In this paper, I will examine the relationship of the Finnish periodical press - both general and film orientated - and the emergence of film publicity during the 1920s and 1930s, when international cinema culture came to Finland and advanced to form a special Finnish film culture. The field of film publicity - even in Finnish context - is too vast an issue to be discussed thoroughly in one paper, so I am concentrating on its most evident form, to publicity concerning stardom or actorship. How are the actors presented in the Finnish periodical press? How are the status of screen actors defined in them and how does the international cinema culture affect these definitions during the period under scrutiny? How does the star publicity develop in these magazines, and what was it like? How was the international (Hollywood-based) publicity and advertising converted to Finnish environment?

**STARDOM**

Internationally the concept of film stardom is almost as old as the concept of fictional film. In his study on the emergence of American stardom Richard deCordova has come to the notion that the star system had fully evolved by the turn of the 1920s. DeCordova sees that stardom begins where the silver screen ends. When the personality of the actor interests more than performances in films, the interest - with a help of the provided excess information - starts to turn the actor into a star. Creation of a star occurs in excess information, photographs, interviews, gossips that make actor something more than the mere performer on the screen. It is important to remember that a star is always produced by the film industry. A star is a product as much as the films were it appears, as there cannot be excess knowledge without calculated production. The implication of magazines was crucial for the origin of stardom, as deCordova points; they provided setting for this distribution of knowledge, for the discourse of a star.\(^1\)

In the American fan magazines gossiping and reporting of the scandals of film stars were popular issues and it was acceptable or even desirable to be curious – the lives of stars were market commodities. Star publicity was an important feature in film promotion and it would not matter so

---

\(^1\) deCordova 1990, 11-12, 19, 51, 98, 100.
much if the stories were false or true. In any case, those stories marketed the star as well as star’s films and film industry. At the same time, the publicity took away from the stars the right to have private lives.  

The interwar period was the period of the establishment of a particular Finnish film culture. Film production began in Finland already in the first decade of the century and continued with only an interruption of a year during the Great War, but the turn of the 1920s started a new phase. Feature film became the prominent form of production and producers started to promote (and create) Finnishness in film. In the vanguard of Finnish cinema was the production company Suomi-Filmi (est. 1919) whose production figures were overwhelming when compared with other producers all the way until the early 1930s.

The building of a national cinema wasn’t trouble free or a carefully designed program. Cinema faced prejudices in Finland during the first decades of the 20th century being opposed to esteemed performing arts like theatre, as it was considered entertainment of no value. Picture shows had to pay the same surtax as circuses and varieties for their presumed counterproductive effects on audiences until 1930, but even after that cinema did not receive an independent status as an art form.

Comparisons to the theatre were not the only ones made in the 1920s. The Finnish cinema was often measured by the accomplishments of international film production – and seen again as inferior. Domestic film production hadn’t found its position on the field of art and entertainment. Comparisons to the domestic theatre and international cinema continued despite the development of film production. Despite this the valuation of domestic film production increased through the years. Only the 1930s made some apparent changes in the conditions. The independent status of cinema was recognized. By the end of the decade domestic cinema gained an independent status and the comparisons diminished at a certain degree.

Regardless of the moralistic prejudices, narrow production and sometimes poor quality there was always a special attention of the audience to domestic films. The pace of production was around 4 premiers in a year in the early 1920s, from 6 to 9 in the latter half of the decade, and in the late

---

2 Orgeron 2003, 76.
1930s after a quick expansion there were nearly 20 new fictional films made in a year. The increase in production compares with the sharpening status of film production as well as with the increasing number of audience.

**JOURNALISM**

One has to bear in mind that side by side with the development of Finnish film production also advanced the notions and practises of domestic cinema culture and the whole concept of Finnish film. The 1920s saw the rise of cinema culture in Finland that wasn’t home-grown but brought from abroad – from Sweden, Germany and of course from Hollywood. Cinema culture was linked to new consumerism and commercialism. Films were no longer consumed only from silver screens, but as well from special magazines of a new kind only focusing on cinema. These magazines created international dreams of film through publicity and star stories. Most of the general journals went along with the moralistic prejudices and did not mention cinema at all on their pages. As an exception to this Suomen Kuvalehti (“Finland Illustrated”, est. 1916) is often mentioned that is said to have been the herald of American cinema culture in Finland.

