

# The Museum of Modern Art

Ben Hecht returned to the newspaper comedy, a genre he helped create with *The Front Page*, for this classic screwball farce. Fredric March stars as a New York reporter who thinks he knows every angle—until he encounters a grifter just as gifted as he is, in the alluring person of Carole Lombard as a small-town girl whose phony plight (she claims to be a victim of radiation poisoning) has all of Manhattan sobbing at her feet. Director William Wellman contributes his distinctively violent version of the battle of the sexes: March famously punches Lombard on the jaw, just as James Cagney shoved a grapefruit into Mae Clarke's face in Wellman's *Public Enemy*.

This new MoMA restoration is based on the original Technicolor separations in the Museum's collection, and is the first to reflect the experimental color design of the film's first 1937 release. Backing away from the harsh tones of early two-color Technicolor, cinematographer W. Howard Greene uses Technicolor's new three-strip process to create softer, paler color washes, an intriguing effect that later reissues obscured by pumping up the hues to the standard Technicolor intensity.

*Organized by Dave Kehr Curator, Department of Film.*