

Programme for 13 November:

ME AND MR. MARSHALL (1948, 13 minutes)

The first Marshall Plan film was produced in Berlin by Stuart Schulberg under the aegis of the U.S. Military Government, before a full-fledged Marshall Plan Motion Picture Section was formed in Paris in 1949. Aimed at German audiences as part of the de-Nazification/re-education campaign, the film turns a putative Wehrmacht veteran into a Marshall Plan enthusiast and sets the pattern of wry humor that characterized many of the 250+ films to follow. Its depiction of the Marshall Plan's genesis and overall objectives made it an effective flagship film, resulting in its distribution in many languages throughout Europe.

THE SHOEMAKER AND THE HATTER (1950, 16 minutes)

This charming color cartoon tackled the issue of intra-European trade, essential to recovery. It managed to turn what might have been a dry treatise on economics into one of the most popular Marshall Plan films ever made, with 11 language versions circulated. Its 'free trade versus protectionism' argument remains topical and could be drawn from today's headlines.

THE STORY OF KOULA (1951, 21 minutes)

This story about a Greek boy taming his ornery American mule - supplied by the Marshall Plan - was a big hit with European audiences and was eventually released in 9 languages. It is a striking metaphor for the transatlantic relationship that still rings true.

WITHOUT FEAR (1951, 15 minutes)

Most Marshall Plan films were informational in character but the film unit commissioned a few that tackled political ideology head-on; this is one of the most dramatic. Because the word "communist" is never invoked, the film retains its power to warn of repression by any totalitarian government, and stands as an eloquent ode to the virtues of democracy and freedom.