

# NCOMP Adopts New 'List' To De-Emphasize Ratings

New York — A plan to de-emphasize its film ratings has been put into effect by the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures.

The plan, designed to put an end to "indiscriminate" use of NCOMP's moral classifications, was unveiled with the publication of the film office's latest "list" — the long white sheet frequently displayed in church vestibules and reproduced in many diocesan newspapers. Whereas such lists have in the past given the ratings for upwards of 300 films, the latest list carries only 24 films — so that they could be commented upon at length.

"Our purpose is to get people to be more discriminating in their choice of films, and a mere classification label is hardly adequate for making a discriminating choice," explained NCOMP's executive secretary, the Rev. Patrick J. Sullivan, S.J.

Each of the films on the new list carries with it a moral classification, but, notes Father Sullivan, "classifications by themselves can be misleading. Many A-1, A-2 and A3 films

are morally innocuous but aesthetically trash."

The film office has been trying to convey this idea through its strong support for film education and through its "Catholic Film Newsletter," but many Catholics apply a rigid interpretation to the ratings and seek no other information on the films.

"As long as we continue to put out every four weeks that long list, we're perpetrating the problem," Father Sullivan said several months ago, shortly after the controversy over NCOMP's "A-4" rating to "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

The priest admitted that because of "a logistics problem" in compiling commentaries on all films, the commentary sheet will be a "periodic service" and that the old-style list will not be abandoned just yet. "But we should arrive soon at the point where no film is classified without a capsule commentary," he said.

A reading of several of the commentaries in the new list indicates the flexibility the film office expects to gain in offering guidance to Catholic moviegoers.

For instance, "Hom bre," a new Paul Newman film about a

white man who has been brought up as an Apache, is given a plot outline and praised as "an above-average Western, excellently photographed by venerable James Wong Howe." But while the film carries a moral classification of "A-2" (morally unobjectionable for adults and adolescents), NCOMP warns — for those who might be sensitive to such things — that it is "brutal in spots."

"Tobruk," which carries simply an "A-2" on the old-style list, is singled out as a film that "brings some welcome intelligence to the endless cycle of war films." However, "The 25th Hour," another war film rated "A-2," does not fare so well. "Worthy theme (the devastating effects of any war on the innocent) but the contrivances are thin, and the film does not achieve a genuine blend of comic and tragic elements."

One of the more interesting commentaries is in the form of a warning to Aie Guinness fans who might go to see "The Quilter Memorandum" simply because they saw that he is starring in it. NCOMP suggests dishonest advertising in that his "small role does not justify his second star billing."

Among the other films treated at length are "Monkeys Go Home" ("Children especially will have a fine time at this Walt Disney family comedy"), "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" ("Sharp wit, witty spoof... Few dull moments") and "Funeral in Berlin" ("A winner if you're not tired of undercover work").

But undoubtedly, the new list's greatest potential contribution can be seen in the long commentary given to "Marat/Sade," a controversial and confusing film set in an insane asylum during the French Revolution. The "observation" that accompanied NCOMP's "A-4" rating (morally unobjectionable for adults, with reservations), merely stated that "this striking and controversial drama about man and his condition will be unsettling and confusing for the casual moviegoer."

The new list, however, lays before the reader a wide selection of comments made by NCOMP's consultants, ranging from "illiterate and invective document of our times" to "re-hashed philosophy of the Thirties gimmicked up. Added to these is a 'consensus,' 'Complex, shocking, Critique to a fault of some conventional social, political and religious concepts but tolerable for adults with patience, strong stomachs.'"

"We hope," said Father Sullivan, "that before long the practice of looking up a film rating apart from a commentary on the film will become antiquated." — (Catholic Press Features)



A nun-attendant tries to calm an insane-asylum inmate in "Marat/Sade," a film attacking social, political and religious concepts and which gets special attention in NCOMP's new-style "list."