First of film magazines in Finland was Filmiaitta (est. 1921), that brought the glory of international film stars to the Finnish readers. Most of the star stories originated to Hollywood – most probably because the publicity production was the most efficient there – but on the side of those there was as well plenty of information about the European stars. Despite Filmiaitta had no special agenda for domestic production, it mentioned each new production without supporting them or campaigning for them. The domestic film production was still in its infancy, and the new cinema consumption was not so much bind to domestic cinema than to the international fantasy world of films and film stars.

**PROFESSIONALISM AND NECESSITY OF BEAUTY**

For the first time Filmiaitta introduced a Finnish film actor to its readers in the autumn of 1923. The actor was Adolf Lindfors of whom the magazine wrote:
“When the history of Finnish film art is once written, Adolf Lindfors will be among the first ones mentioned. It is acknowledged that his significance on the theatre stage has been immense during the decades he has worked for it – as we see now when preparing to celebrate his five decades as a theatre actor.”

Lindfors had appeared in two films, which was quite much taking into account the small amount of production, but still he was a great representative of film art because he had acted for 50 years at the theatre!

In Hollywood the stars were professional screen actors, but in Finland there was no such occupation in the 1920s. Filmiaitta for example divided domestic film performers in two groups, to “professionals” and “amateur”. The professionals were always stage actors – according to the contemporary conception, the professionalism was gained only at the theatre. The true actors were above all theatre actors and their appearance on silver screen was just something trivial, something not worth mentioning. The title of an amateur belonged to all the other performers of film: if there was no theatre career, progress to professionalism was impossible.

In the 1920s most of male leading screen roles were cast to established professionals, which gave respect and prestige to the film. The casting of leading ladies was more troublesome – there were no young professional actresses. In 1924 theatre director Eino Salmelainen wrote in Filmiaitta:

“Let us imagine a love scene à la Romeo and Juliet on a theatre stage. The writer has imagined a young, blooming damsel, but we see in front of us a plump madame, whose age has doubled. [---] Suddenly hundreds of pairs of eyes realize her robust ankle, her armful of waist, and the meat waves of bare arms. Even the beautiful words cannot create a hallucination if the graces of the body are described in this fashion.”


All translations by the writer, except the names of the feature films whose translation originate to the Suomen Kansallisfilmografia [The Finnish National Filmography].
Salmelainen explained this contrast with the demands of acting – a young woman could not yet have the skills and experience needed in portraying young women. At the theatre this was not a problem, as the spectators cared more of what they heard than what they saw, but in film everything had to be beautiful. The necessity of beauty was often discussed in Filmiaitta – and it was a real problem. As professional actresses were – with a bit of an exaggeration – the plump madames, the only solution the film industry knew was to cast young amateur women to the roles of leading ladies. They had no experience, they did not get any training – and they did not get any respect. Their names were mentioned a couple of times and then after the opening of the film they were forgotten. For the next film new amateurs were found.

The amateur actresses were silent in every respect – they only performed on silent screen and they were never interviewed. They were even often compared with mannequins – being beautiful was their most important quality and it was seen important for amateurs to be able to demonstrate the clothes of the latest fashion. Usually the film career of these amateurs lasted only for one film and after that they disappeared into oblivion.

The Hollywoodian idea of making stars did not fit to the Finnish film culture. The actors were respectable professionals and no one could envision gossiping about them or asking strict personal questions during the interviews. There was a fixed composition in all actor interviews of Filmiaitta in the first half of the 1920s. The interviews begun with a summary of the actor’s career on stage, after which his/her film roles were mentioned, and in the ended was asked how the actor liked filming, and who where the actors favourite (foreign) film stars. Finnish actorship was understood as something different from the international stardom. Private life was intimate and the work was the only suitable topic of discussion.

The contrast between the filmic fantasies and the Finnish reality becomes even more evident in the pages of Suomen Kuvalehti. In the early 1920s there was plenty of film related material in the journal, but they consist mainly of publicity pictures, where the Hollywood actor/actress poses in the recent role. Pictures are not accompanied by interviews or reports but only with captions. The Finnish film is rarely commented and the actors are not separately mentioned. In 1921 Suomen...
Kuvalehti for example commented on the actors in motion picture *Ollin oppivuodet [Olli’s years of apprenticeship]* in the following way:

“In the parts of grown-ups we were acquainted with many well-known actors of the National Theatre. Collaborative acting was vivid and captivating throughout the film.”

