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# "HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN"

**TIME**  
THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE  
October 20, 1952  
**CINEMA**

## The Good Old Silents

Hollywood is morbidly jealous of TV, and TV broods itself into ulcers over the high costs of production—but Film Distributor Nat Sanders feels fine. Last year Sanders waded through a list of titles in the U.S. Office of Alien Property, found two old German pictures that many a moviegoer still remembers fondly: *The Last Laugh* (1924), with Emil Jannings, and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920). Sanders made a percentage deal with the Government, added a sound track with music and background noises, and opened his double bill last week in a small Man-

Without benefit of reviews from the New York critics, the pictures in the first week coined nearly four times as much money as the theater had been grossing \$1,700, as compared to \$700.

Sanders, general manager of Famous Films Productions, Inc., is handling the films to the terms of the Government guarantee plus a percentage into a fund for displaced per-

**Film Daily**  
OCTOBER 14, 1952

## Major Distributors Vying For Baronet Revival Hits

With four major distributing companies already in the race for nationwide distributing rights to "The Last Laugh" and "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," which racked up an estimated \$7,000 first week gross at the Baronet Theater, Nat Sanders and Samuel Cummins have adopted a "wait and see" policy before making any further moves to book the silent film revivals. Several circuits have already expressed interest in the films, according to Sanders.

The phenomenal first week business has been packing the Baronet despite the World Series, a record voting registration turnout, and without a single newspaper review. The previous high gross for the house, now in operation for over a year, was \$2,800.

A seven-year U.S. exclusive to the films was granted to Sanders, president of Film Renters, Inc., by the Dept. of Justice Office of Alien Property, which has control of all pre-war German film in the U.S. Cummins, general manager of Famous Films Productions, Inc., is handling the films to the terms of the Government guarantee plus a percentage into a fund for displaced per-

New York Journal-American Wed., Oct. 22, 1952

## New York Cavalcade:

By LOUIS SOBOL

Golly, we're going backwards. "The Thief" at the Roxy, "The Last Laugh" double-featured with "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" at the Baronet—all pictures without dialogue playing to S. R. O. crowds nightly

**RAVES-nothing but RAVES!! Here is a Combination that is Packing Them in-absolute MONEY MAKERS**

**Dupont Brings Back Intriguing Specimens Of the Silent Screen**

BY ERNIE SCHIER  
A COUPLE OF RARE  
**"The Last Laugh" Is Still Superb**



By Richard L. Coe  
FOR ANYONE SERIOUSLY interested in the program not to be missed, call "the movies" The Last Laugh, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"

THE EVENING STAR, Washington, D. C.  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1952

The Passing Show  
Early Film Classics Pair  
Is Offered at Dupont

By Jay Carmody  
The Dupont Theater, an admirably adventurous movie house, has come up with an especially novel and interesting attraction. This is the combination of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" and "The Last Laugh," a pair of films from the cinema's speechless infancy. It is a double-feature that has proved popular elsewhere and there is no reason why it should not repeat its success here. Several levels of appeal are represented in these pioneering works, ranging from the

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**FAMOUS FILMS PRODUCTIONS INC.**  
1560 BROADWAY-NEW YORK, N.Y. - PLaza 7-6227

TIMES. OCTOBER 17, 1952.

## THE CINEMA SHOW OF SHOWS

"ONE OF THE GREATEST MOTION PICTURES EVER FILMED!" - N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

**THE LAST LAUGH**  
with EMIL JANNINGS

"A masterpiece that will live forever!" - Rob't E. Sherwood

"Remarkable and jubilant! A MASTERPIECE!" - N. Y. TIMES

"We warn you - you'd better see it!" - N. Y. POST

"AS WONDERFUL TODAY AS EVER - Worth seeing again and again!" - CUE

and  
**THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI**

"Amazing thriller ...worthy of Edgar Allan Poe at his best!" - N. Y. TIMES

"ABSOLUTELY REMARKABLE!" - N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM

"First rate thriller!" - CUE

**The BARONET**  
3rd Ave. at 59th St. opp. Bloomingdale's  
"LAST LAUGH" at 12:50, 3, 5, 15, 7:30, 9:45  
"CALIGARI" at 12:50, 3, 5, 15, 7:30, 9:45, 11

**TWO ALL-TIME GREATS!**  
Exclusive N.Y. Showing  
**THE LAST LAUGH** and **THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI**  
EMIL JANNINGS in **THE LAST LAUGH** UNEQUALLED THRILLER!  
"ONE OF THE GREATEST MOTION PICTURES EVER FILMED!" - H. TRIB.  
"WORTHY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE AT HIS BEST!" - N.Y. TIMES

Exclusive N.Y. Engagement Starts Tomorrow!

