

COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL NONTHEATRICAL EVENTS  
 1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. Suite 1016 Washington, DC 20036 PHONE (202) 785-1136 FAX (202) 785-4114  
 RICHARD CALUNS, Executive Director



CINE testimony is presented by First Vice President Alan Rettig. Mr. Rettig is currently Manager of Business Television at the American Red Cross in Washington, D.C., where he directs a satellite-delivered live television service to one hundred installed locations and several hundred other sites. During his 25-year career in film and television production and distribution, he has won more than 30 national and international awards for his work, including six CINE Golden Eagles.

Assisting Mr. Rettig is John W. Mendenhall, former Chief, International Communication Media Staff, Motion Picture and Television Service, U.S. Information Agency. Mr. Mendenhall is a Vice President of CINE.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

FEB 22 1993

MOTION PICTURE, BROADCASTING  
 AND RECORDED SOUND

- PRESIDENT  
S. Paul Klein
- CHAIR, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
Robert Kelley
- FIRST VICE PRESIDENT  
Alan Rettig
- SECOND VICE PRESIDENT  
Dr. Frank From
- OTHER OFFICERS  
Barbara Blank, V.P.  
Lina D. Davis, V.P.  
James G. Damon, Jr., V.P.  
James B. DeWitt, V.P.  
John Mendenhall, V.P.  
Ann Tipton, Secretary  
Walter W. Tipton, Treasurer
- OTHER DIRECTORS  
Dr. Martin Pearson Allen  
J. W. Will Anderson  
Michael Cox  
Dr. William G. Carr  
Harold Crumby  
Herbert E. Farmer  
Guy Hennessy  
Curtis Jones  
Gifford C. (Dan) Kater  
Polly Koska  
Karen Loveland  
James Mackay  
Dr. Edward A. Mason  
Sally Montgomery  
Joseph Olewitz  
David Parker  
Art Roscher  
Ernest T. Sanchez  
Warner Schumann  
Russ Surinwick  
W. Tom Torpenning  
Irene (Emory) Toth  
Don Van Pelt  
Dr. Gene S. Weiss  
Richard Young
- ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Fritz Alben  
Dr. Holly Atkinson  
Glenn Barbour  
Susan Bartlett  
Donald Baruch  
Al Barty  
Don Bolen  
Philip C. Brooks  
Busby Burnell  
Nancy J. Caranough  
Dan Charles  
John Clarkson  
Mary Claycomb  
Madame Covert  
Clara G. Davis  
Dr. Cora Jay Daming  
Jim Dallaschide  
Brian Dyak  
Rima Eynuni  
Mary Frost  
Michael Gallagher  
Pat Gong  
Tom Grams  
Rob Hallam  
Jacquelyn Hess  
Jim Kristofas  
Chris Kater  
Diane Klein  
James Larson  
Susan Lochner  
Steve LaMurray  
Robert B. Lindemeyer  
Jack Lusk  
Breck Marion  
David McAllister  
Leo McGovern  
Kate McSweeney  
Dr. Jeanne Meadorwick  
Dr. Laverne Miller  
Richard Milligan  
Ralph Mizia  
Harry Moxley  
Wilton T. Murphy  
Jim Parisi  
Peter Packham  
Janice Richardson  
Dr. Ernest Rose  
Karen Sayer  
Garda Scatling  
Robert Seftik  
S. Martin Shelton  
Dr. William Simon  
John Sincell  
Walter Smith  
Philip M. Shub  
S. B. (Tommy) Tomhane  
John D. (Dan) Voss  
Christine Weber  
Steph A. Weiss  
W. G. Williams  
Patricia Woods de  
Stephen E. Wright

## THE CURRENT STATE OF AMERICAN FILM PRESERVATION:

### THE DOCUMENTARY FILM

CINE, the Council on International Nontheatrical Events, is a non-profit, volunteer organization established in 1957 to judge non-feature motion pictures made by American producers and to select those appropriate for exhibition overseas. For three decades, its semi-annual competitions have been open to producers of a wide range of documentary, information, instructional, and short entertainment films, and more recently, videos. Its Golden Eagle award has long been recognized throughout the film industry as a mark of achievement in non-feature film production.

Since 1963, of a total of 68 Golden Eagle winners nominated for Academy Awards, 21 have received Oscars, and in 1984, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences recognized the CINE Golden Eagle as one prerequisite for nomination of a film for an Oscar in several short and non-feature categories.

