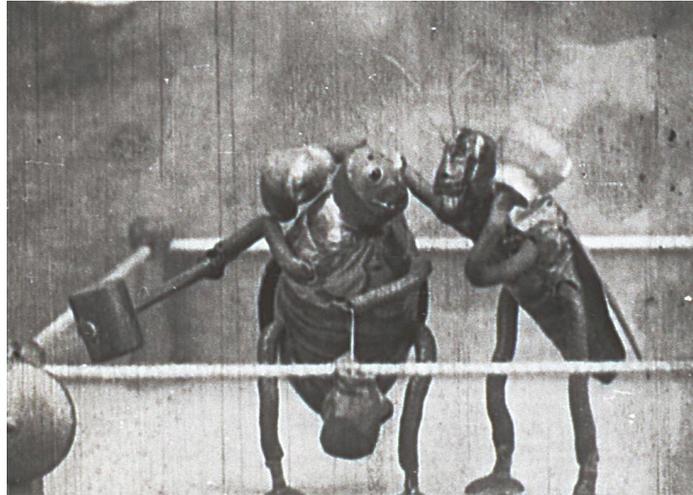


SINE NOMINE – 18
[INSECTOS BOXEADORES]
[Insetti pugili / Boxing Insects]
(US, 1920-1924?)
DCP, 4'20"



regia/dir.: ? cast.: ? prod.: ? dist.: New York Film Exchange. copia/copy: DCP, 4'20" (da/from 16mm dupl. neg., 44 m., 18 fps); did./titles: SPA. fonte/source: Museo del Cine Pablo Ducrós Hicken, Buenos Aires (Inventario n./Archive no. Peña Rodríguez, Compilado de cortos no. 9).

Da un controtipo negativo in 16mm, realizzato negli anni Sessanta a partire da un positivo nitrato in 35mm appartenente alla collezione "Manuel Peña Rodriguez". / *From a 16mm duplicate negative, struck in the 1960s from a 35mm nitrate print from the Manuel Peña Rodriguez film collection.*

The fragment opens with stop-motion animated boxing insects performing on a stage. One of them slits open a tent and escapes. However, it turns out that this spectacle is merely the dream of an entomologist who has fainted. It appears that some kind of competition is actually underway, in which participants must capture one or more specific bugs. Ultimately, the entomologist falls victim to his rivals by means of a hammer – and after a short animated cartoon sequence, he finds himself again plunged into the surreal world of boxing insects.

A few interesting clues appear in the footage.

A single short intertitle informs us that we are between the film's second and third parts, and that the movie was distributed by the Buenos Aires-based New York Film Exchange, which mainly released Vitagraph and Goldwyn-Cosmopolitan productions in several South American countries. Then, a "stage entrance" inscription (in English) on a door, a short glimpse of a Campbell's Tomato Soup can, and an undecipherable word on a notebook cut by the frame edge (but which might suggest the word "entomology") all seem to further prove that this footage is from an American 2-reeler or feature film. But perhaps even more

puzzling are the anthropomorphic features of the insects, which clearly echo the works — and the bugs — of the great Władysław Starewicz, who never worked in the United States but whose films were known to American audiences. Unlike much of Starewicz’s filmography, here the insects appear entirely artificial, perhaps made of some type of clay. Hairstyles and clothing, as well as the short animated sequence, make it possible to date the material to sometime in the 1920s.

The source for the footage is a 35mm nitrate print from the Manuel Peña Rodriguez film collection, which was discarded after its duplication to a 16mm negative. No record of the original edgemarks or other material details is available. Peña Rodriguez was a close friend of Argentine-Romanian distributor Adolfo Zicovich Wilson, the person who brought the original version of Metropolis to Buenos Aires, and intended to create the first film museum in Buenos Aires in the 1940s, with little success. His amazing nitrate film collection was “preserved” as 16mm negatives in the 1960s. Since the 1980s, these negatives have been kept at the Museo del Cine Pablo Ducrós Hicken in Buenos Aires. – *Andrés Levinson, Leandro Varela*

Commenta e firma il tuo contributo così potremo riconoscerti e contattarti!

Comment and sign your contribution so that we can recognize and get in contact with you!

Serge Bromberg wrote: “Check Kinex Studio Animation”

Didier Bertrand: I am not sure of the Kinex trail. Their production has been well documented and Thunderbean issued many of these in Bluray and DVD. They were made for the non commercial circuit with three main series Chip the wooden man, Snap the gingerbread man and Daffy doings in Doodlebugville and the look and style of this material is quite different from this item. Of course this movie is a kind of plagiarism of Starewicz in the early twenties with the insects and even the mixture of animation and live action (which is in several titles of the period). One could maybe approach the Starewicz family to know if there was some trace of protest or action made by this creator against such imitations; if existent, that could provide a clue.

