

ISSUE #1 of GYRONNY, official newsletter of  
 UNICORN PRODUCTIONS  
 222 S. Gramercy Place  
 Los Angeles 4, California

Unicorn Productions, a 16mm amateur movie group, has decided it is time to "communicate". Several questions need public answering, among them the one "are we ever going to make another movie?". The answer to that one may be "no".

To inform all interested parties of our recent activities, future plans, and of UP's holdings in cash, material and equipment is the job of this newsletter. Also, we will try, in this issue or future ones (since all information is not available right now, even on the subjects mentioned above) to answer questions sent in, concerning formation of the group, techniques used in movie-making, and how to obtain our films for showing to your own group. We need the letters from you, first.

The photos on this page were reproduced by multilith directly from our film The Genie, with Forrest Ackerman, Bjo Trimble and Fritz Leiber. Dale Frey did the photo work seen here.

The officers of Unicorn Productions are:  
 Albert J. Lewis.....President  
 Ron Ellik.....Treasurer  
 Bjo Trimble.....Secretary  
 Blake Maxam.....Publications Director

Unicorn Productions is NOT a part of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, though we all work together on certain projects, and most of the people belong to both groups. LASFS has no "say" about UP, nor does the club lend itself to UP activities in an official capacity.

The treasury of UP is not high enuf to begin another film, even if we had equipment on hand:

12-15-61	treasury obtained from		
	William B. Ellern...	\$53.25	
12-25-61	Pavlat-patron member...	\$10.00	
1-28-62	Film for Persian movie.....	\$ 8.50	
2-24-62	Film Party-admission....	\$16.50	
	-film rental.....	\$25.35	
	Donation, Jim Groves....	\$ .50	
		\$80.25	\$33.85
3-3-62	Total UP treasury.....	\$46.40	

There will be a break-down of earlier parties, patron memberships, etc, in the next issue.

NOTICE: the LASFS annual fanquet has been moved to March 24, from March 17. Change your calendar.



The first Unicorn Productions movie party of the year, on February 24th, was not exactly an unqualified success; we lost money. Perhaps it was due to the unseasonable season, or the round of colds which have plagued local fans, or just that we did not advertise well enuf. In any case, we are hoping that the next party helps to make up for it. The announcement for the movie parties is elsewhere in this letter; please read it and pass the info on to others who might like to come. We have rented a series of movies which we hope will be of interest to you, but this year we have simply had to guess. Next year....?

#### PERSIAN ROMANCE TO BE RELEASED SOON

Blake Maxam's delicate and beautiful little movie is now in the "work print" stage, and almost ready for sound synchronization. This whole project has been almost entirely the work of Blake, who wrote the story, directed, made up the stars, and acted in it. It will be unveiled to the general public (of fandom) at the Westercon this June 30 & July 1, but possibly may be "previewed" at a movie party.

#### GREEN STAMPS HAVE A USE, AFTER ALL

It is possible to arrange with the S & H Green Stamp company (or with Blue Chip) to trade so many full stampbooks for 16mm equipment. For this reason, we gratefully accept trading stamps as membership dues to Unicorn Prod. We can always trade off the stamps we don't use to some church which is saving both kinds, so send either kind mentioned here. Local trading stamps will do us no good at all. It takes three filled stamp books for one patron membership, annually. So far, Margii Ellers, Ruth Kyle, and a couple of others have used this method of assisting UP; some of you bachelor types who never save the stamps could consider starting now. We will include stamp donors in next issue's treasury report, of course.

#### CLUBS MAY RENT UP FILMS

Individuals may, also, but the same rules and fees must apply until we can work out something better. First, it is necessary for one person to accept responsibility for the films; unless we have a signature, we cannot send the movies. Rental for a package of The Musquite Kid and The Genie will be either \$10.00 or 50% of collection, whichever is more, plus costs of handling and insurance. Any damages to the films will be paid for by the club; with the signing person held responsible. As we add other films (providing we continue) to the list, we will allow a selection.

