

# The Daily Movie Magazine

FOR YOUR SCRAPBOOK OF STARS

## TODAY'S HONOR ROLL IN THE MOVIE BEAUTY CONTEST



MAY HARTLEY, 2964 Kensington Ave.

### WHY THE AMATEUR SCENARIO WRITER USUALLY FAILS

YESTERDAY we printed the first installment of this unusual article for the amateur scenario writer. We feel that this is one of the most helpful articles of its kind that we have been able to secure.

By ELMER HARRIS

Titles are necessary to cover lapses of time, tell what has happened in the interim episodes; while the episodes themselves should be confined to the high spots or important parts of the story—important from either the comedy or dramatic standpoint.

Lapse titles, as these are called, should never tell what follows, otherwise we have an anticlimax and what follows is stale before it happens.

Each episode should tell its own part of the story, just as an act tells its own part of the play, with recourse to the titles, whether spoken or plot, when absolutely necessary to add humor to the situation, to clarify some point which all the ingenuity of the writer and the director has been unable to express in pantomime.

WHEN we say that pictures differ from the stage play or the story as not meant that the picture can dispense with dialogue altogether any more than the play or story can dispense with movement or pantomime.

Sub-titles representing the spoken word are acceptable as a matter of course in motion pictures, but the new writer is prone to fill the scene with spoken titles and to furnish the director with little or no business to carry the action and hold the eye.

A scene with more than two titles, or bits of dialogue, is a bad scene; three or four spoken titles in the same scene are likely to give the spectators the impression of characters quacking like ducks, and, however instructive or amusing the sub-titles may be, the sure audience, accustomed to movement or pantomime, is soon yawning and

### Advices Amateur Writers



ELMER HARRIS

acquainting at programs in the dark to see what follows.

In other words, a picture without interesting pantomime is like a play without interesting dialogue and is usually panned by the same critics.

One of the greatest difficulties for the new writer to overcome is that of tempo. In drama the action moves along normally at a life-like speed, but in comedy it should be quickened, while in farce it must be exaggerated. This is accomplished partly by the actual speed with which scenes follow scene in the writing itself and partly by what is called "cranking" or grinding the camera.

Normal cranking means about sixteen pictures to a foot of film, and the handle of the camera is turned at a certain speed to accomplish this result. Farce and comedies are cranked at from ten to fourteen pictures to the foot.

Thus, when a scene which is photographed by slow cranking of the camera is projected in the theatre at normal speed, the movements of the actors are all accelerated, causing the action to proceed at a more rapid gait and the laughs follow one upon the other at closer intervals, and should build to a climax.

The danger in slow cranking is that important bits of business, necessary to the plot, may be blurred, or rather, blurred, and it is up to the director to know when to discriminate, when to speed up and when to retard.

ANOTHER closed book to the novice is the expense of production. Without actual experience in the studio it is impossible for him to develop his story within the range of commercial possibilities. It costs a considerable sum to produce a modern picture—anywhere from fifty thousand dollars for a program picture to a couple of hundred thousand



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dollars or more for a special, and profits are reckoned accordingly. To gauge the expense of production and the possible commercial returns require not only an intimate knowledge of the writing part of the game, but of the production and distribution as well.

For instance, an author may demand an immense and expensive interior which will cost in the neighborhood of twenty or thirty thousand dollars. In order to take a picture of it the camera must be set up a couple of hundred feet away.

But since intelligent action and the intimate detail necessary to the story can only be made effective by moving the camera up within a radius of a few feet, a long shot of the set is good for only a few feet of film and this huge expense is wasted.

Large sets are necessary at times for atmospheric effects, but should be used sparingly at best, but when used care is always taken in the writing of the script to have a large and important part of the action transpire within them, so as to offset the expense.

To build a drawing room and furnish it for one shot would be a commercial suicide, and in this respect, usually, the script of the new writer, if shot as written, would put the film business into an untimely grave.

A man must profit by his mistakes, learn by his failures. I had several disasters before I had any success on the stage. I had to learn the technique of the plot before the studio would trust me without a guardian.

The man who knows it all knows nothing of business. I had several disasters before I had any success on the stage. I had to learn the technique of the plot before the studio would trust me without a guardian.

