

Document Citation

Title	French cancan
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Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	French cancan, Renoir, Jean, 1955

French Cancan (FRENCH—COLOR—SONGS)

Cannes, May 24.

Clumont release of Franco London production. Stars Jean Gabin, Maria Felix, Francoise Arnoul. Written and directed by Renoir. Dialog. Andre Antoine; camera (Technicolor), Michael Kelber; editor, Boris Lewin; music, Georges Van Parys. Previewed at Cannes Film Festival. Running time, 100 MINS.

Douglars	Jean Gabin
Nini	Francoise Arnoul
Lola	Maria Felix
Casimir	Philippe Clay
Valet	Gaston Modot
Count	Caussimon
Laundress	Annick Morice

The birth of the Moulin Rouge and the French Cancan is nostalgically caught in a splash of perfect color and affection in a pic that glows with love, charm and eyefilling movement. Although story is sketchy and almost non-existent, it is the feeling created that makes it a stirring personal affair. Film might be just the thing for U.S. arty houses.

The slim story tells the tale of the showman, Jean Gabin, whose knowhow and drive make for the final creation of the Moulin Rouge and its rousing, riotous Cancan. Complications are brought in by the beautiful, langorous Maria Felix as the belly dancer, Lola, and Francoise Arnoul as the pert, little laundress who becomes the head exponent of the Cancan. The colorful period is evoked with its dandies, lovesick princes, laundresses and heavies. Gabin gets his dream of the Moulin Rouge only after renouncing any permanent love affiliations. All comes to a head in a vibrant cascade of color, energy and sheer elegance as the Cancan bursts forth with all its ruffled and reeling effect.

Gabin is perfect as the showman whose life only reacts to the boards and audiences. Miss Felix's lush beauty is a fine trump while Miss Arnoul is a pleasing innocent. Direction has made what might have been mawkish into poignance. Renoir lets things slow down but never sag as the side stories of the amorous prince, the lovesick count and the mixture of real and theatre life are dwelled on. Many top singers show up to impersonate turn-of-the-century idols, among them being Patachou, Edith Piaf and Andre Claveau. Color is perfectly used to denote changing moods. The tinting breaks into animated beauty in the final Cancan scene, making for the finest film painting ever seen on any screen. Editing and lensing are all tops. Word-of-mouth and crix should help this pic. Mosk.