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UMBERTO

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UMBERTO D. (ITALY, 1952)

Director: Vittorio de Sica;
Script: Cesare Zavattini and de Sica;
Story by Zavattini;
Phot.: G. R. Aldo;
Mus.: Alessandro Cicognini.
Cast: Carlo Battisti; Maria Pia Casilio.

In cinema history UMBERTO D is considered one of the outstanding works of the Italian neo-realist movement. A period of film making that had its beginning in the closing years of World War II and continued on during the post-war era. This post-war development in cinema had its roots in the anti-creative film training school under Mussolini, the Centro Sperimentale in Rome. The frustrated talent there tried to break away from the official conventions of Italian film making; Visconti's OSSESSIONE (1943) and Antonioni's IGENTE DEL PO were early experiments with realism. In 1946, de Sica made SHOESHINE, a film on two boys drawn into crime, victims of war, of institutionalism, of self-betrayal. He followed it in 1948 with BICYCLE THIEF, which was acclaimed all over the world as one of the best films ever made. Neo-realism is primarily concerned with people, using natural settings and types to give an overwhelming sense of looking at life as it really is. "This is the way things are" became the credo of the entire neo-realist movement.

The ability to treat dispassionately the daily life of the ordinary Italian was inspiration enough for directors like Rossellini, Visconti, Zampa and de Sica. These directors, as leaders of the neo-realist movement, were influential in the development of post-war film making in Italy. Out of these films emerged an image of the ordinary Italian. Projected on the screen was a drama of commonplace joys and sorrows depicted with vividness and humanity unequalled by any other nation.

The neo-realist technique imposes a severe discipline on the director, particularly because of his use of non-professional actors. The actors are asked not to "act", but to "be". It is a tribute to de Sica's skill that their performances never appear artificial. De Sica's extraordinary tact with people, generally, enables him to get performances that are real and dignified.

UMBERTO D was dedicated by de Sica to his father, formerly a clerk in the Banca d'Italia. The film's theme is the neglect and loneliness of aged people, a story of a "senior citizen" subjected to inadequate pensions and indifference or hostility on the part of society. It is an intense study of an old man, alone in the world except for his

mongrel dog, and his attempts to sustain himself and his pet. The insight and feeling of futility that de Sica presents have never been equalled.

De Sica said of the film, "UMBERTO D is the film that I prefer among all those I have made, because in it I tried to be completely uncompromising in portraying characters and incidents that are genuine and true. I have sought with great humility to approach the true, poetic and limpid style of Robert Flaherty, the outstanding American documentary film-maker; creator of NANOOK OF THE NORTH in 1922 and MOANA in 1926."

"The production is brilliant in every respect. The Zavattini-de Sica screenplay is wealthy with honest incident, bitter and funny at the same moment, and de Sica has molded them into a series of unforgettable scenes, strikingly photographed by G. R. Aldo."—*Film Daily*

UMBERTO D is neither pathetic nor sentimental; it is concerned with a man's moral and human relationship to society.

PROGRAM FOR 1967-1968

Nov. 16: Vittorio De Sica's UMBERTO D (Italy 1951)

Dec. 13: Rene Clair's LE MILLON (France 1931)

Jan. 11: Andrzej Wajda's KANAL (Poland 1956)

Feb. 15: Jean-Luc Godard's BREATHLESS (France 1959)

March 11, 12, 13 Comedy Festival: Marx Bros., W. C.

Fields, Buster Keaton Laurel & Hardy, Charlie Chaplin

April 11: Satyajit Ray's PATHER PANCHALI (India 1956)

May 14: Experimental Films

June 19: Jean Renoir's LA GRANDE ILLUSION (France 1937)

Only members and their guests will be admitted.
Memberships may be purchased at the door
at 6:30. Free Coffee.

Members \$1.00 Student members \$.75 Guests \$2.00

BLAKE, MOFFITT AND TOWNE, PAPER

TJELDA MULLER, DESIGN