



BBC photograph

Film Concerto: This picture was taken on the occasion of the first broadcast of the "Warsaw Concerto" in the BBC's Empire programmes. Louis Kentner (left) the pianist, Richard Addinsell (centre) composer of the concerto, and Geraldo (right) the conductor, are here seen discussing the score.

The "Warsaw Concerto" was specially written for the new British film "Dangerous Moonlight," which stars Anton Walbrook as a Polish airman-composer. In the film, Louis Kentner "dubbed" for Anton Walbrook in the sound track of the film.

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The devil it will! We shan't get better films any more than we'll get a better social order or a better way than war for settling disputes just by waiting for them. We've got to protest about the rubbish we're still getting and make it quite plain that we want something better and won't be satisfied till we get it. So my particular protest—and I hope yours, too, if you have any strong feelings about the importance of the cinema—is against the continuing escapism and futility of the great majority of films, their almost complete lack of integrity and of relevance to the world in which they are produced. With few exceptions, the films of the past 10 years or so have been about as much related to those years as some of the communiqués about Malaya and Libya were related to fact.

NO, I am not arguing that all films should Mean Something, should have some Social or Propagandist Purpose: of arguing, for instance, that in a world at war, all films should be war films. I am enough of an escapist to believe that we are already getting quite enough so-called war pictures, and to view with some alarm the prospect of bayonets and bombers figuring more and more prominently in every unit of our movie programmes, from the shorts to the feature. At the same time, I hope I am also enough of a realist to believe that the social order (or disorder) which produced the war should get some emphasis, and not merely the actual fighting. Here is a whole civilisation in flux, and all the interlocking causes and effects, especially the thousand and one personal problems and relationships of our everyday life, often trivial and amusing, but always human and real, should be the chief material of our screen entertainment. Yet to Hollywood, and to a large extent to the British studios also, the war is still too much just a kind of huge romantic adventure, rather than the

climax of a world-wide catastrophe, a background of titanic tragedy against which the common people, whether in uniform or out of it, carry on lives that can never be the same again.

Our leading film producers, indeed, still seem to be preoccupied with the idea of the *status quo*, and this is shown by the fact that the characters of such a vast number of films remain, as they have always been, the members of a rich and leisured class, sipping cocktails, living in luxury flats, and making love to other people's husbands and wives. Are these the "values that everyone is fighting for"? Or dope at one and six a dose? For in all these films what makes them such a powerful narcotic for the addict who seeks escape by the stalls entrance is the apparently inherent promise that all these romantic adventures and all this luxurious living may one day come his own way. It is because just as many films as ever before seem designed to make us contented with our fate that I think we should regard them as being almost as sinister as they are silly.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

(Solution to No. 104)

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