have said that the film director is the equivalent of the stage producer but it is perhaps clearer to liken him to the conductor of an orchestra. He may not have had much say in bringing the players together, but it is for him to decide the effect that is to be produced. Then he leads or directs the players in such a way as to obtain it. Many directors have distinctly individual styles of treatment; the keen filmgoer can usually recognise them easily—for instance, the work of John Ford, Ernst Lubitsch, Alfred Hitchcock, Preston Sturges and Orson Welles. directed by these men normally have a style and atmosphere which make them distinctive. Still, it is often very difficult to know what fine touches should specifically be put to the credit of the director and what were the special contributions of the cameraman, the art director or the film-editor.

WHEN considering the functions of the director, it is important to remember that a film is made in fractions, and that these fractions are usually not photographed in the order in which the audience sees them. They may start shooting a film in the middle or at the end of the story; perhaps because some actor is in the final scenes who has to be released early for some other picture. It is the director's task to ensure that the details of these fractions are consistent, and then to put the jig-saw puzzle together with the aid of the cutter and the editor.

[T is, very often, not easy to decide whether to blame the producer or the director for a bad picture, or to whom to give credit if it is a good one. My own view is that in the majority of cases the director is the most important man of all. He will almost certainly be more important than the stars, But from what I have said, it should also be clear that a good deal will depend on the producer's own standard taste, or on his willingness to admit that his special genius lies in finance and that questions of artistry and taste are best left to the director. So in most cases the wise producer is the one who starts out by choosing an intelligent and imaginative director and then gives him a free hand, even letting him have a good deal of the original say as to what form the story shall take, as well as what players shall appear in it. Sometimes, of course, the functions of producer and director are combined in the one person; when that happens, the success of the picture almost invariably depends wholly on his efforts.

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