THE best results can be obtained only by constant work in the studio. Brooding about a play, it is occasionally produced by ambitious stage societies endowed with loose change.

Brooding wrote it in the library not in the theatre, and it could never be a commercial success. It is very well for those not financially interested to seef at the commercial producer, whether of plays or pictures, but the fact remains that money is required to exhibit either, and so long as the public is expected to pay the bills, the producer and the writer must be understood and successfully supplied.

Hence the necessity for the writer, ambitious to become a successful photographer by his failures. I had several disasters before I had any success on the stage. I had to learn the technique of the plot before the studio would trust me without a guardian.

Want Hungry-Looking Children Mrs. Jean Trebold, mother of the famous thirteen children who appear on the screen, says she is seriously considering putting them all on a bread-and-milk diet, so they will more nearly conform to present market demands. At the present moment all the casting directors seem to have need for pale, hungry-looking youngsters. Jeanette, one of her youngest, has the part of the starving and neglected Patch in Will Rogers' new picture, "A Poor Relation," now being made by Goldwyn.



### DOROTHY LEEDS IS JOHNNY HINES' LEADING LADY

DOROTHY LEEDS, leading woman with Johnny Hines in the Torchy Comedies, made from the stories by Sewell Ford and released through Educational, is well fitted to represent the New York girl, Vee, whom she portrays in these pictures, for she was born in the big city and has lived there all her twenty years with the exception of the time she spent at a finishing school.

Miss Leeds' parents had no other thought than that she would take her place in society and so they sent her to the fashionable Phelps School at Wallingford, Conn. But she had long cherished a secret ambition to go on the stage, and she spent her spare time studying in that direction. Immediately after the graduation she obtained a position with one of Billings' musical shows and later joined the Ziegfeld Midnight Follies, where her unusual beauty and grace made her one of the sensations of New York. She is now a member of the Raymond Hitchcock, Hilly Know company, and is reported to be the highest salaried show girl on Broadway.

AFTER having tried a number of experiments Miss Leeds was finally selected as the ideal type for Vee, the rich New York girl with whom Torchy falls in love and afterward marries in one of the later Sewell Ford stories. She has appeared in the last five of the comedies and is now working on another one.

Miss Leeds has brown hair and gray eyes and screens exceptionally well. She is five feet eight and weighs 135 pounds. Her hobbies are dancing and all sorts of outdoor sports, in which she is most proficient.

Woman Director's First Film Marion Fairfax "shot" the final scene for her initial production, "The Hit," which was released last week. The work of cutting and assembling the film is now in progress and it is expected that it will be ready for public presentation shortly.

Staged under the personal direction of Miss Fairfax, this film marks the entrance of the noted author and playwright to the motion picture producing field. Miss Fairfax during the last six years has written the scripts for many seven screeners.

First Morosco Picture Shown "The Half Breed," the first of the Oliver Morosco pictures, has been completed, titled and edited. To celebrate this event it was shown to an invited audience of 2500 persons in Los Angeles, "Shippy McGee" has already been started as the second Morosco offering.

Maclyn Arbuckle, the well-known stage and screen actor, has been engaged to play an important part in Marion Davies' cast in "The Young Diana," a Cosmopolitan production which Miss Davies is now working on at International Film Studio, New York.

Cecil B. de Mille arrived in New York yesterday from the coast. He will remain there for several days and then return to Los Angeles.

Alhambra 12th, Morris & Passenau Ave. Mat. 10c, at 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127, 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 149, 151, 153, 155, 157, 159, 161, 163, 165, 167, 169, 171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 187, 189, 191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203, 205, 207, 209, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219, 221, 223, 225, 227, 229, 231, 233, 235, 237, 239, 241, 243, 245, 247, 249, 251, 253, 255, 257, 259, 261, 263, 265, 267, 269, 271, 273, 275, 277, 279, 281, 283, 285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 295, 297, 299, 301, 303, 305, 307, 309, 311, 313, 315, 317, 319, 321, 323, 325, 327, 329, 331, 333, 335, 337, 339, 341, 343, 345, 347, 349, 351, 353, 355, 357, 359, 361, 363, 365, 367, 369, 371, 373, 375, 377, 379, 381, 383, 385, 387, 389, 391, 393, 395, 397, 399, 401, 403, 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