## Premiere Tonight

# 'Superman' at Aquinas

By WHIT JOHNSON

Theatre interest and activity at Aquinas Institute have taken a new and exuberant lease on life this month and promise to reach a summit of achievement and prestige with the opening this weekend of "It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman."

The Superman production will be another in a long line of premieres to be seen on an Aquinas stage. During the year, Aquinas has offered local audiences the first amateur performances of "Finian's Rainbow," "Kiss Me Kate," "Annie Get Your Gun," "Teahouse of the August Moon," "Oklahoma," "King and I" and "My Fair Lady." Credit for such an array of Broadway hits goes to Father J. Leonard Cullen, C.S.B., artist, performer, director and designer.

To the legions of grownups who, behind the backs of their juniors, are avid followers of the "Superman" strip in the comics, the Aquinas production will be no disappointment. Stage settings, intricate in detail, wild chases, and fast-moving action are all exciting.

Set to open this evening at the Dawson Avenue Auditorium.

and an excellent performance. Leo Defendorf is amusing as spidery Max. Superman's archenemy is Dr. Abner Sedgwick, a frustrated scientist and ten times loser in his quest for the Nobel Prize. Al Tanski is properly malicious in the role.

Father Cullen, head of the Aquinas dramatics department, produced the show and designed the sets, assisted by James Blackburn of the school faculty. The highly-professional pit orchestra is under the direction of Aquinas music director Sebastian L. Calabro.

## Arts Festival At St. Agnes

St. Agnes High School's second annual Fine Arts Festival will continue today, May 12, beginning at 8:15 p.m. The festival will combine the work of the art students with a concert by the Glee Club and Freshman Chorus.

Exhibited during the evening in the gymnasium will be the paintings, sketches and hangings created throughout the year by the art students.

Highlights of the concert will include the Glee Club's rendition of "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing," "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," and "Matchmaker" from "Fiddler on the Roof." The Freshman Chorus will sing the Irish folk song, "The Road to Derry," and "Feed the Birds" from Mary Poppins.

The newly formed Chamber Choir, a select group of voice students, will offer Mozart's "Alleluia" and a medley of Thomas Moore's Irish melodies. Tickets are available at \$1.00.

## 'Ugly Duckling' Opens Tonight

### At Immaculate

A combination of music and laughter is promised at Immaculate Conception School tonight, May 12, when A. A. Milne's comedy, "The Ugly Duckling," is presented.

The play deals with the elaborate scheme that an overly worrisome King and Queen devise as a last, desperate attempt to marry off their somewhat-less-than-beautiful daughter. Complicating their plans is the fact that the daughter is completely unconcerned with her shameful situation. As a matter of fact, she wishes that her parents would mind their own business. As any self-respecting fairy tale should, this delightful spoof comes to a happy (though slightly confused) ending.

The role of the Princess will be played by Paulette Wanda Vincent. Robert Lovett will be her Prince and George Mitchell, her father. Mary Jo McGee and Deborah Perkins will alternate in the role of The Queen. Rounding out the cast are Anthony Fratta, Richard Frankberger, Anne Frankenberg, Ruth Hobbins, Terry Marcus and John Bedini.



Tony Fratta, as the Chancellor, pleads his case before a doubtful King and Queen, portrayed by George Mitchell and Deborah Perkins, in "The Ugly Duckling."

Performances are scheduled for tonight and tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. Tickets, which will be available at the door, are \$1.00 for evening performances; in the afternoon, they will be \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for children.