If Finnish actors were introduced and commented, they would appear solely as stage actors, so in this matter Suomen Kuvalehti reproduced the same standards seen in Filmiaitta.

In the latter half of the 1920s even the Hollywood pictures vanished from Suomen Kuvalehti. At the same time, the journal declared the beginning of its own picture plate production and the content of articles diversified. One cannot help thinking if all of these features are linked. Could it be that Suomen Kuvalehti – the alleged herald of international film culture in Finland - used in the early 1920s large quantities of Hollywoodian publicity photos because they were available and because an illustrated journal had had pictures? By creating its own picture plate production, the journal was in the late 1920s no longer dependent on pictures provided by others. This theory is supported by the fact that in the 1930s there was practically nothing of films – Finnish or foreigners – in Suomen Kuvalehti except of paid advertisements.

**WHY DO NOT WE HAVE FILM STARS?**

The turn of the 1920s and the 1930s saw a rise of a discussion about the lack a Finnish film stars. As Anu Koivunen has pointed, the discussion was linked to the expansion of consuming the entertainment, to the arrival of new urban culture.

In modern urban society the consuming cinema and other forms of leisure was an evident part of everyday life – or at least so it seemed in the fantasies of the day. On the pages of Filmiaitta, brand new Elokuva [Cinema] and Ylioppilaslehti [Student Journal] young idealists and culture critics debated why there were no stars in Finland.
albeit the film production had been growing for years and starting to overcome its teething troubles.\textsuperscript{15}

In these discussions a film star was always regarded as a woman. Of course the writers were willing to give the title of a star to any possible Finnish actor, but in the search of stars they sought young ladies of the right kind:

\begin{quote}
It is often said about an actor or an actress of the screen that he/she has a true “film face”: there is contained much in this concept, from photographic techniques – all pretty faces will not reap the benefit on film – to some kind of mystical soulfulness, that is nearly inexplicable, but in some way based on eroticism. Finnish film actresses lack this feature and that is the obstacle to their improvement as eroticism is precisely the self-conscious incarnation of soul and in this way part of the overall intention of film art.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Young women lacking the “sex-appeal” and “eroticism”, without “film faces” were problematic according to the debate as they were supposed to represent the needed beauty and grace on the screen. There were plenty of elder women – theatre actresses – who were able to create artistic impressions on their film roles - as mothers, grannies and servants.

The lack of stars was well-known fact but it did not prevent the usage of the title of a star. Often it was seen as a synonym for the word “actor/actress”:

\begin{quote}
A film star seems to be a title that requires success as a film actor/actress. However usually here – and specially women - get instantly that “fame name” if they have been given the opportunity to stand for a few metres in front of a camera.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

Albeit the status of amateurs was still as poor as it had always been, there were now plenty of opportunities for screen starlets. The film production had enlarged and the style of the Finnish film

\textsuperscript{15} Koivunen 1992, 22-26, 30-36
\textsuperscript{16} “Sanotaan usein jostakin valkokankaan näyttelijästä tai näyttelijättärestä, että hänellä on oikeat ’filmikasvot’: Tähän käsityiseen sisältyy paljon, aina valokuvaustekniikan sekoista – kaikki kauniit kasvot eivät ole filmissä edukseen – johonkin mystilliseen sielukuukuteen asti, joka on mitte selittämätön, mutta jollaakin tavalla pohjautuu erotiikkaan. Tämä ominaisuus suomalaisilta filminäyttelijättäriltä puuttuu, ja se on heidän kehityksensä esteenä, sillä erotikka on juuri sielun itsetietoista ruumiilistumista ja tällaisena osa filmitaiteen kokonaispyrkimyksälä.” Roland af Hällström: Miksi Suomessa ei ole elokuvatähtiä? [Why there are no film stars in Finland?] Elokuvu 7/1929, 4.
\textsuperscript{17} The length of film was still in the early 1930s measured in metres of film strip, not in minutes of screening time. “Elokuvatähtit lienee nimitys, jonka saaminen edellyttää menestystä elokuvanäyttelijänä. Mutta meillä yleensä ja varsinkin naiset saavat heti tuon ’mainenimen’, kun vain ovat muutamankin metrin saaneet seisoa kameran edessä.” Pseudonym Ergi: Elokuvaamailmasta [Of Film World], Suomen Kinolehti 2/1933, 14.
had evolved – at the same time as the young idealists started debates in journals, other young idealists started making films of a new kind. The rural themes and the filmizations of the national classics got on their side more modern urban portrayals and the critiques started to categorize roles and actresses. As a pseudonym Valentin wondered 1932:

