

Cold War Ideology or Corporate Profit?: The Motivations Behind the Movietime U.S.A. Tours, 1951-1952

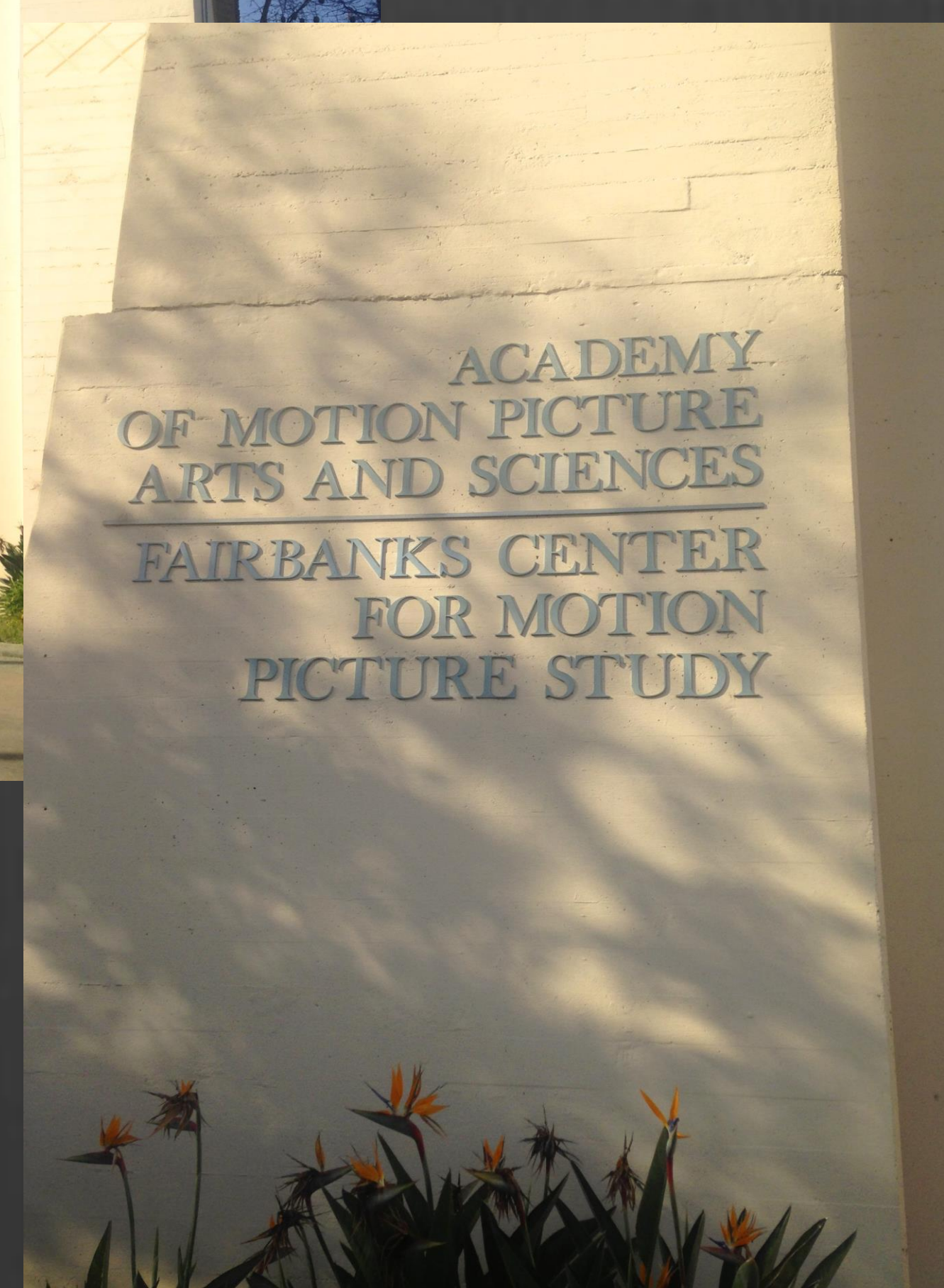
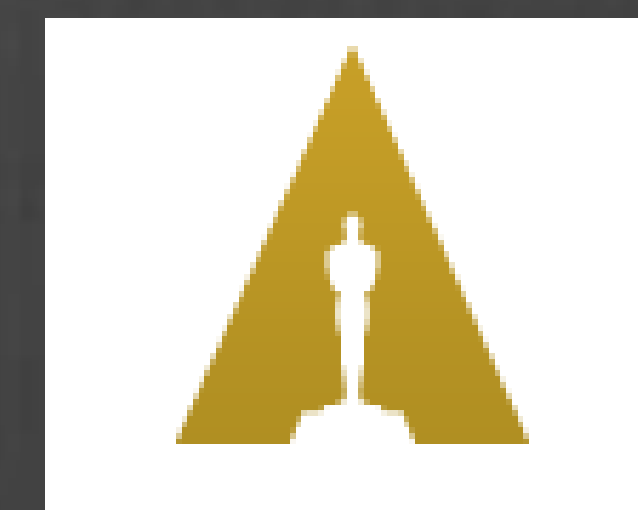
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Thesis: The Movietime U.S.A Campaign was Hollywood's attempt to conform to the new dominant culture pervading Cold War era America to increase profits. It was a PR campaign to demystify, de-villainize, and clean up the tarnished image of Hollywood and increase box office profits that had been steadily declining.

Methodology:

For this project I analyzed both primary and secondary sources. Books on the basic history and film industry of the 1950s were used. Newspaper articles from the NY Times, The Motion Picture Daily, and various local newspapers from around the country were also used. The most interesting sources came from the the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences library in Beverly Hills where I found newspaper clippings, reports, and personal correspondence that illuminated the behind the scenes activity of COMPO and the film industry.



Conclusions:

The post war period was a strange time in America where the white, middle class culture became the dominant culture and value system in America. The 1950s were an era of conformity and the cultural trends were so pervasive that anything or anyone who did not conform, including the famously non-conformist film industry, were stigmatized. The film industry attributed its declining profits to a number of factors, but the changing culture was the number one issue. To answer the question of ideology or profit, the answer is both: Hollywood conformed and changed their image to fit into the pervasive ideology to rectify their declining profits, and they did so through the Movietime U.S.A. Campaign.