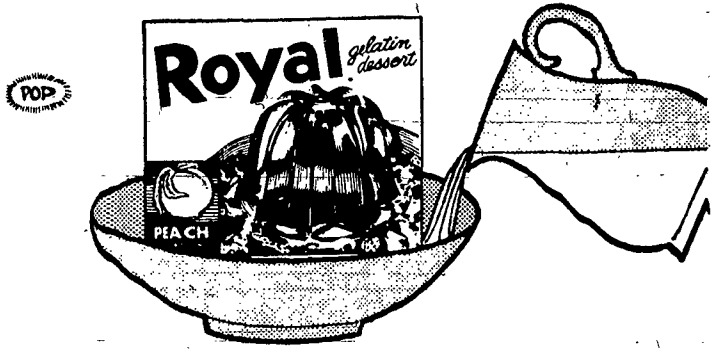
## Fatima Shrine

Devotions, Stations of the Cross and Mass will be offered on Saturday, May 13 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Youngstown, N.Y. (Town of Lewiston).

May 13 marks the anniversary of the first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima in 1917. Shrine is under the care of the Barnabite Fathers.

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Hallelujah, Baby!—Georgina's career is from 1900 to the end time but as she is 19 Uggams, she remains the throughout the passing years. This she explains as she twirls a parasol, and as Uggams has that rare combination of self reliance and plicity as well as good her show gets off to a start.

It's the odyssey of a young actress determined to succeed against the handicap of a mother who shows her, mop in hand, in the kitchen with her mother, is cooking for the w— Georgina has other ideas in the twenties "Back to kitchen"—becomes a retrainee.

The depression of the thirties darkening shadows by the forties and fifties — things is brighter and wh comes to the sixties, Georgina achieves her goal—a st the night clubs and ad into cafe society. After the struggles, it seems a anticlimax but Georgina pull her mother up after and is full of spunk Momma is taken for her—

Marian Anderson has d enriched our culture by h

GALILEO—For the first this season Lincoln Ce Repertory Theatre is filling the box office has a li visitors for Brecht's d translated by Charles Lau of Galileo Galilei, the 16th century scientist who de that the earth was not center of the universe.

This may not seem a stupendous bit of news but it was to a public founded their faith on the in which Jesus commande Sun to stand still. This time that I have Brecht's Galileo — once Laughton — and I have found it was as interest Lamp at Midnight by New Stages. Slavis' p action where Brecht has v

Galileo was a Florenti good family who taught a matics at Padua. Wher telescope" revealed to his piter's remarks on this ment he affirmed the stat of Copernicus that the ear volves about the sun. Clement VII had encou Copernicus but Pope Urba although a scientist himse fearful that the Cope theory might weaken fait encourage heresy so he Cardinal Bellarmine warn led to limit his theory hypothesis (unproved su tion).

Sixteen years later the permitted the Inquisitic force Galileo to sign a re tion which, as Stavis sho his play, three Cardina fused to endorse as did himself who had decide no papal ban must be on the Copernican solar s

An adventurous weal of scholastic philosoph Aquinas had said that must be based on reaso that to really know an was to know the causes, lly Galileo never understo causes on which his hyp rested.

This was left to Newton Galileo's most valuable bution to modern science. Treatises on Motion — v and the parabolas of proj — which was written wh was a papal pensioner i smuggled out of Ron Brecht's play.

The current success of leo seems due to the E actor, Anthony Quayle, v able to project the gen great man and give de Brecht's words. John I the Canadian director, h added dramatically cont backgrounds and interest tail as well as enlivened by the company as a wh

For those Catholics wh at the Inquisition—and us does not — let them r ber that Galileo receiv ed a papal tribute at he died like his three daughters in the arms Church.

ILYA, DARLING — Byron, who died of a fe Greece during her strug freedom, was saddened lack of heroic material the Grecian patriots. In h of Greece, are the lines,

"For what is left of poel For Greeks, a blush, for Greece, a tear."

The same thought so t a young Clives—teacher Connecticut, Homer T that he journeyed all U to Athens to discover t son. In the port of Pire met Ilya and she pr answer as inscrutable as cal. It is said that in on Manhattan's West Sid are Greeks who dance zouki in a long line wit arms on each others' shc If someone is suddenly i to dance a solo, it is e neither to notice or h him.

Homer's applause call challenge from the da which he responds so m