*Why the heroine of the film is not carrying a pail on her hand even if she is a Finnish film star? [Valentin] gets an answer telling that the actress is so called performer of the salon parts, who does not have to do anything else but give a dull smile for the camera and lean her body backwards a couple of times so that the hero would understand to kiss her.*

In this discussion, no-one linked the stardom with the investments of film producers. Young screen actresses were in the same situation as in the beginning of the 1920s – professionalism and beauty were not able to meet. Nevertheless the turn of the 1930s saw a new kind of face in the Finnish cinema publicity as the so far mute amateurs got their possibility to bring themselves to the public knowledge. The first Finnish cinema journal published by the producing company Elokuva put out 25 articles of the actors of Finnish film screen in the years 1930-1931. This means that in about every other issue of the magazine there was one of these interviews or introductory articles including many cover stories. Most of these actors and actresses were still theatre professionals, but among them there were several amateurs. The growth of the publicity was drastic but not surprising. Elokuva was the first Finnish film magazine with an agenda of supporting the domestic production and the Finnishness in film. As the magazine concentrated on passing information about the Finnish cinema, the increase in the actor publicity came alongside with it.

The diversifying film production and the expansion of publicity did not evolve into a Finnish star production and despite the growing numbers of the actor articles there was no publicity building. The questions asked were the same than in the early 1920s and the amateur actresses still disappeared in the oblivion after one or sometimes two film roles. The new volume of articles did not break the conventions of writing. Private was still intimate and the only suitable topics of discussion were the career in the theatre and career on the screen. Only time that Elokuva tore down the curtain of privacy was in the autumn of 1929 as it wrote about an iffy ex-officer/a self-made film director and the amateur starlet of his latest film:

---

18 Miksei elokuvan sankarittarella olekaan kiulua kädessä vaikka onkin suomalainen filmitähti ja [Valentin] saa vastauksen, että nyt on kysymyksessä n.s. salonkiosien esittäjä, jonka ei tarvitse muuta kuin hymyillä tyylästi kameraan päin ja taivuttaa pari kertaa ruumistaan taaksepäin, jotta sankari älyäisi suudella häntä.
Cavalry Captain Carl von Haartman has recently got engaged with the leading lady of his direction "Kajastus" [Mirage], Miss Elsa Segerberg. We are certain that all the readers of "Elokuvan" will join the congratulations, that the editorial staff pronounces to the engaged and wishes them success in collaboration on the field of cinema as well as in the course of life in general.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{19}}

NEW IDEOLOGIES AND THE RIVALRY BETWEEN TWO

The first years of the 1930s were nightmarish for the Finnish film production. The recessionary period hit the industry at the same time as the invention of the expensive sound film production. Also the field of the film magazines had suffered from the recession – a new publisher bought both Filmiaitta and Elokuvan and formed of them a new independent film journal Elokuvan-aitta in the year 1932 when was also established a journal for the film professionals (mainly to the theatre owners) called Suomen Kinolehti.

The years 1932-1933 were the worst for the industry, but by the end of 1934 the film production had overcome the biggest problems and instead of one major producer there were now two large film companies, Suomi-Filmi (est. 1919) and Suomen Filmiteollisuus (est. 1933),\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{20}} both under new leaders. From this time onwards the overall situation of production was set for the next 30 years and it was based on the rivalry between two equal contestants.\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{21}} In a few years, these two companies built industrial film production systems upon American and Swedish examples, the production numbers quadrupled.

The new leaders that came outside the film business brought fresh visions to the Finnish cinema. The attitude towards the actors and the publicity shifted for example. In 1934 Suomen Filmiteollisuus cast recent Miss Europe –winner Ester Toivonen to an upcoming film. The role given to the beauty queen was insignificant and it was added to the storyline just moments before

\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{19}} Ratsumestari Carl von Haartman on näinä päivinä mennyt kihlautaamansa "Kajastus" elokuvan naispääosan esittäjän, neiti Elsa Segerbergin kanssa. Olemme varmoja siitä, että kaikki "Elokuvan" lukijat yhtyytä niihin onnitteluihin, jotka toimitus täten lausuu kihlautuneille toivottaa heille menestystä yhteistyössä sekä elokuvan alalla että elämän taipaleelle muutenkin.
\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{20}} The name of the latter was consiously selected to resemble the previous. It was also ”a translation” of the name of the most important Swedish film company Svensk Filmin industri – Suomen Filmiteollisuus = ”Finlands Film Industry”.
\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{21}} From the year 1950 onwards there was also a third equal rival, Fennada, in the competition.
the filming was completed. Still Toivonen was probably the biggest celebrity of the film as the press had been for months filled with information about her and her beauty contest victory.

