

"Leni Riefenstahl was born in Berlin about 1905. After a brief study of painting at the Academy of Fine Arts, she entered a state dancing school, making her professional debut in 1923. She was hired by Arnold Fanck in 1925 to appear in one of his 'mountain films.' Miss Riefenstahl's considerable skill as a skier led Fanck to star her in a whole series of similar films from 1927 to 1937. In 1932 she collaborated with Hans Schneeberger and Bela Balasz in the production of her first film, DAS BLAUE LICHT.

"Miss Riefenstahl was appointed, in 1933, 'Film Expert to the National Socialist Party', a post she held until September of 1939. Her first Nazi-sponsored film was a record of the Parteitag in Nuremberg in the fall of 1933: SIEG DES GLAUBENS. Her next film was a record of the next Parteitag: TRIUMPH DES WILLENS, shot in the fall of 1934. From 1936 through the spring of 1938, she worked on OLYMPIA.

"The Nazi films are essentially obscurantist in intention. Both the speeches and the images which accompany them are designed not so much to elucidate, to show or to explain anything to the audience, as to withhold, reserve, conceal. Siegfried Kracauer has divided films and film-makers according to their tendencies toward a 'formative' or a 'realist' approach. The first is characterized by a manipulation of reality for artistic purposes, the second by a conscious acceptance of the limitations of this reality, and a belief in the camera's ability to find meaning in it. But OLYMPIA is more than merely 'formative' - it is actively and consciously 'transformative'. It aims at nothing less than the destruction of the audience's spatial and temporal coordinates: by the use of oblique angles, increasingly fragmented shots, shooting into the light and against a plain backdrop, the suppression of natural sound, and the use of reverse shots, the athletes are emancipated from the ordinary limitations of time and space." (Christopher Bishop)

<u>OLYMPIA</u>	1938	3.5 hours	b/w	German
	Conception, Editing		Leni Riefenstahl	
	Music		Herbert Windt	
	Design		Walter Traut, Walter Groskopf	
	Chief Cameramen		Walter Frenz, G. Lantschner,	
			Kurt Neubert, Hans Schieb	
			Tobis Filmkunst G.M.B.H.	
	Production			
	Part 1- FEST DES VOELKER			
	Part 2- FEST DER SCHOENHEIT			

"OLYMPIA is the apotheosis of the Nazi Documentary form. Shots progress with an order scheduled not by logical development but by a unique psychological pattern which stresses greatness, splendor, and order out of confusion, much as the earlier 'cross-sectional' documentaries, such as Ruttmann's BERLIN: SYMPHONY OF A GREAT CITY. It is this evocation of emotions from the audience, while they are being constantly dazzled with interminably unfolding splendor, and bathed in the music of soaring strings, muted horns, and the singing of wordless choirs that places this film in the same category as a profound religious experience.

"It is not a documentary film in the realist sense. It deals not with what may be referred to as the 'objective reality' of the world that is inhabited by people, but with a greater super-world of mystically evoked 'spiritual reality' inhabited by super-people." (Henry Breitrose)

"The director, who claims to have cut every foot of OLYMPIA herself, took a year and a half to edit the 1,300,000 feet shot to 21,000 feet. It was never given general distribution in this country, due to the anti-Nazi boycott." (Christopher Bishop)

--- The Experimental Cinema Group will show during the spring semester ---
among others, the following films: Day of Wrath (Carl Dreyer), Ivan the Terrible (Sergei Eisenstein), The Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein), and Orpheus (Jean Cocteau). Tickets are now on sale in the UMC ticket booth.