#### BLACK ADEPT SHOOTING CANCELLED AGAIN

With 1500 feet of b&w film stored in the freezer, it is frustrating to have to once again announce that the filming of The Black Adept will have to be indefinitely postponed. This is especially embarrassing, because Fritz Leiber, on request, turned out this adventure in magic, a Fafhrd and Gray Mouser tale, for Unicorn Productions; an original story by a busy author, and we cannot handle it now! The first problems arose when the supply of girls went away to schools out of handy weekend travel area. Then other necessary interests (such as school, jobs, bills, and meeting mundane obligations, and such) interfered with one or another principal person in cast or crew. Now we are without equipment, and forsee no compatible time when we can possibly arrange all people and equipment on the same weekend. So, until further notice...

#### UNICORN NEEDS EQUIPMENT OR IT DIES

The letter from Morris Dollens and Dale Frey should explain this plea. We can make no attempt to answer the charges that we neglected their equipment, as they made no show of interest in the welfare of either the group or the equipment until this letter. One of the reasons why UP would not use the projector which supposedly came with this professional quality equipment is that it did not work properly, due to several problems which Morris never "got around" to fixing. We have not mistreated the equipment in our hands, nor have we neglected to bring any problems of handling to their attention. We made a point in Morris' case of checking with him at least periodically to make sure that he did not wish to use the equipment we had in our possession; the letter was the very first indication that he had decided to recall all of it. So now UP at least needs a 16mm camera of some reasonably good quality to use up the 1500 feet of film before it is too old. But we don't wish to beg for it! Will anyone help Unicorn Productions live?

(The following letter has been reproduced exactly as it was originally written; any spaces or dashes are the author's, and not editing of any kind by us).

Dec. 26, 1961

Unicorn Productions  
Los Angeles Science-Fantasy Society

To Whom It May Concern:

With the beginning of the new year, the situation must be changed concerning camera and sound equipment loaned to the club by Dale Frey and Morris Dollens some time ago, due to a projected series of short commercial, instructional, and art films planned for the coming year.

The club has had almost exclusive potential use of the equipment for some three years, and our own use has been set aside during this time for other reasons, but the serious activity here is to be resumed. We have not made any recent attempt to discuss with the group any plans of their expected productions, but will be willing to co-operate to a limited extent in making the equipment available on some weekends for further shooting, but feel that it will be necessary for the equipment to be on hand here for continuous shooting evenings and many weekends in the coming year, starting shortly after the beginning of February.

This will necessitate overhauling and checking the equipment, testing for steadiness, speed, focus, etc, for the films must be of professional quality, and equipment does need occasional upkeep, none of which has been had in the past few years, even though use has been very limited. We expect to be able to do this work during January, so we are recalling all equipment loaned out --- silent and sound camera equipment, editing materials, developing and lighting equipment.

Club projects in process can be finished by using the equipment on a weekend basis, and if any more projects are planned, arrangements can be made. We have no information regarding any of these projects, so are not aware of possible difficulties in finishing these, but would be glad to talk over time schedules by phone or in person.

Weighing the relative inactivity of the club in filming (understandably, with all the other activities involved in, such as magazines, parties, conventions, and such), against our planned serious films here, which will consume much of the coming year's free time, using much art work and miniature models on hand, we feel that the equipment should now be kept where used mostly, even though available for limited club use.

We would appreciate if you could call Morris Dollens at EX 8-9097 after 7 pm soon or on Sundays, to discuss the matter.

Sincerely,

Morris Dollens

Dale Frey

(Ed. note: We feel that a simple "give back the ga'dam equipment, stupid" would be sufficient.)