The competitor Suomi-Filmi did not get any similar celebrities. Instead the company relied now on upbringing its own stable of actresses. In 1934 the new production manager Risto Orko declared in Suomen Kinolehti:

> When we will get the production numbers to rise substantially and by its side the real “film town” will come along. After that, we might be able to employ some permanent acting staff. [--] Anyhow the upcoming growth will give its part for the film training of actors that they need before anything else. This will raise talents, whose art will be enjoyed even outside the Finnish borders. [--] So we can be able to trust that tomorrow the Finnish film star will be nearly equal to her European sisters.

Just like ten years earlier the stardom was still gender-bound and the star was expected to a woman. The innovation was the recognized need for training – Orko even noted in his text that learning at the theatre can damage the acting on screen. This started a new phase that evolved the screen acting in to an independent profession. The starlets no longer disappeared into the oblivion but instead the companies hold on to them. They were trained and given new opportunities on screen.

In only a few years, the importance of actors raised drastically. They were no longer dispensable parts of production and the companies were trying to secure those investments put in them. For the first time it became important to inform the audience about the stars of the company – as actors started to reappear in the short run, they became themes of advertising. Also the pace of the film advertising in general accelerated. In autumn of 1935 both of the major companies established their own advertorial magazines, Suomi-Filmin Uutisaitta and SF-Uutiset. The beginning of both was in some sense amateurish but in year or two they had both evolved in to versatile journals – both of course giving the main focus on their own domestic production. These journals were not the first.

---

22 The film was Meidän poikamme ilmassa – me maassa [Our Boys in the Air – We on the Ground], a patriotic feature of the Finnish air force. Toivonen played a nurse in a nightmare sequence in which the hero dreams of an air raid with a chemical warfare.

23 Kunhan saadaan tuotanto tuntuvasti kasvamaan ja sen turvissa oikea ’filmikaupunki’ kehittymään, silloin voidaan ehkä myöskin kiinnittää jossain mitoissa vakinaista näyttelijäkuntaa filmin palvelukseen. [--] Joka tapauksessa tulee tuotannon kasvamin antamaan sen lisän näyttelijöiden filmikoulutukseen jota he ennenkaikkea tarvitsevat ja nostamaan tästäkin maasta kykyjä, joiden taidetta nautitaan maamme rajojen ulkopuolellassakin. [--] Niinpä siis voinemmekin luottaa siihen, että suomainen filmitähti huomenna on oleva lähipitäen eurooppalainen ammattisarsiensa veroinen.

ones to give a special attention to the Finnish production – Elokuva had done so in the turn of the 1930s – but the altered situation and the rivalry between two companies led to the start of the publicity building.

In the early issues of Suomi-Filmin Uutisaitta and SF-Uutiset the publicity mainly consisted of harmless little stories describing the filming of the upcoming feature film. Companies wanted to show the world of filmmaking to the audience which started the unveiling the private life. As there was a new issue of the magazine each month, there had to be a constant provision of excess information and photographic material to fill the upcoming issues. At this phase for the first time the domestic publicity stills started to appear in large numbers. Of course there had been advertorial stills as long as filmmaking had been organized, but now instead of picturing the scenes of the film, the stills portrayed the actors. This constructed interest upon their person and in this way started to produce them into market commodities, into stars.

If the stardom is understood in a sense given by Richard deCordova,\textsuperscript{24} it is clear that the beginning of rivalry between two and the establishment of the companies’ advertorial magazines indicated the beginning of Finnish stardom. It would be harsh to say that there was no stardom before the year 1935 but it is clearly the time when Finnish film companies adopted the Hollywoodian way of the star production.

