

CRITIC AT LARGE

Apostle of the Individual

BY CHARLES CHAMPLIN
 Times Entertainment Editor

One of the several fascinations of the movies is that they are so young an art form that many of their shaping pioneers are still around and still vigorous. One is King Vidor, who will introduce his own retrospective to-night at the County Museum of Art.

Another is Frank Capra, 74, whose classic social comedies—"It Happened One Night," "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" and "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," among them—are currently winning the startled admiration of a new generation which thought that it had invented social protest.

A course in Capra's films is being given at UCLA this term and there were 100 more applicants than seats. A professor in Pennsylvania recently wrote telling Capra of a standing ovation after a showing of "Mr. Smith" in a film history course.

"I never dreamed they'd play on this way," Capra said at lunch the other day. "Ours is a cash business. We made 'em and released 'em, and if they did or didn't make money we went on to something else. I'm constantly amazed at the power of film. Books live on and now film does, too."

Capra has not made a movie since "A Pocketful of Miracles" in 1961, but he has finished his autobiography, "The Name Above the Title," which Macmillan will publish next month and which is one of the best and most candid Hollywood memoirs ever written.

"I said, 'Is this just going to be a puff piece for myself? That's dull. The hell with it, I'm going to tell it like it is.' And I went at it six or eight hours a day for three years."

It's a saga which began in 1921 when he became a gagman for Mack Sennett ("We didn't dare call ourselves writers; in fact it was forbidden to write anything down") and runs up to his outspoken present. He spares no one, including himself.

"Everything I ever did just for the money turned out to be rotten," Capra says. "The things I did out of my guts turned out OK."

He has lived in Palm Springs for years and feels a certain but limited nostalgia for movie-making.

"I visit the front offices and I don't feel anything," Capra says. "But let me go on a sound stage again and, oh, that's something else. There's a smell on those stages—musty, dusty, mixed with stale perfume and old makeup and ozone—ozone, you know, from the arcing when they unplug the big lights—and it all gets to me."

"But I'd be scared to death to go back at it again. Because you don't just direct, or I didn't. You put a lot of yourself into a film and you leave a lot of yourself there. It's a young man's game. You need that energy and that strength to tell everybody else to go to hell."

"If the motion picture is going to be an art form, it has to be centered on one man. In essence it was always Frank Capra versus Louis B. Mayer, etc. The businessman always wants to standardize everything and the artist has to fight him all the way, not only defend your own freedom but persuade the businessmen that you are right."

"That struggle killed more than one director in this town. Others went along with all of it. They were General Motors vice presidents; that's what it amounted to."

"I was the maverick who tried to establish the director as a man who could go his own way. If I could tell the kids anything, I'd say it's not money or anything else, it's what comes out of your guts that counts."

"I hope I've been the apostle of the individual; that's what I've tried to be."

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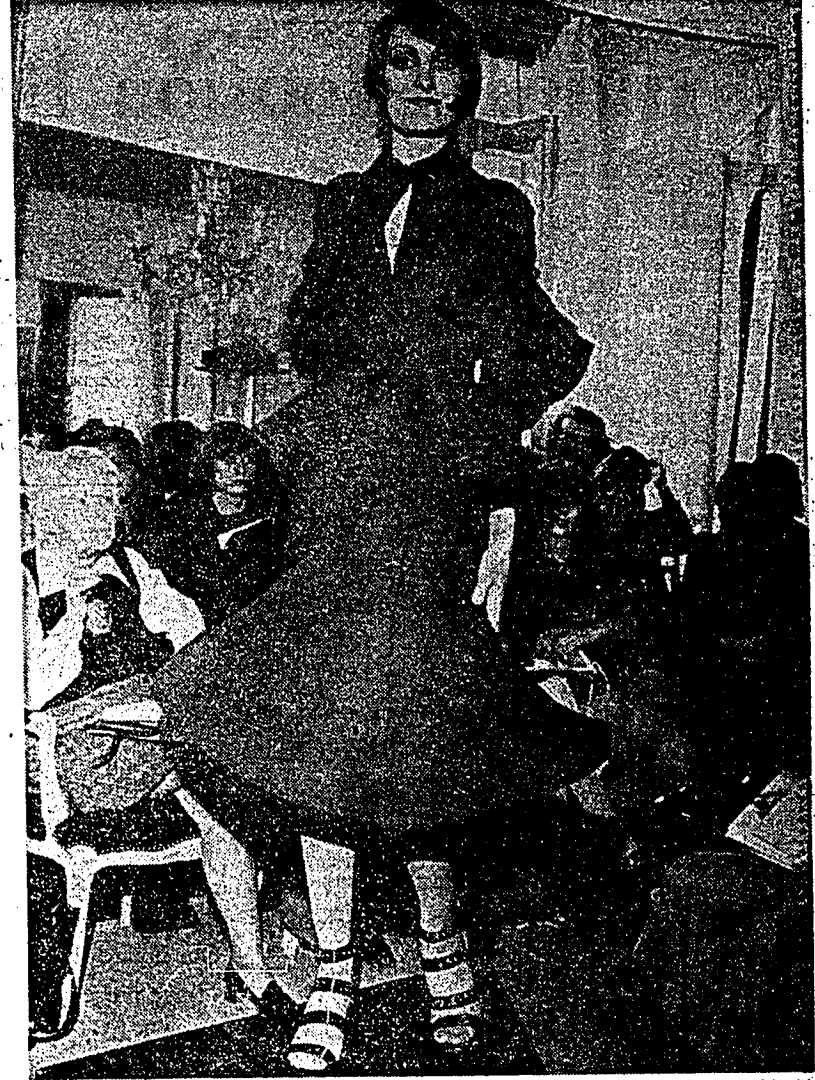
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OSSIE AND FRIENDS—The 40s' look, with its author, Britisher Ossie Clark, who brought out his midi and ankle-length 'in' fall ready-to-wear collection in Paris.