UNICORN PRODUCTIONS MEETING....SATURDAY MARCH 17, at 2 pm...222 S. Gramercy Place,  
Los Angeles...near 3rd & Western...DU 9-0619...coffee & discussion of movie ideas.  
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### UP CONSIDERING "INACTIVE MEMBERSHIPS"

Discussion went 'round and 'round last meeting about the possibility of some kind of "inactive membership" to UP for interested people who could not participate in making the actual movies, and who could not afford the \$10.00 (or 3 green stamp books) required for patron memberships. We would like to hear a discussion on this, with a possibility of publishing some of the letters in the next issue of GYRONNY, with pro and con attitudes. Suggestions here rather favored at least \$3.00 annually (or one green stamp book), but nothing was settled. This is, of course, to make UP a paying proposition, but the question arose about just what UP could give its membership. Discussion ranged from "personal satisfaction" to letting at least patron members borrow films at cost. Membership cards were decided upon (depending on acceptance of whole membership idea, of course), as printing costs are held down by reason of a captive hobby-printer in the ranks. Other suggestions included sending all UP newsletters for free, plus any fanzines, programs, etc which might also be published. Someone that that stills of the movies made during any membership could be offered at cost, perhaps with a selection of slides. It is up to you and other interested people; what do you say to all this?

### UNICORN PRODUCTIONS WILL GO DOWN FIGHTING!

UP will continue its movie parties, and will find some way to complete the movie now being edited for sound. The meeting on March 17 will be one of decision for the group, wherein we hope to find some way to continue activities without in any way interfering with anyone's serious planned films; and yet where we may have some equipment on hand to take advantage of unscheduled times when films could be made because of circumstances which miraculously allowed enuf of us to be in one spot at one time. When working with ~~so~~ many individuals, this is very hard to plan or predict, and much valuable working time on fill-in shots and background can be lost. We won't give up until we've tried harder!

### INFORMATION & MATERIAL STILL NEEDED

Thanks to Margii Ellers for info on where to locate feathers of all kinds and colors for costumes: to Ellie Turner for costume materials: to Ann Chamberlain for jewels: to Miri Carr for the loan of a sewing machine to make more costumes: to Bill Ellern for taking color pictures of the Persian Romance sets and costumes: to Adrienne Martine for clearing out the costume room and to all the others who have done so much work for UP. We request all info on shops with interesting material, "at cost" equipment, and odds'n'ends of junk we could use in films. We urge everyone who notices unusual doors, interesting vistas, shadowy walks, artistically clumped buildings or trees, or anything else which might make a good background to action to report the address or area. Donations of material for costumes, from hats, jewelry, cloth or clothing which would yield good material for costumes, or any kind of make-up or any kind of lighting or other movie equipment will be gratefully accepted, and charged as a membership to UP.

### MEETING TO DISCUSS NEW FILM IDEA

Ray Craig, USC cinema arts student, has an idea which would make a great little movie for both SF fans and possible film competition. We will discuss it at the March 17 meeting. This idea will involve people who are not afraid to work, so if you are willing to help go thru Forry's garage, come to the meeting.

### GYRONNY TO CONTINUE ON YOUR INTEREST

What do you want to know? Are you at all interested in a make-up class? A costume-construction crew? Do you want to be a member of UP and what it is trying to accomplish? Is it worth a letter to tell us so? Then WRITE now and tell Blake Maxam about it. GYRONNY is your business; it is published for you and will continue only if you show enuf interest in finding out about UP and its activities. We would like to hear from anyone who has made a movie; exchange ideas, and learn something.

MOVIE PARTIES provide fun, movies and coffee for \$1.00 per person, or \$1.50 per couple (UP is doing its share in encouraging the More Girls In Fandom movement). This money helps add to the Unicorn Treasury, covers costs of film and party arrangements. Or we hope it will, if we can reverse the loss we took on the first party.

BRING INTERESTED FRIENDS, why don't you? Inquiries about movie-making itself, and movie parties should be directed to Bjo Trimble; phone DU 9-0619, or write or visit Mathom House, 222 S Gramercy Place, L A 4. This address, Mathom House, is also the site of the movie parties. Parties start at 7:30, movies at 8 p.m.