At the same time the desire of having a permanent acting staff became true. Usage of the same actors and actor couples in consecutive films became a dominant feature when the most beloved Finnish screen couple Ansa Ikonen and Tauno Palo started to appear together in the year 1935. Soon the presence of the couple was the best possible advert for a film. Already in the autumn of 1935 Suomi-Filmin Uutisaitta wrote:

\begin{quote}
Suomi-Filmi has cast the ”main lovers” of the film “Everybody’s Love” – Ansa Ikonen and Tauno Palo – to an upcoming film. We believe that the Finnish film audience will be very satisfied when getting acquainted with the new film of this lovely couple.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

A year and half later, in the spring of 1937 Suomi-Filmi employed its (and as well the film industry’s in general) first full time screen actor with an incessant monthly salary.\textsuperscript{26} This first

\textsuperscript{24} deCordova 1990, 11-12, 19, 51, 98, 100.
\textsuperscript{25} Suomi-Filmi on kiinnittänyt palvelukseensa ”Kaikki rakastavat” –elokuvan ”päärakastavaiset” – Ansa Ikonen ja Tauno Palon seuraavaan uuteen elokuvaansa – ja uskomme, että Suomen elokuvayleisö tulee hyvin tyytyväisä tätä uutta elokuvaa.
Finnish full time screen actress was Tuulikki Paananen, who had no formal acting training nor ever appeared on the theatre stage. Only year after the employment of actress Paananen there was a full permanent acting staff with a monthly salary in both of the competing companies. Some of these actors were working on both the theatre stage and the silver screen, but there was also a large group of those film professionals who never appeared on the theatre stage. Soon afterwards the competition of the companies got a new feature as the permanently employed actors started to swap the company for a better salary.

THE POWER OF THE PICTURES

The visibility and the excess information became more and more prominent in the tightening competition of the late 1930s. The control over the information distributed however stayed in producing companies and the film producers and distributors seem to have been the keenest distributors of photographs. It was not self-evident to the journals to have one’s own picture production yet in the 1930s. When introducing or interviewing screen actors the independent film journal Elokuva-aitta for example used solely pictures provided by the producing company. It also seems that the journals Elokuva-aitta and Suomen Kinolehti often printed whole articles created by the producing company. Some articles even appeared in the same form in both of the magazines.

The distribution of the photographs did not bring the stars to the pages of non-film-orientated journals. Film culture was still seen as something inferior and trivial. However, it is interesting to notice that the prejudices did not prevent all usage star illustrations. The classy ladies’ magazine Hopeapeili (est. 1936) for example discussed only of Finnish theatre professionals and in only a few occasion of Hollywood stars – usually depicting the latest events in the life of Greta Garbo. Despite the fact that domestic cinema as well as the Hollywood cinema did not interest the magazine, there was a repeated appearance of publicity photos of American stars on the fashion pages of the magazine. It seems that Hopeapeili might have had trouble getting pictures of the latest fashion, so it used those photographs easily on hand. In the publicity stills the stars pose in high fashion clothes

26 Suomi-Filmi’s account diary A 1, 30th of april 1937. Great deal of the accounting of companies has been destroyed or disappeared, which means this statement cannot be said in certainty but it seem to be doubtless that there were not any monthly salaries paid before this incident.

27 She was established dancer and had lived in United States and in Hollywood, for most of her life, which means that she wasn’t mere amateur. She resembled Miss Europe Ester Toivonen in the way that they both were celebrities before entering the film business.

28 See for example Unknown writer: Suomi-Filmin tulevat kotimaiset uutuudet [The upcoming domestic novelties of Suomi-Filmi], Elokuva-aitta 1937/10, 242-243. All photographs are publicity portraits made by Suomi-Filmi.

bringing international style to the readers of Hopeapeili. Furthermore it is interesting to notice that despite there are pictures of many Hollywood stars, the magazine’s favourite star Greta Garbo did not appear on fashion pages. Instead Bette Davis seems to have been the top fashion icon for the magazine with her picture illustrating fashion section in most of the issues.\textsuperscript{30}

The lack of proper illustration was evident also in theatre journal Naamio (est. 1931) which concentrated solely on promoting the theatre. The style of the journal resembles the articles of Filmiaitta in the early 1920s – only the well-established theatre professionals were noticed and usually only in obituaries or articles congratulating 25 or more years on the theatre stage. There were only a few pictures in the journal and much of them consisted of theatre stills that were picturing scenes of the theatre stage. The approach of the journal was strictly professional and was admiring the skills instead of the looks. However, when taking look at the covers of the journal it is revealed that this approach is not constant. It could be that the skills were not commercial enough or that there were not enough photographs of theatre actors or that the readers had the same desire for beauty that Eino Salmelainen had discussed more than ten years earlier by using the name “plump madames” of the respected theatre divas. What ever the reason was, there were female film stars appearing on many covers of Naamio in the late 1930s and what is the most interesting is that they were not those who connected their theatre career with the film career but those who never appeared on stage. Despite the fact that many screen actresses became cover girls of Naamio their names were never mentioned in the articles of the journal.\textsuperscript{31}

**FINNISH STARS AND DECENT PRIVACY**

Despite the growing publicity building the Hollywoodian version of stardom was not adapted to Finland. The Finnish stardom was still understood as something different than the international and the decency was extremely important in the interviews and advertorials.

