of "A Cycle of 300 Films". As I said then, I think the ingenious and striking effect of the stacks of cans is seriously handicapped by the layout of the page with its very active lettering. This unhappy competition could have been solved. *For William is certainly incredible. The artist is named Kleinberg.*

Now practically the same cover has come out, but this time in a very cheap-looking rotogravure brown. I hate to look forward to months of seeing this on the front counter.

As I suggested in July, I think the Film Library ought to submit its typography to Monroe Wheeler for his Okay. Every other department of the Museum does this as a matter of course.

I am all the more distressed about this because this pamphlet is a record as well as a schedule of one of the most extraordinary achievements in the whole history of American museums. It ought to be better dressed.

ahb:vs



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*Barry*  
**THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

**Date** January 6, 1942

**To:** MISS BARRY

**Re:** \_\_\_\_\_

**From:** MR. BARR

\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Iris:

I ran across this copy of "Sovietski Ekran" in my files the other day. Would you like to have it for the Film Library? If you already have a copy perhaps you could give this one away.

Please note on Page 14 the picture of our hero. The Russian for William is certainly incredible. The artist is named Klemmenberg.

AHE:VS