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SHOWMEN'S TRADE REVIEW,
November 12, 1955

Umberto D

(Italian Dialog—English Titles)

(Ratio: Standard)

Harrison & Davidson Drama 89 mins.

AUDIENCE SLANT: (Family) Good. A poignant, human story directed by the expert skill of Vittorio De Sica in a manner to arouse sympathy with the federal worker retired on a pension too small for him to pay his rent. The man's love for his small mongrel dog makes an appealing touch that no one who has ever loved a dog can resist. Acting is in perfect keeping with the human sympathy of the story.

BOX-OFFICE SLANT: An outstanding film for any art theatre. Its human appeal is irresistible.

Cast: Carlo Battisti, Maria Pia Casilio, Lina Gennari and others. **Credits:** A Rizzoli-De Sica-Amato production. Director, Vittorio De Sica. Story by Cesare Zavattini, Screenplay by Zavattini and De Sica. Music by Alessandro Cicognini.

Plot: Carlo Battisti as Umberto D., is an Italian federal worker, retired on a pension too small to live on. His only friend is his mongrel dog, Flicka, and his landlady's household drudge, Maria Pia Casilio, a young girl pregnant by one of two soldiers, who both deny their paternity. The landlady, Lina Gennari, refuses part pay for the back rent he owes, and threatens to turn him out at the end of the month. After a week's rest in a hospital with an attack of tonsillitis, he return to find his room being torn up to be remade into a parlor for the landlady, who has turned his dog into the streets. He finds Flicka in the dog pound, attempts to beg, but cannot bring himself to it. He tries suicide with the dog, which escapes. The story ends with his playing with the dog in a children's playground.

Comment: A very human story of a retired federal worker and his love for his mongrel dog, Flicka. The direction by Vittorio De Sica is poignant and as near perfection, humanly speaking, as anything De Sica has ever done. The principal actors, Carlo Battisti as Umberto D., Maria Pia Casilio as the pregnant drudge, and Lina Gennari as the heartless landlady, all give excellent performances. Battisti displays unusual acting ability as Umberto D, never being for an instant out of character, a tribute to De Sica's directorial genius. Maria Pia Casilio is equally fine as the drudge, Battisti's only human friend. Lina Gennari makes the landlady a most unsympathetic character. The English-sub-titles are excellent and the production is an outstanding art theatre film. Its human appeal is irresistible.