

MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

ARTHUR L. GALE, Editor

January 20, 1937

Dr. Alexander H. Leighton, ACL
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Md.

Dear Dr. Leighton:

Would you care to write an article for MOVIE MAKERS on your experiences in producing "Porpoise Oil"? What I have in mind is a discussion of how you worked out the general plan for the film, followed by highlights of your experience in producing it, coupled with an explanation of some of the outstanding technical achievements in the picture. For example, we were most impressed by your titles and the staging of the scenes of harpooning the porpoise.

Plan
Experience
Technique

You could discuss the continuity in detail if you chose, rather than the photographic details.

I have an adequate assortment of frames from the film which we could enlarge for illustrations. However, if you have additional clips that you would like to send, I would be glad to have them.

Payment for the article would be \$20.00 upon publication and we would like to feel free to edit it to fit our general style. In the event that you are hesitant about undertaking the writing job, you could prepare a rough draft and we would be glad to re-write it in this office. In any event, please type the manuscript double spaced.

I hope that you have the time to tackle the article.

Cordially,

Arthur L. Gale

January 31, 1938

Mr. Arthur L. Gale
420 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Gale:

I have your letter of January 20 and would be very glad indeed to write an article on the production of porpoise oil for Movie Makers.

I shall send you the manuscript as soon as it is completed.

Very truly yours,

Alexander H. Leighton, M. D.

AHL:K

MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

ARTHUR L. GALE, *Editor*

November 29, 1937

Dr. Alexander H. Leighton
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

It is a great pleasure to tell you that your splendid picture, "Porpoise Oil", has been given Honorable Mention by MOVIE MAKERS staff in the selection of the Ten Best Non Theatrical Films of 1937, General Class.

You will find a review of the film and a frame enlargement of one of its scenes in the announcement of the Ten Best in December MOVIE MAKERS. A special film leader on Kodachrome, which announces that this picture was given Honorable Mention, will be sent to you sometime before the fifteenth of December.

I want to offer you my sincere congratulations, for your film was selected from the largest and best collection of amateur movies ever submitted for the Ten Best listing.

Cordially,

Arthur L. Gale

*Delivered!
A.M.*

MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

ARTHUR L. GALE, *Editor*

March 19, 1938

Dr. Alexander H. Leighton
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

I greatly appreciated your prompt letter with the additional data on "Perpoise Oil" which I included in the article which will appear in April MOVIE MAKERS. We are using three frame enlargements and one of your still pictures to illustrate the article.

I made very few changes in the introductory matter and no changes in the meaning or general sense. My main idea was simply to rearrange a few sentences in an order which struck me as somewhat better.

I hope that you will like the presentation of the article and I know that it will delight our readers. It is a fascinating story.

Cordially,

Arthur L. Gale

bc

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MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

ARTHUR L. GALE, *Editor*

February 21, 1938

Dr. Alexander H. Leighton
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

I am delighted with the material in your article, "Porpoise Oil" and I am happy to offer you \$20.00 upon publication for it.

Would you have any objections if I rewrote the introduction? By bringing one of the more amusing incidents, such as storing the propoise on ice for several days before you could film its capture, would make a fine introduction and would let the reader know at once that he had a really interesting story in front of him.

One or two points need amplification. Did you make the film during a holiday for the whole summer, or did you complete it in a month or two weeks? How did you give the propoise an aspect of life when he was speared? I can't remember anything strange about this sequence and it occurs to me that perhaps you had a boat towing the propoise or something similar. When did you put the red ink in the water and who put it in? What I want to know is how you avoided the audience knowing how it happened. I can't remember anything suspicious about this, in fact, I was completely hoodwinked, which is fine! I think that perhaps you simply stopped the camera, put in the ink and resumed filming from a different angle.

Would it be possible to have a frame of the porpoise being speared? I would especially like a close shot of him in the water with the harpoon sticking into him.

I am planning to use your article in April MOVIE MAKERS and since we have to work well in advance, I would greatly appreciate hearing from you soon.

Thanks also for the still pictures, which I will keep to see if I can fit some of them in the layout. I will return them to you after the article is published.

Cordially,

Arthur L. Gale

MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

ARTHUR L. GALE, *Editor*

February 2, 1938

Dr. Alexander H. Leighton
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

It is a pleasure to hear that you can write an article for us on the production of "Porpoise Oil" and I hope that you can give some interesting data on the technical, as well as the planning aspects of making the picture.

I will look forward to the pleasure of reading the article, which would be welcome as soon as you could send it.

Cordially,

Arthur L. Gale

alg;bc

article sent

Feb 8th 1938

Stephen F. Voorhees
President

Lee F. Hanmer
Vice-President

A. A. Hebert
Treasurer

Roy W. Winton
Managing Director

MOVIE MAKERS

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

Arthur L. Gale, *Editor*

March 24, 1938

Russell C. Holslag, *Advertising Manager*

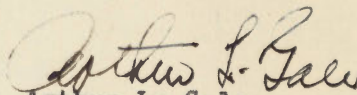
Alexander H. Leighton, M.D.
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

I am returning to you herewith twelve stills from "Porpoise Oil" which you submitted with your article. These are the ones we are not using.

