



# INTOLERANCE

D W GRIFFITH  
PRODUCTIONS  
1916

DIRECTED BY D W GRIFFITH

## CAST

The Dear One... Mae Marsh  
The Boy... Robert Harron  
The Friendless One... Miriam Cooper  
The Musketeer of the Slums... Walter Long  
Brown Eyes... Margery Wilson  
Catherine de Medici... Josephine Crowell  
The Mountain Girl... Constance Talmadge  
The Rhapsode... Elmer Clifton  
The Prince Belshazzar... Alfred Paget  
The Princess Beloved... Seena Owen  
The Woman Who Rocks the Cradle...  
Lillian Gish

Film editors: James and Rose Smith  
Photography: G.W. Bitzer  
Assistant cameraman: Karl Brown  
Set design: Frank Wortman, Walter L Hall  
and Ralph De Lacy

A tinted print  
Duration: 165 minutes plus interval  
Projection speed: variable, three-  
bladed shutter required  
Aperture: Sound Academy

Score by CARL DAVIS (61 players)



LIVE CINEMA

# INTOLERANCE

*'HISTORY ITSELF SEEMS TO POUR  
LIKE A CATARACT ACROSS THE SCREEN ...'*

*Intolerance*, Griffith's ardent plea for peace, was released during a period of strident war-mongering in America. So revolutionary was the film that it became an inspiration to filmmakers, and is seen today as one of the cinema's greatest monuments. It began as a small scale drama about social injustice in modern America. Griffith then expanded it to trace injustice through the ages using three other stories: the fall of Babylon in 539 BC, the Crucifixion, and the massacre of the Huguenots in 16th century Paris. He intercut the stories to emphasise their similarities and maximise their dramatic impact. This technique had never been seen before. Griffith explained the unusual construction of the film: 'Events are not set forth in their historical sequences or according to the accepted forms of dramatic construction, but as they might flash across a mind seeking to parallel the life of the different ages... switching from one to the other as one might do while contemplating a theme.' He used a linking motif representing the eternal cycle of life and death; a young woman rocking a cradle while behind her sit the three Fates, inspired by a poem by Walt Whitman.

Griffith prided himself on the film's realism. The prison sequences replicated the dirty cells of the San Francisco city gaol, and the execution procedure is a reconstruction of death row at San Quentin. The strike at the mill and its suppression by the state militia was based on the Ludlow Massacre of 1914, when 45 people were killed during a strike. Ancient Babylon was recreated on a Hollywood back lot by Italian master craftsmen. Bitzer's camera tracks and swoops across the towering splendour of the 90-foot high sets. The film is outrageously cinematographic. History races across the screen—Cyrus advancing on Babylon, Christ making his painful progress to Calvary, the Boy approaching the gallows—the images interwoven into what one critic described as 'the first film fugue'. The drama and spectacle are enhanced by elaborate tinting reproduced from original nitrate prints and by Carl Davis's magnificent score. After 90 years, *Intolerance* is still a unique experience.