Steve Massa: I think a possibility is that this was part of Hi-Mark Film Sales “Collegiate” series. One of the regular cast was George Chapman, who plays the student looking in the grass for bugs, and hits the professor in the head with a hammer. An extremely obscure series (although Universal sued them for poaching their “Collegians” series idea), so far I haven’t been able to find any specific titles for any of the individual shorts. Here’s a shot of the cast (George Chapman far left) with boxer Jess Williard from the 5/13/1927 Motion Picture News:



Jess Willard, former heavyweight champion, poses with members of the cast of the Hi-Mark "College Sports" series, including George Chapman, Archie Burke, Elane Chapman, Gay Sheridan, Bud Shaw and Polly Christie

Here's another item that announces the series and names the cast of the students from the 1/14/1927 Motion Picture News:

Nathanson Announces New Series of Two-Reelers

Nat Nathanson, president of Hi-Mark productions, has announced that his company will distribute a new series of two-reel subjects in story form to be known as the "Collegiate" series. The title of the first release is "The Sophomore," featuring George O'Neil, George Chapman, Steve Caruthers, Churchill Ross, Lucille Graydon, Pauline Crowley and Eddie Biggins. Sherwood MacDonald directed.

About 30 years ago I saw an unidentified American short under the title of EL MICROBIO DEL AMOR, where a professor shows a group of students scenes of bugs that cause love. Reminded me very much of this.

This Hi-Mark series is a place to check –if anyone has any more info on it.

Reinier Wels: If the theory above is correct, then there are indeed a few possible titles!

<https://www.archives.nysed.gov/research/motion-picture-division-index>

gives us the following list for Hi-Mark... all between '27 and '28 (one 1926).

Some titles are more promising for a match than others, of course. The problem is how to access these, other than ordering copies 'in the dark'...

Adventurous Soul, The	Hi-Mark Prod	Biltmore Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Air Mail Pilot	Hi-Mark Prod	Biltmore Pict Inc	United States	1928	Eliminatio ns
All Balled Up	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Eliminatio ns
Beating The Book	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1926	Approved
Bells, The	Hi-Mark Prod	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	United States	1927	Approved

Blue Friday	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodwill Dist Corp	United States	1927	Approved
College Boys Vacation	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
College High Jinks	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
College Marathon, The	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
College Splash	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
College Tailor	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight	Hi-Mark Prod	ABA Film Corp	United States	1928	Approved
Dark Horse, A	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1927	Approved
False Morals	Hi-Mark Prod	Biltmore Pict Inc	United States	1927	Eliminations
Food For Thought	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Eliminations
Freshman's Folly	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Gid Ap Napoleon	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Eliminations
God Of Mankind	Hi-Mark Prod	Biltmore Pict Inc	United States	1928	Eliminations
Golden Spurs	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1927	Approved
Hearts And Horses	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1926	Approved
Hearts And Hurdles	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Home Brewed Youth	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Eliminations

Inventive Student	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Lights Of Paris	Hi-Mark Film Sales	ABA Film Corp		1928	Approved
Links And Ladies	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Love Of Paquita, The	Hi-Mark Prod	Biltmore Pict Inc	United States	1927	Eliminations
Merry Wives Of Windsor	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	ABA Film Corp	United States	1928	Approved
Mistletoe Bough	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	United States	1928	Approved
Nothing To Think About	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Eliminations
Pigskin	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Riding For A King	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1926	Approved
Ringer, The	Hi-Mark Prod	Harold Rodner	United States	1927	Approved
Run Away Match	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Approved
Scrooge	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Silk Bouquet	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	United States	1927	Approved
Sophomore	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodart Pict Corp	United States	1927	Approved
Taming Of The Shrew	Hi-Mark Prod Inc	ABA Film Corp	United States	1928	Approved
Thrill Seekers	Hi-Mark Prod	Capital Film Exch	United States	1927	Approved
Wages Of Conscience	Hi-Mark Film	Capital Film Exch	United States	1927	Approved

When Martin Gets Here	Hi-Mark Prod	Fineart Dist Co Inc	United States	1928	Approved
Who's Your Husband	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodwill Dist Corp	United States	1927	Approved
You'd Better Get Out	Hi-Mark Prod	Goodwill Dist Corp	United States	1927	Approved

Federico Striuli: Thank you! I just wonder if this list entirely matches the films actually shot. According to the same link Reinier posted, "*Between 1921 and 1965, New York State required film distributors to obtain permission to screen individual films. Series A1418 consists of 71,269 case files documenting the application process, administered by the Motion Picture Division. Case files contain license applications, copies of film scripts, examiners' reports; and amendments to scripts if changes were required.*". So, is it possible that some of these titles were never produced? For a few of them I could not find any reference anywhere...

I am also thinking, what if the animated and stop-motion inserts come from other films? The fact is that they fit the rest of the live action footage very well... And who might have done them in the US? Did Hi-Mark Film regularly use these kinds of techniques?

As a last thing, Steve's guess on the actor is correct. It is indeed George (Georgie) Chapman (**see comparison below**):



Film print vs. frame grab from "Ham and Herring (1927)"

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2z5n3uVZHc>)

Reinier Wels: I have the impression that their archive contains records for the finished product - I've never come upon preliminary consultation myself.

Sometimes, especially for the silent era, there are no documents available. Crossreferencing sometimes gives only a single search result... E.g. "inventive student" on lantern:

https://lantern.mediahist.org/catalog/exhibitorsdailyr21unse_0805

International Corporation.

Get Five College Titles

Hi-Mark Productions have announced the titles of the first five released of the "College Sports Series" as "The Sophomore," "Pigskin," "The Inventive Student," "The College Tailor" and "A College Boy's Vacation."

Teamed Again

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