

film 33

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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## PAUL TERRY CARTOON SERIES TO BE SHOWN AT MUSEUM

A retrospective program of the cartoons of Paul Terry, creator of the popular series, Terrytoons, and pioneer in the field of film animation, will be shown in the Auditorium, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, during the week of March 10-16 as part of the regular film showings held twice daily at 3 and 5:30 p.m. "The Cartoons of Paul Terry" will include 9 examples of his work. The latest of these, FLATFOOT FLEDGLING, shortly to be released, is Terry's one-thousandth film cartoon, a milestone in his career.

Other films that make up the program represent Terry's work in animation since the days when the field was all but unexplored. They are: CAT AND THE MICE (1921) and TWO SLICK TRADERS (1922), two of the "Aesop's Fables" series; SPANISH OMELET (1930), the first Terrytoon; two other early Terrytoons, HUNGARIAN GOULASH and SALT WATER TAFFY, also made in 1930; and three more recent Terrytoons, OUT AGAIN, IN AGAIN (1948), SUNNY ITALY and WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE (1951).

Commenting on the program, Richard Griffith, Curator of the Film Library, says: "The Film Library is happy to present this retrospect of Mr. Terry's career in acknowledgment of his remarkable contribution to the medium of film animation and to the genuine entertainment of countless audiences over a period of 37 years. His is a formidable record matched by no other animator, nor indeed by any other eminent film craftsman, with the exception of the indestructible Cecil B. DeMille.

"In 1915, a few years after the editorial and strip cartoonist, Winsor McCay, made one of the first and most famous American film cartoons, GERTIE THE DINOSAUR, Paul Terry, then a newspaper strip cartoonist, entered the field with a film entitled LITTLE HERMAN. Today, a large staff of artists works together on cartoons which contain thousands of individual drawings, but in 1915, Terry had to make each of the drawings for LITTLE HERMAN himself. Then, he faced the

even harder problem of selling his finished product to a film world in which cartoons were still an occasional and suspect novelty. Finally he sold LITTLE HERMAN to Edwin Thanhouser, pioneer film producer, whose faith in Terry's work enabled him to continue in the cartoon field.

"In 1920, Terry introduced the well-remembered 'Aesop's Fables' cartoon series. It was so successful that Terry eventually told on the screen 240 more fables than Aesop himself, who had told 220. In 1930, Terry made his first sound cartoon and, at the same time, his first Terrytoon.

"Terry's earliest sound films illustrate a general tendency of the period: every movement on the screen accompanied a simultaneous phrase of the sound track. But he soon moved on to a much freer relation between sound and visual. His humorous style has always contained a curious flavor of the sardonic, exemplified by all his character creations, from Farmer Al Falfa of 'Aesop's Fables' to today's Mighty Mouse and the two stately Anglo-Brooklynese magpies, Heckle and Jeckle. Although his continuous output for 37 years can only be called mass-production, it has, thanks largely to its satiric qualities, maintained an almost equally continuous level of fresh invention.

"Terry began his regular film work in New York City and in New Rochelle, when that community, with others in nearby New Jersey and New York, was a flourishing center of film production. The motion picture companies then dominant have long since disappeared, and production has transferred itself to Hollywood. But Terry, with his staff of 85 film animators, remains in New Rochelle. Though his cartoons are world famous, he himself has been little publicized even in the film industry with which he has been so closely identified for so many years."

The 9 films are shown at the Museum by permission of Mr. Terry and 20th Century-Fox.