THE 40S LOOK—Ossie Clark sees fall '71 as a 40s flashback, as in this ruffled pleum jacket which is worn here over mid-calf length halter dress in crepe. Photos by Bill Cunningham

Playing the 40s Straight and Long

BY MARYLOU LUTHER
 Times Fashion Editor

PARIS—Said the 50-year-old buyer from New York:

"Good Lord, do you think he really means it? And would you believe those models? I've never seen such vulgarity. It's trash, pure trash."

Said the 25-year-old English-speaking representative

for an American buying office:

"Super, super! Aren't they just the sexiest clothes you've ever seen?"

They were both talking about Ossie Clark's fall collection—another 1940s retrospective complete with shirred midriff insets, fan-pleated skirts, puffy sleeves, pleums, back cutouts, mid-

calf length skirts and ankle-strap sandals.

Reactions to the Clark collection, shown for the first time in Paris because it is now being made here by Mendes, are a marvelous study of the generation gap at work.

If you lived through the 40s, you hated it. If you were born after 1950, you loved it. If you were a smart buyer

with lots of 25-and-under customers with at least \$200 to spend on a dress, you tried your darndest to understand it.

And if you were a fashion reporter you couldn't help but respect this designer's authentic rendition of the look and his author's rights to its current revival.

In a word, Ossie Clark was doing the 40s for the London

birds before Yves Saint Laurent parodied it for the tart-lovers of the world.

Ossie plays the period straight—and long. Yves caricatured the 40s and played them short—pre-1947, to be exact. Ossie is really into the 40s and has been for many seasons. Yves treated them as high camp and already has moved on to more civil-

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PROUD OF HER BROOD—Mrs. Billy Casper is enveloped by her seven natural and adopted children who are Bill Jr. and

Linda standing behind her and, from the left, twins Jenny and Judy, Charlie (on her lap) and Byron Randolph and Bobby. Photo by Bill Clemens

Mrs. Billy Casper Young Mother of Year

BY ARLENE VAN BREEMS
 Times Staff Writer

For Mother's Days gone past, the most Mrs. Billy Casper of Chula Vista, near San Diego, ever got was orchids from the church for having the youngest babies.

This year, the American Mothers Committee has honored Mrs. Shirley Franklin Casper, wife of golf pro Billy Casper, as their second National Young Mother of the Year.

"It was always my hus-

band who got the awards," said the soft-spoken mother of seven, three natural and four adopted, who range in age from 3 to 17.

The State Mothers Committee distinguishes Mrs. Casper as being both mother and father to the family while Casper is away on the golf circuit.

"Shirley Casper has been active with the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign (in charge of the San Diego drive)," reads the notice of her appointment. "She is a

new appointee to the State Central Committee of the California Republican Committee, being put in charge of the youth department.

"She does volunteer work at the Bay General Hospital as a pink lady. Shirley also is director of wife activities of the tournament for the Andy Williams San Diego Open Golf Tournament."

Mrs. Casper was judged on a percentage basis like all mothers who compete for this title. Points were earned for her qualifications as an

individual, as a successful homemaker and for traits such as courage, resourcefulness, cheerfulness and affection, according to a fact sheet put out by the American Mothers Committee, Inc.

"She must be an active member of a religious body and have a sense of civic responsibility, public service, etc.," reads the fact sheet. "She must exemplify in life and conduct the precepts of the Golden Rule."

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UNIQUE EXHIBIT

A Blending of Art, Technology

BY WILLIAM WILSON
 Times Staff Writer

The Los Angeles art world is preparing to kick the gong around in a week of premieres for the County Museum of Art's most venturesome contemporary project to date, "Art and Technology." And international art pundits are tripping in to admire and wrangle over results of a unique match-making experiment between corporate industry and the Taj Mahal of Hancock Park.

A series of galas will precede public unveiling next Friday. The public will see room-size works never imagined by a beard-and-beret easel painter.

Artists of heavy repute like Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and Robert Rauschenberg will be represented among the works made of twinkling mirrors, cardboard caverns, laser beams, moving paintings and waterfalls.

Range of Exhibit

The exhibition will range from a space where emptiness gets emptier and silence quieter to a 16-foot lox-colored Oldenburg icebag that dances, then naps between performances.

The exhibition is the brain child of senior curator of modern art Maurice Tuchman, aided by the museum's mod squad—Betty Asher, Jane Livingston and Gail Scott. Tuchman decided to open the floodgates dividing the whirlpool of art from the ocean of corporate industry. The idea was less to produce an exhibition than to create a dialog between polarized points of view.

The pilot project, started four years ago, finally involved 80 corporations and 40 artists. The tangible exhibitable results, which Tuchman insists were not the major point, amount to 15 over-size works.

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