THE SCHEDULE published in the last LASFS Newsletter was scrambled by the people from whom we rent the films. The February and April programs were reversed. The New Schedule of Unicorn Productions Movie Parties is as follows (and we have confirmation on all of these):

April 14, 1962....The Ghost Goes West (Robert Donat, Jean Parker, Elsa Lanchester) a fantasy of a Scottish castle moved by an eccentric millionaire to America...complete with ancestral ghost.

June 16, 1962.....The Happiest Days of Your Life (Alastair Sim, Margaret Rutherford) an English farce about a boys' school accidentally billeted with a girls' school...non-science-fictional, but very funny.  
and.....The First Russian Earth Satellites...documentary.

July 1, 1962.....Things to Come by H G Wells...THIS FILM WILL BE SHOWN AT THE WESTERCON XV...IT IS NOT A UNICORN PRODUCTIONS MOVIE PARTY. For details, send \$1.00 to Wm B Ellern, WESTERCON XV, P O Box 54207, Term. Annex, L A 54, for Westercon membership and PRs.

August 4, 1962....The Magic Horse (Russian color animation) a Russian folk tale of enchantment.  
and.....The Red Balloon (French live action) fantasy of a boy and his balloon in Paris.

October 6, 1962...Bell, Book and Candle (J Stewart, K Novak, E Kovacs, J Lemmon) a fantasy of modern witches and warlocks in New York.

NOTE: ALL MOVIE PARTIES WILL ALSO HAVE SHORT SUBJECTS &/OR CARTOONS. Some very fine little experimental films, avant-garde ideas, amateur art films, and documentary shorts are available, as well as cartoons, childrens' fantasies, and assorted other fun subjects.

If you know of an interesting amateur film to share with others, let us know please. If you wish to see any movie not listed above, please indicate the movie and where to obtain it, if possible; we're trying to formulate not only a list of substitutes for the present schedule (in case of further problems), but we'd like to plan next year's movie parties to your preferences...SPEAK UP, PLEASE!

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While we're at it, let's throw a plug in here for the 20th Annual World Science Fiction Convention...GHICON III...to be held at the Pick-Congress Hotel in Chi, over Labor Day (Sept 1, 2, & 3, '62). Theodore Sturgeon will be Guest of Honor, and Walt and Madelaine Willis will be coming over from N Ireland via TAWF. Send your \$2.00 now to George W Price, Treasurer, 20th World SF Con, P O Box 4864, Chicago 80, Illinois. Go Chicago!

A COUPLE OF ADDITIONAL TREASURY NOTES: While that \$8.50 listed for the Persian Romance is not a final figure (we've got some sound-synch and printing costs to add to it, and we haven't as yet got complete film costs worked out), we're a little better off than we look; that 1500 feet of film for the Black Adept is paid for, and we've some equipment that is our own...and more available from Ray Craig, who is a Good Man.

We're willing to face facts...as the rest of this issue of GYRONNY will testify...however, we can't see being snowed under by a few set-backs: A goodly number of us really want to make more films, and we're not going to stop exploring ways and means until we reach the position where we can continue filming.

If any of you people have ideas as to those ways and means, by all means bring them up. Your suggestions are most welcome, and we're willing to explore any and all logical paths available tous. Write, phone, or come on over...we've always got coffee, etc. available.

ONCE AGAIN, remember the Unicorn Productions Movie Meeting...  
...M A R C H 1 7...

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A COUPLE OF ANNOUNCEMENTS OF INTEREST TO LASFSians:

Meeting times of the LASFS is moved back to 8 p.m. ~~where it belongs~~. We've given up fighting twenty-eight or so years of tradition, and dinner schedules, and have moved the meeting time to the usual 8 p.m. The club still meets at the Alpine Playground, 817 Yale (@ Alpine St, two blocks west of North Broadway).

The location of the Annual Fanquet is undecided at the moment...the Original Barbecue (the location for the last two fanquets) does not have the March 24th date open. Besides, we'd like to go somewhere where we don't have to eat barbecued food as an only choice.

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Unicorn Productions

from...

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222 S Gramercy Place  
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F I R S T C L A S S M A T T E R

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