None So Great as these 2 GREATS

EMIL JANNINGS in **THE LAST LAUGH**

"A JUBILANT MASTERPIECE!" - N.Y. TIMES

**THE CABINET of DR. CALIGARI**

Prologue by CONRAD NAGEL

Both Still

"Among the most famous of all-time" - N.Y. TIMES NAT'L BO'D OF REV.

FANTASY AND MADNESS THE FIRST "HORROR FILM" MASTERPIECE!

AS WONDERFUL TODAY AS EVER - WORTH SEEING AGAIN AND AGAIN!

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EMIL JANNINGS in **THE LAST LAUGH**

"AMAZING THRILLER... WORTHY OF EDGAR ALLAN POE AT HIS BEST!" - TIMES

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**THE CABINET of DR. CALIGARI**

"WE WARN YOU - YOU'D BETTER SEE IT!" - POST

"ABSOLUTELY REMARKABLE!" - W. TEL. SUN.

50th BEVERLY at 3rd Ave. EL 5-8190

"A MASTERPIECE!" - N.Y. TIMES

Los Angeles Examiner \*  
**El Rey Bills Twin Features**  
DOUBLE-BILLED as two of the all time greats of the silent era, "The Last Laugh," starring Emil Jannings, and "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," the grandfather of the horror shows, have started their exclusive Los Angeles engagement at El Rey Theater.  
Music and background sounds have been added to both features, which were secured from the U. S. Office of Alien Property by Famous Films Productions.

Exclusive N.Y. Engagement Starts Today!

"AS WONDERFUL TODAY AS EVER - WORTH SEEING AGAIN AND AGAIN" - ZUNSER, CUE

EMIL JANNINGS in **THE LAST LAUGH**

and **THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI**

UNEQUALLED THRILLER!

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2p #27239  
 RUNNING TIME  
 LAST LAUGH 80 min  
 CALIGARI 53 min

The New York Times  
 NOVEMBER 2, 1952  
 Silents Praised

Send us your dates now!

PICTURE of the MONTH

Published October to June, by  
 the National Board of Review,  
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**Raves**

**National Board of Review Magazine**

70 Fifth Avenue, New York City  
 Published Monthly

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 HETTIE GUNBY

Volume 1, Number 7  
 20c a copy, \$2.00 a year

**THE LAST LAUGH**

Directed by F. W. Murnau  
 Photographed by Carl Freund

The Porter  
 The Daughter  
 Her Aunt  
 The Manager  
 The Night Watchman

Emil Jannings  
 Mary Delachoff  
 Kurt Eiler  
 Emilie Kurz  
 Hans Interkircher  
 Georg John

with homage, as if he were a general; he salutes them and is saluted. Each morning he departs clothed in its glory, walking pompous and superior, kindly patronizing. His mind is as poor as his pocket; it is the imagination of the people among whom he moves. Coming, one day, to take up his post before the door of the hotel, he finds a younger man in an identical uniform on duty. Stunned, he is called into the office and told that he is too old to work as the head porter any longer. The benevolent establishment gives him another job in recognition of his long service, but it takes his uniform, his new job is that of towel-boy in the men's lavatory. With the uniform gone, his pride is gone, his being is crushed, his world is destroyed. For a while, he manages to keep up the appearance of his former estate by stealing the uniform and wearing it home at night. But his deception is discovered when his old aunt, bringing him at the front door, mormel, misses him at the wash-room, where he is directed to the wash-room, where he cringes, humbled and despairing, before her horrified gaze. She carries the news back to the tenement. When he returns that night his shame is flung back at him by the gossip-loving, scandal-mongering neighborhood—by the same people who bowed before the symbol of his uniform. His doom, dumbly comprehended, unspoken, is brought upon him. He is alone with his torture. As he was upborne by the uniform for men to be crushed by the towel of the menial that he holds in his hand for men to wipe their hands upon. Lear, outcast in the night and storm on the moor, is not more tragic. Indeed the cloak that he has been wearing is like the cloak of Lear and has been snatched from him by the ingratitude of the thing he has served.



the cinema camera is effected. The old Porter, celebrating his daughter's wedding, gets drunk; the condition of his mind and senses is reflected in the circling room, in the wavering building; the heads of the audience are made to swim, the gorge rises. A trumpet is tooted by a merry-making musician in the street beneath; the screen, the photograph protrudes in brassy convolutions of issuing defocalized shadow: the depth of the sleeping tenements rise darkly in the empty street, dawn bursts and they stand stark, white, bloated, giving off waking, yawning noise in the tawdry daylight; bedding is shaken from the windows, forms in shawls appear in rapid movement on the iron balconies; the life of the tenement is fluttered sleazily forth to the audience. The old Porter retreats at night to the wash-room of the hotel, sits huddled motionless on the bench against the dark wall; the pavement light, cold in the grated sky-light, falls above him: the photograph is numb, full of despair, of humiliation. Far into the reaches of the possible art of motion pictures this picture projects like a pointing finger; its shadow is on the future of the motion picture.