Your article will appear in the April MOVIE MAKERS and I hope that you will like its presentation.

Cordially yours,


Arthur L. Gale

AMATEUR CINEMA LEAGUE, INC.

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

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James W. Moore
Continuity & Club Consultant

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

Frederick G. Beach
Technical Consultant

October 9, 1937

Alexander H. Leighton, M. D.
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

My dear Dr. Leighton:

Thank you for completing the certificate regarding "Porpoise Oil" dated the first, which has just reached us. Naturally, this will void my request of yesterday, enclosing another similar form. I recalled sending you a form, but in checkup could find no record of it.

Contrary to your understanding of the prompt return of your film, this fact simply means that we were able to have all the staff see it and get it out without holding it until the 15th of the month. This is line with our general policy in carrying on the Ten Best selections -- which is not a formal contest in the sense that all films entered are screened in competition at one grand, grinding session following the close.

Our system is to examine films as they are sent in, to make careful notes on their points and to card all subjects which we feel are at all in the running. You may surmise that "Porpoise Oil" is in the running or we should not have asked you for a completed certificate. The ~~ju~~ selections are made following the deadline and the results are announced in the December 1st issue of MOVIE MAKERS.

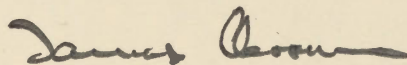
I can tell you heartily that all of us liked your subject very much indeed. From the continuity point of view, I found your treatment, sequencing and change of angles of particular interest and effectiveness. You must have had unusual privilege to produce such a unique record.

Our one adverse reaction -- and it was a universal one with all of us -- had to do with your treatment of the end sequence. Up to the point where the Old Man visits the gas station it is fine. Then, the discarding of the barrel of oil seemed to us very abrupt and unaccounted for, as did the swift, staccato and too abrupt termination of the little tragedy. One sees the barrel secure beneath the gas pump, then tumbling into an ash heap, seemingly without propulsion

or action on the part of anyone. Wouldn't it have been better, for instance if the Old Man sits looking disconsolately at it, resting on the street curb. A slap-dash, modern car drives in for gas and modern oil. Carelessly, it brushes the cask with its bumper as it goes by, tumbling it into the gutter. The stopper falls out, the oil pours slowly into the gutter. At first the Old Man makes a move to recover it, then shrugs his shoulders humorously and ambles off, followed by his faithful dog. Cut to a CU of the spreading pool of oil, cut back to your beautiful shot of them going into the dusk. Then, for my taste, by all means cut out completely the last bright shot of the porpoise in the water. It is far too harsh a contrast to a stunning low key scene and has no value in that position.

I hope these points will interest and aid you. Thanks for the privilege of seeing the reel.

Cordially yours,



James W. Moore

AMATEUR CINEMA LEAGUE, INC.

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James W. Moore
Continuity & Club Consultant

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

Frederick G. Beach
Technical Consultant

March 24, 1938

Dr. Alexander Leighton
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

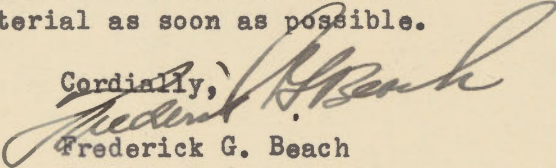
Dear Dr. Leighton,

I have been given charge of the movie programs for the First International Photographic Exposition which is to be held in Grand Central Palace April 18-24.

In selecting pictures for showing I thought of "Porpoise Oil" as a fine example of a documentary film. Would you be willing to lend us the film for the week of the exposition? It would be screened not more than two or three times by competent persons on new machines.

I would appreciate your word on this matter so that I may release publicity material as soon as possible.

Cordially,


Frederick G. Beach
Technical Consultant

AMATEUR CINEMA LEAGUE, INC.

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James W. Moore
Continuity & Club Consultant

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

Frederick G. Beach
Technical Consultant

May 3, 1938

Dr. Alexander Leighton
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton,

I am sorry to have delayed writing to you about your film but it took some time to clear things up after the show.

We greatly appreciate your kindness in allowing us to use the film and it was very well received.

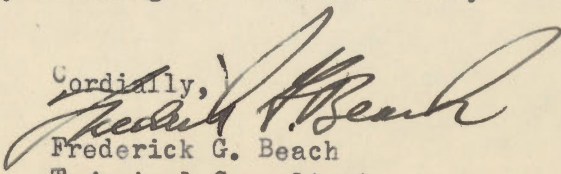
It was run once in addition to the two times given on the program. Whenever we had time and people waiting we ran extra shows. The hall seated 200 people and we had them packed in at every show.

