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Wiene, Robert, 1920

Der Letzte mann (The last laugh), Murnau, F. W., 1924

"HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

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 th New York critics, the pictures in the fire

latest Here and the Washington, D. Control of all properties of Famous to the terms of the Sanders, the Sanders, the Sanders, the Sanders of the Sanders of

Dupont Brings Back Intriguing Specimens Of the Silent Screen

One on the Afsle The Last Laugh? Is Still Superb

OCTOBER 14, 1952

Major Distributors Vying For Baronet Revival Hits

With four major distributing companies already in the race for napanies already in the race for hat tionwide 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 lespite 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, presilent of Film Renters, Inc., by the Dept. of Justice Office of Alien Property, which has control of all pre-

City showing. ders, it is ex-

The Passing Show

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

THE EVENING STAR, Washington, D. C.

TIMES. OCTOBER 17, 1952.

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

THE 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 DE CALIGARI

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

ABSOLUTELY REMARKABLE" -N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM

* "First rate thriller!" - CUE

"LAST LAUGH" at- 12 50, 3, 5 15, 7 30, 9 45 "CALIGARI" SE : , TE et a in a ce 1

CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY OF THE

TWO ALL-TIME GREATS! Exclusive N.Y. Showing CABINET OF

UNEQUALLED & EMIL JANNINGS ! THRILLER!

Early Film Classics Pair Is Offered at Dupont

The Dupont Theater, an admirably adventurous movie house, ha By Jay Carmody 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 speechlesi infancy. It is a double-feature that has proved popular elsewher should not repeat its success here. acting, there Several levels of appeal are repre-

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AAKKECKKKKKKKKKK

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"AS WONDERFUL TODAY

AS EVER - WORTH

- ZUNSER, Cue

Tos Angeles Examiner * Rey Bills win 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 the horror shows, have started their exclusive Los Angeles engagement at El Rey

Music and background sounds have een added to both features, which were secured from the U. S. Office of Alien Property by Famous Films Productions.



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THE LAST LAUGH

and make-shift title given the latest foreign film, first appropriately named The
Least of Men—is one of the most imfice
portant pictures yet to be observed on
as the
any screen. Its influence on future picture making should be as provocative as
ture making should be as provocative as
that of The Cobinet of Dr. Colinari was that of The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari.
Unlike The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, its expressionism is that of the rational world, conveyed in terms of everyday objects. It raises no barriers of doubt-

ful meaning.

Essentially it is a picture of thought. It is a comment on the cruelty of an organized society to the individual grown too old to serve that society. This cruelty is not shown through preconceptions of plot but through the impressions it creates in the mind of its principal charac-It is a cinema visualization of a state of mind as well as of a state of society. It is less a narrative of occurrences that a record of psychological experience. It is told perfectly in the medium of photography and the motion picture, without artifice, without subtitles, without compromise. (We are not speaking now of the happy, humorous ending that was tagged on to propitiate the gods of laughter and the fairy story, which ending, too, by the way, is handled with the technical integrity of the main story, which is stark and tragic in its implica-

The main body of the picture constimost perfect photoplay, if one also remembers 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 and departing guests. It is not his bod)
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 piritual well-being, in the tenement here he lives. Each evening he returns waddling in the huge, ornate coat and is treated by the tenement dwellers "ONE OF THE GREATEST

he salutes them and is saluted. morning he departs clothed in its glory, his pocket; it is the uniform that enriches him, that makes him a figure in his imagination and in 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 Stunned, he is called into the office and told that he is too old to work as the head porter any longer. benevolent establishment gives him another job in recognition of his long service, but it takes his uniform. new job is that of towel-boy in the men's lay layatory. 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 bringing him at the hotel a hot morsel, misses him at the front door, and 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, unescapable, is thus brought upon him. He is alone with his torture. As he was upborne by the uniform on his back, so he is crushed by the towel of the menial

> he has been wearing is like the cloak of Lear and has been snatched from him by the ingratitude of the thing he has Emil Jannings, who plays the part, is this man at every movement, in every little action, in every turning of his mind. He commands the part and fills it. His is a perfect realization of the character. The mind of the character is what his art of pantomine reveals, and the feelings of this old man lie open in Mr. Jannings' every look and gesture. Here, indeed, is an actor, and in his control the character bleeds in all its wounds. To tell this simple and heart-rending story in motion pictures the pure use of

MOTION PICTURES EVER

FILMED!"-N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

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



the cinema camera is effected. The old Porter, celebrating his daughter's wed-ding, 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 round mouth of the trumpet fills the screen, the photograph protrudes in brassy convolutions of issuing defocalized shadow: the braying sound is heard. On a screen of depth the sleeping tenements rise darkly in the empty street, dawn bursts and they that he holds in his hand for men to stand stark, white, bloated, giving off wipe their hands upon. Lear, outcast waking, yawning noise in the tawdry in the night and storm on the moor, is daylight; bedding is shaken from the windows, forms in shawls appear in not more tragic. Indeed the cloak that rapid movement on the iron balconies: the life of the tenement is fluttered sleaforth 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 skylight, falls above him: the photograph is numb, full of despair, of humiliation. numb, full of despair, of numination.

Far into the reaches of the possible art of motion pictures this picture proiects like a pointing finger; its shadow
is on the future of the motion picture.

The New York Times

NOVEMBER 2, 1952

Silents Praised

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 en were like is burgeoning. Accord ing 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 and 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.

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The Somnambulist Awakens

THEN we first reviewed The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari has been running to packed houses for over Caligari after a special showing of the picfour weeks at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse. It still

Volume 1, Number 7

motion picture is capable of as a form of artistic expression. It challenges the public to appreciate it and challenges the producer to learn from 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

"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 di. larity to the exclusion of quality, and seeks to dazzle of terror told with the virtuosity of a Poe, in to its barest outline it would still compel our 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."

ture to the Exceptional Photoplays Committee in the Capitol Theatre, we wrote in part as follows:

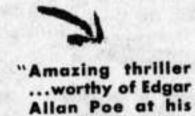
Tour weeks at the Fifth Avenue Flayhouse. It still dwarfs contemporary pictures of artistic pretentions and in its own field it has never been surpassed. Now more than ever we feel assured that it will go down as a landmark in the history of artistic pictures.

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 a new standard and imbue the producers with 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?" rectly to a universal audience. Even if stripped a jaded 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, instead of as much as possible, so that he must give something of his imagination too?

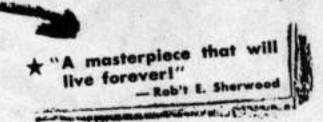
The present success of The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari also answers the last question of our paragraph. A sufficiently large part of the American public will appreciate the best if given a chance to see it. The Cameo repertory and the more modest Fifth Avenue

Playhouse experiment prove that up to the hilt. day after a second viewing nothing has happened to the United States, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari de-In the inevitable extension of the Little Motion make us change that unreserved judgment. For serves the post of honor in the vanguard of artistic now again after a lapse of over five years the picture pictures. It has done most to give that movement thines forth in its artistic integrity. With a minimum form and substance, to bring it from the realm of of advertisement or paid publicity The Cabinet of Dr. Utopia to the world of practical possibility.—A. B. K.



Allan Poe at his best!"-N. Y. TIMES





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