A curious belief appears to have gained widespread acceptance among younger filmgoers concerning the cinema's historic past. Fostered in part by such extravagant lampoons as "Dream Boat" provided, an erroneous concept of what films of the pre-talkie era were like is burgeoning. According to this notion, photoplays of that distant day were of small consequence, their chief claim to fame being the exaggeration of gesture and facial expression with which they were enacted. Despite the best persuasive efforts of their elders, youth seems determined to cling to this fallacious appraisal of silent pictures.

If for no other reason than to deflate so preposterous an idea, I would have welcomed the return to the local scene of F. W. Murnau's sensitive and skillfully wrought production, "The Last Laugh." Here, indeed, is a work that has triumphantly stood the test of time and can, moreover, provide lessons even today to some of the more plodding of presently functioning directors. So delightful an instance of pure pantomime, projecting as it does its absorbing story without the need for a single caption or subtitle, remains an achievement at which to marvel. True enough, it had the unique artistry of Emil Jannings to lend credibility to its all-important leading role. Nevertheless, "The Last Laugh" is essentially and primarily a triumph of consummate and imaginative direction.

**The Somnambulist Awakens**

WHEN we first reviewed *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* after a special showing of the picture to the Exceptional Photoplays Committee in the Capitol Theatre, we wrote in part as follows:

"*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* is a revelation and a challenge. It is a revelation of what the motion picture is capable of as a form of artistic expression. It challenges the public to appreciate it and challenges the producer to appreciate it. The revelation is there for all to see. If the appreciation fails, the motion picture itself, and all that it has promised, is in danger of failing."

"In *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* the motion picture for the first time stands forth in its integrity as a work of art. It is one of the paradoxes of art that it is at the same time an abstraction and something tangible in terms of our bodily senses. It is form and idea."

"The story of Doctor Caligari is a phantasy of terror told with the virtuosity of a Poe, in terms of the screen. Its emotions appeal directly to a universal audience. Even if stripped to its barest outline it would still compel attention, for it deals with the fascinating problem of one person's supernatural control over another person. But it acquires the irresistible quality of all true art because it is told with such complete mastery of medium that its terror becomes an aesthetic delight. We find that we have shared the experiences of a madman without suspecting that he is mad; we have been transported into that sphere where man creates his own imaginative realities as an escape from the realities of life which constantly overwhelm without every completely satisfying him."

Today after a second viewing nothing has happened to make us change that unreserved judgment. For now again after a lapse of over five years the picture shines forth in its artistic integrity. With a minimum of advertisement or paid publicity *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* has been running to packed houses for over four weeks at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse. It still and in its own field it has never been surpassed. Now more than ever we feel assured that it will go down as a landmark in the history of artistic pictures. In concluding our review we also said:

"In *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* the motion picture has proved its kinship with the other arts. Its popularity ought to be assured. It comes to us at a critical period of our motion picture industry when the public is jaded by many inferior domestic pictures and our producers themselves are still at a loss as to how to get out of their rut. It should give the public the courage to live up to it. Is it too much to assume that the American public can appreciate the best when it is given a chance to see it?"

This also, is no less true today. The motion picture industry is still groping. It still pursues popularity to the exclusion of quality, and seeks to dazzle the public by extravagantly spending money for flashy pictures on the plausible theory that the more money spent on a picture, the better it will be. But *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* was made for a trifling sum under the most penurious war conditions. Why not try giving a director as little money as possible, something of his imagination too?

The present success of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* sufficiently large part of our paragraph. Appreciate the best if given a chance to see it. The Cameo repertory and the more modest Fifth Avenue Playhouse experiment prove that up to the hilt. In the inevitable extension of the Little Motion Picture Theatre movement to other communities in the United States, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* deserves the post of honor in the vanguard of artistic pictures. It has done most to give that movement form and substance, to bring it from the realm of Utopia to the world of practical possibility.—A. B. K.

Raves

Raves

The main body of the picture constitutes a perfect photoplay—about the most perfect photoplay, if one also re- members and brackets with it *Shattered*, that has ever been produced. It is the photoplay of an old head porter who stands resplendent in his gold-braided uniform at the entrance of a continental hotel, and grandiloquently superintends the handling of luggage of the arriving and departing guests. It is not his body that is covered by the uniform so much as his soul. By that uniform he exists; it is the symbol of his authority, of his spiritual well-being, in the tenement where he lives. Each evening he turns waddling in the huge, ornate coat and is treated by the tenement dwellers

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"AS WONDERFUL TODAY AS EVER—Worth seeing again and again!"—CUE

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"Amazing thriller ...worthy of Edgar Allan Poe at his best!"—N. Y. TIMES

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 "First rate thriller!"—CUE

"A masterpiece that will live forever!"—Robt. E. Sherwood