In the interviews most of the male screen actors were presented as perfect candidates for marriage but at the same time the readers were informed that they were already respectably married men. Many of the interviews took place at the actors’ home displaying the respectable family life and the sweet wife at the same time. Male actors were able to tell about their hobbies and hopes - with the reservation that in the late 1930s it was not suitable for actors to have opinions of politics or religion or other social issues. The screen actresses also discussed themselves, their hobbies and plans for


\textsuperscript{31} See for example the covers of Naamio 7-8/1937 (Regina Linnanheimo), 1/1938 (Tuulikki Paananen), 6/1938 (Sirkka Sari) and 8/1938 (Helena Kara).
the future. Through this, they were depicted as respectable, honest and hard working young women who did not have unrealistic illusion about their own abilities. The difference to the male actors was that the actresses’ private life was more secured. The interviews were usually done somewhere else than at home and the husbands (if there were any) were not presented in public.

It is self-evident that as most of the star information was produced by the companies there was nothing compromising in them. Despite the new kind of publicity building in the late 1930s there were no pulp magazines or paparazzo in Finland and the kindness of the press continued also in the independent journals.

There were divorces and affairs among the Finnish actors but the journals did not mention even the upcoming marriages or the birth of children. Usually, the marriages were reported months afterward and then the marital status was presented as a fact that had always been there – no-one was in the newly-wed phase of life. When expecting the actresses quietly disappeared from the public. During the pregnancy, the producing company kept distributing older photos so that no one was even able to notice the absence. After the child birth, the actresses reappeared around the time of christening with the notion that they were again as thin as before the pregnancy. Marriages, divorces, affairs and pregnancies were great taboos that no-one saw suitable for presenting in public. In the year 1939 the most celebrated Finnish film actress (and a young theatre professional) Ansa Ikonen for example gave birth to a daughter only a few weeks after marriage with actor Jalmari Rinne. Ikonen and Rinne had been an item for a couple of years and even lived together, but there was nothing in the press suggesting that especially as Rinne was still married to actress Anni Aitto until the autumn of 1939. The marriage of Ikonen and Rinne became public only in the early 1940s.

FINNISH FILM CULTURE

The star building and the publicity are always closely connected with the film economics. Another important connection they make with the national ideologies of the cinema culture and the actorship. One can say that the Hollywood stardom is an example for all the other stardoms around the globe, but it doesn’t mean that the American way would completely be adopted. The Finnish stardom rose from the Finnish context and most probably the greatest influence on it came not from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean but from the Finnish theatre culture and from the Finnish ideas of the proper publicity. The Finnish stardom and the screen actorship that evolved during the interwar period grew from the international models but in a way that it was able to be adopted by the Finnish society.
The domestication of the international film culture and the adoption of it to the Finnish context required the development of the Finnish periodical press. The independent press did not see the film culture distinguished enough to be the topic of the articles but it did not stop them from using the film culture for their own benefit as illustrations. On the other hand as there was no dirt digging in the Finnish press during the period under scrutiny, it was extremely easy for the film producers to control the media. The press was probably even too passive – as it has been seen from this article the development of the stardom occurred in the magazines owned by the film companies. If there were no company advertorials like Suomi-Filmin Uutisaitta and SF-uutiset the Finnish stardom would have been much more modest on the eve of the Second World War.

LIST OF REFERENCES:

Journals:
Suomen Kuvalehti
Filmiaita
Elokuvu
Elokuvu-aitta
Suomen Kinolehti
Suomi-Filmin Uutisaitta
SF-Uutiset
Naamio
Hopeapeili


Mervi Pantti 2000: "Kansallinen elokuva pelastettava". Elokuvapoliittinen keskustelu kotimaisen elokuvan tukemisesta itsenäisyyden ajalla. ["National Cinema Must Be Saved"] The debate on subsidising domestic film