The Exposition was a great surprise to everyone because of the huge crowds. Opening day we broke all records for the Grand Central Palace. As you can see we had a pretty heavy schedule of events in the lecture hall and they were all well attended. In fact, every time we ran movies we had the place packed with standees and an overflow outside the doors.

I am sending you a copy of the program and I understand the Exposition office is going to send you a certificate stating that your picture was selected for showing. I am enclosing one of the seals in case you might want to put it on your film can or take a shot of it to splice in your film as a leader. It would make a nice color shot, lighted from the side so that the lettering would stand out.

Many thanks again for your kindness and I hope that I shall some day have the pleasure of thanking you in person. My visits to Baltimore are usually fleeting but some time I may be able to look you up.

Cordially,


Frederick G. Beach

Technical Consultant

THE HENRY PHIPPS PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC.

September 17 1941.

The Amateur Cinema League, Inc.,
420 Lexington Ave.,
New York City.

Gentlemen,

I have a film called "Work for Your Own" depicting Navaho Indian life and I am wondering if it would be eligible for your "10 Best" competition which closes at the end of this month. At the time I made the film, it was entirely an amateur project, but a few months ago I signed a contract with Gutlohn for its distribution. As yet I have received no financial returns from this commercial venture, but hope to do so. My question is therefore, does listing with a distributor put a film out of the amateur class even though it was made without commercial assistance? Also, since Gutlohn has the original, could I send a Kodachrome copy for the competition?

With many thanks,

Very sincerely yours,

Alexander H. Leighton, M.D.

AMATEUR CINEMA LEAGUE, INC.

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

Hiram Percy Maxim, Founder

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James W. Moore
Continuity and Club Consultant

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

~~Kenneth F. Spies~~
~~Frederick C. Beach~~
Technical Consultant

September 19, 1941

Alexander H. Leighton, M. D.
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

We have your letter of the 17th and are delighted to hear that you have a new documentary film on native life. All of us remember with pleasure your earlier picture, "Porpoise Oil."

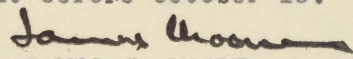
In giving you our ruling on the status of your Navajo picture in this year's Ten Best contest, I want to give you the reasons for it. Several years ago, when the fine film, "L'Isle d'Orleans," produced by the Crawleys, won the Maxim Award, we discovered the possibility for an extremely embarrassing situation in this regard.

Prior to October 15, the closing date of the contest, the Crawleys had made no commercial arrangements in connection with the film of any kind. Between that date and December 1st, the date of announcement of our awards, the Crawleys placed their film with Gutlohn for distribution. The result was that Gutlohn wanted to advertise in the very issue of MOVIE MAKERS announcing the Maxim Award that he had that exact film for commercial rental or sale! We persuaded him to delay such advertising until the January issue following.

It was as a result of that situation that the present wording of the contest entry certificate was worked out. You will find it on the inside cover of the current September issue of MOVIE MAKERS. Item No. 2 is the wording I refer to, and is the affidavit which you would have to make to enter the film in the General, or amateur, class. In view of the expressed and already existing arrangements which you have with Gutlohn for the commercial handling of the film, I feel sure you will understand that we could not rightfully admit it in the General Class.

This need not, however, bar its entry in the Special Class, and I hope we shall have the pleasure of seeing it before October 15.

Cordially yours,


JAMES W. MOORE

Official Publication · MOVIE MAKERS · Arthur L. Gale, Editor

THE HENRY PHIPPS PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC

October 1 1941

James W. Moore, Esq.,
The Amateur Cinema League, Inc.,
320 Lexington Ave., N.Y.C.

Dear Mr. Moore,

Many thanks for your kind letter of September 19th. We should like very much to enter our film in the Special Class. Could you send the instruction or a copy of Movie Makers that contains the instructions?

One other point. We have an engagement to show the film on October 20th. If we send it in soon, do we stand a reasonable chance of getting it back before that date?

Sincerely yours,

Alexander H. Leighton, M.D.

AMATEUR CINEMA LEAGUE, INC.

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE · NEW YORK, N. Y.

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James W. Moore
Continuity and Club Consultant

Telephone MOhawk 4-0270

Kenneth F. Space
~~W. E. Kidder~~ ~~T. A. Willard~~
Technical Consultant

October 2, 1941

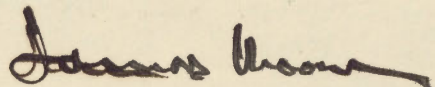
Alexander H. Leighton, M. D.
The Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore, Maryland

Dear Dr. Leighton:

I am delighted to know that you are interested in submitting your film in the contest in the Special Class.

All of the essential data is to be found in the enclosed announcement of the contest. In sending in your film, please remember to submit the completed certificate of entry, attached to the corner of this sheet.

I feel quite sure that we can have your film back to you by the 20th, but so that I won't overlook this request on your part, may I ask you to restate it in your letter submitting the film. We are handling so many films these days I am likely to overlook it.



JAMES W. MOORE