

IN MEMORIAM
Fred J. Balshofer, ASC
 1877 - 1969

The membership of the American Society of Cinematographers is bereaved to hear of the recent death of its beloved Honorary Member, Fred J. Balshofer, ASC.

One of the few remaining true pioneers of the motion picture industry, Balshofer was made an Honorary Member of A.S.C. in 1965, joining a select group which has included only ten others—among them, Thomas Alva Edison, George Eastman and George A. Mitchell, inventor of the Mitchell camera. The plaque presented to him upon the occasion of his election to A.S.C. membership read as follows:

The American Society
 of
 Cinematographers
 In Recognition of His Contribution to
 the Production of Motion Pictures
 Awards to
 Fred J. Balshofer
 Honorary Membership
 This Award Commemorates His Long
 Career As a Cinematographer, Director
 and Producer, But Above All, His Leadership
 That Was So Necessary in Those
 Early Days of Pioneering
 May 24, 1965

Balshofer's photographic career began with the dawn of the 20th century, when he was photographing stereoscopic still pictures for Underwood & Underwood. Those were the days when nearly every home had a stereoptican viewer on the parlor table as a popular

form of home entertainment.

On an assignment for U&U in Philadelphia in 1903, Balshofer chanced to pass an optical store, and on closer inspection noted that the firm also made motion pictures. Intrigued, Bal-

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The late Fred J. Balshofer, ASC, shown in recent photo at Calabasas with his most famous pupil, three-time Academy Award-winner Arthur C. Miller, ASC. The two old friends collaborated last year on a best-selling book, "ONE REEL A WEEK", which tells of their experiences during the early exciting days of the motion picture industry.



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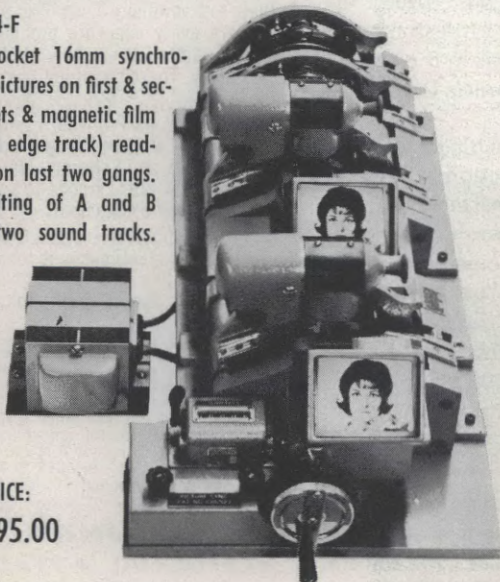
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1877 — 1969

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shofer marched into the store and introduced himself to Sigmund Lubin, destined to become an historic figure in his own right as founder of Lubin Co., pioneer motion picture firm. Leaning heavily on his experience with stereo still cameras, Balshofer was able to sell himself to Lubin and went to work immediately. He quickly became head of Lubin's film laboratory, and later got the job he really wanted, that of motion picture cameraman.

After five years with Lubin, Balshofer sought greener pastures. In 1908 he formed a partnership with Herman Kolle, doing business as Crescent Film Co. in South Brooklyn. Under that banner he produced films which were well in advance of competing products.

But Kolle became increasingly gunshy of the intimidations of Edison's Motion Picture Patents Co., so Balshofer pulled out to form a new partnership with Adam Kessel and Charles Bauman. They called the new firm The New York Motion Picture Co., and used a charging bison as their trademark. With headquarters in Manhattan, Balshofer made his Bison pictures, mostly westerns, on location across the Hudson River around Fort Lee and Coytesville, N.J. Fort Lee is now the western terminus of the George Washington Bridge, but in those days the only way there was by ferry. Balshofer's photographic instincts put the scenic beauties of the area to good use, employing the forests and rugged terrain as colorful backgrounds for his highly successful cowboy-and-Indian pictures.

This area of northern New Jersey quickly became the film capital of the world, and remained so until about 1915. But Balshofer had already left for what was to become the new film capital, southern California. Late in 1909 he moved the company and built a new studio for westerns, a complex which later became famous for comedy as the Keystone-Mack Sennett studio. He built another studio in a lovely locale where Sunset Blvd. meets the Pacific Ocean. The ground occupied both of the picturesque mountain slopes which form Santa Ynez Canyon. The company soon made a tie-up with Miller Brothers 101 Ranch Wild West Show and the resultant westerns, made under the 101-Bison Pictures brand, are legend.

Although Balshofer advanced to the status of director and producer, he

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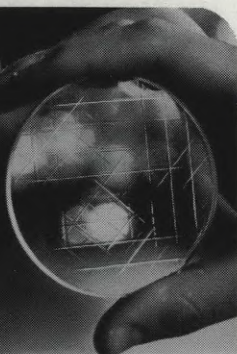
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never failed to put to good use his early training as cameraman, evident in his choice of locations for picture settings. His career parallels that of Edwin S. Porter, in a period when both men contributed much to make cinematography and motion pictures a truly new art form.

Countless cameramen began their careers in cinematography under the tutelage of Fred J. Balshofer.

Perhaps the most famous of his proteges is Arthur C. Miller, ASC, who, as a local lad of fourteen, was hired by Balshofer in 1908 when he founded the Crescent Film Company in Brooklyn. He trained Miller to develop his film in the laboratory and to crank a moving picture camera. So well did Balshofer teach Miller, and so eagerly did the teen-age apprentice do his "home work", that he became a full-fledged cinematographer on the classic "Perils of Pauline" serial by the time he was eighteen. In later years, Miller, having been awarded seven Academy nominations and three "Oscars" for his achievements in cinematography, never failed to give full credit to Balshofer for having been his mentor and guide in the learning of his craft.

Last year the two old friends co-authored "ONE REEL A WEEK", a joint nostalgic memoir of the early exciting days of the motion picture industry. It has since become a best-seller.

With the passing of Balshofer, the cinema industry has lost one of its great pioneers, a man who did much to advance the art and science of motion picture-making.

He will be sadly missed by his fellow members of the American Society of Cinematographers and by those others of the film industry who were privileged to know and work with him. ■

ACADEMY AWARDS PROGRAM TO RETURN TO MUSIC CENTER

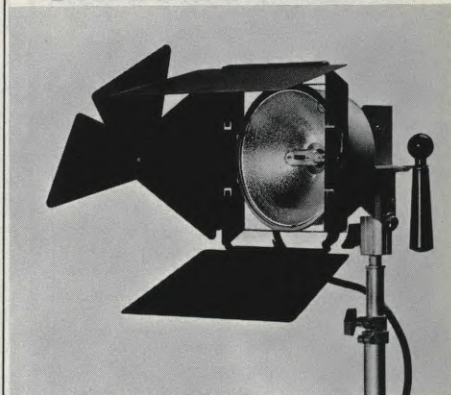
The 42nd annual Academy Awards Presentation Program will be held in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion of the Los Angeles County Music Center, it was announced today by Gregory Peck, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

The program has been set for Monday, April 13, 1970.

The Awards Program was held at the Music Center for the first time last April.

Presentation of the Academy Awards for outstanding achievements in making motion pictures will again be telecast by the ABC Television Network.

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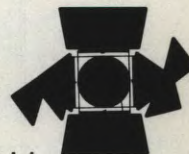
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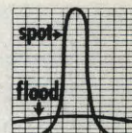


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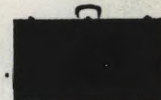
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