The CINE competitions have drawn increasing numbers of entrants since their inception. More than 600 films have been entered in the spring 1993 competition, a 25% increase over entries in the same period last year. On this basis, we believe that total entries for 1993 will

exceed 1,200. Categories represented in these competitions include large general areas such as short and feature documentaries, films for business and industry, and films for children, as well as small specialized areas such as medicine, economic development, and oceanography. The competitions are open to amateur as well as professional productions, and all entries are judged by multi-stage juries of film and media specialists throughout the United States.

CINE's original mission - to introduce the film treatment of American life and thought to overseas audiences - has remained a priority. The organization routinely recommends entry of Golden Eagle winners in more than 100 general and specialized film festivals throughout the world, and each year scores of awards from these festivals are presented by foreign diplomats to U.S. producers at CINE's annual awards ceremonies in Washington, D.C.

In presenting testimony before this Committee, CINE's purpose is to urge the Library of Congress to include documentary films in its preservation efforts.

It is a generally accepted view among film scholars that documentary motion picture and newsreel constitute a major cultural legacy. Such films are records of actuality, and as the late John Grierson observed, it is the documentary which both "...entertains and instructs."

Documentaries and related non-feature films examine and reveal the social and cultural fabric of our society in its remarkable complexity. Unfortunately, many of them are likely to be lost to future scholars if there is no sustained effort to preserve them.

Such films as Frederick Wiseman's records of American institutions, Barbara Kopple's detailed views of labor and social problems, and Ken Burns's masterful revelation of the most tragic crisis in American history, the Civil War, are examples of documentary films familiar to all of us. Numerous other documentaries are currently discounted, however, because the form is so familiar to us now through the major delivery medium of television news. Before the documentary was a staple of our daily information diet, memorable examples were part of the entertainment package delivered at the movies. After World War II, non-feature films became common as information presentations in public meetings and as classroom aids in the teaching of history, science, social science, and even behavior society deemed appropriate. Since the 1970's technological development has made video the predominant medium for film delivery. Whatever the format for presentation, however, documentaries continue to inform us and to help form our opinions. As William Bluhm wrote twenty-five years ago, "A part of a documentary's purpose is always social - somehow to let us discern more clearly, with greater

compassion and vision, the issues we must resolve."

The relation of documentary and other non-feature film to entertainment films - "the movies" - has always been close. We need only consider the documentary films of such great feature directors and producers as Frank Capra, whose "Why We Fight" series - no matter how he or we might have considered it later - was used extensively for both information and inspiration in World War II. Many famous names from Hollywood have also made their marks on documentary, often beginning their careers producing non-feature films. The influence of documentary filmmaking on the feature film should not be overlooked. "On the Waterfront," produced for feature exhibition, has the look and sound of a documentary, and the current centerpiece of TV network entertainment, the Movie of the Week docudrama with its partially fictionalized structure imposed over actual events, is the child of both entertainment and documentary film.

Despite its close relationship to entertainment, the documentary film is a category of distinct independent value to American film culture. Between 1963 and 1993, CINE estimates that more than 22,000 documentaries and related non-feature films have been entered in its semi-annual competitions, and these may well represent no more than a fraction of the total non-feature output - good and bad - of the U.S. film industry during that time.

The danger of losing this part of our film heritage

is great. Many of our colleagues report on their quests for prints of significant documentary films, tracking them from producer to sponsor, to university archivist, through the U.S., and sometimes across the border into Canada, a vain pursuit that often leads to the sad conclusion that much excellent film material will be lost if we don't make a dedicated effort to preserve it. Federally-produced documentaries are already preserved in the NARA program, but no such resource archive has been established for independently-produced documentaries. Nor is data about these productions readily available to organizations or scholars. The American Film Institute catalog in development now, for example, lists entertainment features only.

CINE recommends that the Library of Congress give serious consideration to the following:

- including independently-produced documentaries and related non-feature films in its preservation efforts'
- extending the definition of motion picture to include documentary video productions of the highest quality, and
- establishing a data base to describe and give the location of existing prints of documentary films.

Further, CINE offers its extensive files to the Library of Congress or any other interested agency as a

foundation for a data base, and it will gladly cooperate toward the establishment of a system for identifying, locating, and preserving documentary films.

In the words of Richard Dyer McCann, "Film's contributions to social stability and orderly change have come most often from the documentary, with its steady informational base and its appeal to reason." CINE urges that those contributions be recognized and preserved.

Thank you.