
TRUE ART TRANSCENDS TIME
SAN FRANCISCO
SILENT
FILM FESTIVAL
June 1-4, 2017
The CASTRO THEATRE

Welcome to the San Francisco Silent Film Festival for four days and nights of live cinema! This is SFSFF's twenty-second year of presenting silent-era masterpieces with live musical accompaniment. This year's edition features films from nine countries and dozens of musicians from around the world.

SFSFF is a nonprofit organization committed to educating the public about silent-era cinema as a valuable historical and cultural record as well as an art form with enduring relevance.

In a remarkably short time after the birth of moving pictures, filmmakers developed all of the techniques that make cinema the powerful medium it is today—everything except for the ability to marry sound to the film print. Yet these films can be breathtakingly modern. They have influenced every subsequent generation of filmmakers and they continue to astonish and delight audiences a century after they were made. SFSFF carries on silent cinema's live musical tradition, presenting these films with accompaniment by the world's foremost practitioners of putting music to picture.

Showcasing silent-era titles, often in restored or preserved prints, SFSFF has long supported film preservation and now also has a direct hand in major film restoration projects. As ever, our initiatives are inspired by the late film preservationist David Shepard (1940–2017), silent-era gem wrangler and longtime festival friend. We dedicate this year's festival to him.

Enjoy the festival!

silentfilm.org

THURSDAY JUNE 1

7:00 PM THE FRESHMAN
Music by the Berklee Silent Film Orchestra
Underwritten by Adam S. Rubinson
Introduction by Sheldon Mirowitz and Suzanne Lloyd

FRIDAY JUNE 2

10:00 AM AMAZING TALES FROM THE ARCHIVES
Presenters: George Willeman, Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, and Heather Linville
Music by Donald Sosin

1:00 PM GET YOUR MAN with restored fragment from NOW WE'RE IN THE AIR
Music by Stephen Horne
Introduction by Cari Beauchamp

3:30 PM THE DUMB GIRL OF PORTICI
Music by Donald Sosin and Frank Bockius
Underwritten by Leather Gloves by Fratelli Orsini
Introduction by Shelley Stamp

7:00 PM BODY AND SOUL
Music and Introduction by DJ Spooky

9:30 PM THE INFORMER
Music by Stephen Horne, Guenter Buchwald, and Frank Bockius
Introduction by Bryony Dixon

SATURDAY JUNE 3

10:00 AM MAGIC AND MIRTH
Music by Donald Sosin and Frank Bockius
Introduction by Serge Bromberg

12:00 NOON A STRONG MAN
Music by Guenter Buchwald and Sascha Jacobsen
Introduction by Eddie Muller

2:30 PM FILIBUS
Music by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra
Underwritten by Kenneth and Marjorie Sauer
2017 SFSFF Award presentation to EYE Filmmuseum
Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi of EYE will accept the award and introduce the film

5:00 PM OUTSIDE THE LAW
Music by Stephen Horne and Frank Bockius
Introduction by Leonard Maltin

7:15 PM BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN
Music by the Matti Bye Ensemble
Underwritten by Friends of the Silent Film Festival

9:30 PM A PAGE OF MADNESS
Music by Alloy Orchestra

SUNDAY JUNE 4

10:00 AM THE DOLL
Music by Guenter Buchwald and Frank Bockius
Introduction by Jay Weissberg

12:00 NOON SILENCE
Music by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra
Introduction by Robert Bryne

2:00 PM A MAN THERE WAS
Music by the Matti Bye Ensemble
Introduction by Jay Weissberg

4:00 PM THE LOST WORLD
Music by Alloy Orchestra
Underwritten by Frank Buxton and Cynthia Sears
Introduction by Serge Bromberg

6:30 PM TWO DAYS
Music by Stephen Horne

8:15 PM THE THREE MUSKETEERS
Music by the Guenter Buchwald Ensemble
Underwritten by McRoskey Mattress Company
Introduction by Tracey Goessel

Special support provided by the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, the Consulate General of Sweden in San Francisco, the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the US, and the French American Cultural Society

SFSFF2017
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Louise Brooks in *Now We're in the Air*

MUSICIANS AT THE FESTIVAL

ALLOY ORCHESTRA is a three-man musical ensemble that uses found percussion and state-of-the-art electronics to create uniquely eclectic scores for classic silent films. Founded more than twenty-five years ago, Alloy has composed and performed in venues around the world as well as recorded for numerous DVD releases. Members include Terry Donahue, Roger Miller, and Ken Winokur, who this year perform original scores for *A Page of Madness* and *The Lost World*.

Incubated at Boston's world-renowned Berklee School of Music, the **BERKLEE SILENT FILM ORCHESTRA** works under the leadership of three-time Emmy nominee Sheldon Mirowitz to compose original scores for classic silent films and perform them live. BSFO returns for its third appearance at the festival to play on opening night for *The Freshman*. The 2017 class composers are Vincent Isler, Esin Aydingoz, Bernard Duc, Victoria Ruggiero, Andres Gutierrez, Jeffrey Gaiser, and Vinicius Pippa.

A versatile jazz percussionist, **FRANK BOCKIUS** has performed for dance and theater companies as well as in his own bands, including the jazz quintet Whisper Hot and the percussion ensemble Timpanicks. He joined Guenter Buchwald's Silent Movie Music Company more than twenty years ago and has since accompanied silent films at festivals in Kyoto, Pordenone, and Sodankylä, Finland. He joins Guenter Buchwald, Stephen Horne, and Donald Sosin for several programs this year.

Conductor, composer, pianist, and violinist **GUENTER BUCHWALD** is a pioneer of the renaissance in silent film music. He has provided live accompaniment for thousand of titles, playing at festivals worldwide from Berlin to Tokyo, both solo and with other musicians through his Silent Movie Music Company. In addition to accompanying *A Strong Man* and *The Doll* and joining Stephen Horne for *The Informer*, Buchwald leads the Guenter Buchwald Ensemble for the festival's closing night film.

Based at London's BFI Southbank, **STEPHEN HORNE** is considered one of the leading silent film accompanists working today and his music has met with acclaim worldwide. Principally a pianist, he often incorporates other instruments into his performances, sometimes playing them simultaneously. This year, he performs solo for *Get Your Man* and *Two Days* and is joined by other accompanists for *The Informer* and *Outside the Law*.

Bassist **SASCHA JACOBSEN** draws on a variety of musical styles from classical to jazz and Argentine Tango. He is the founder of the Musical Art Quintet, which premiered Jacobsen's original score for *Diary of a Lost Girl* in 2016. The quintet also recently performed an original Jacobsen composition for a program of short films at the San Francisco Exploratorium. He has performed in past festivals alongside Donald Sosin and Guenter Buchwald and, this year, joins Buchwald for *A Strong Man* and *The Three Musketeers*.

MATTI BYE ENSEMBLE seeks that magical, emotional alchemy between music and images, playing a wide variety of instruments that includes piano, glockenspiel, violin, musical saw, and other percussion. It is led by award-winning film composer Matti Bye, who is also the Swedish Film Institute's resident silent-movie pianist. In addition to Bye, the ensemble members include Kristian Holmgren, Henrik Olsson, and Laura Naukkarinen. This year, they will accompany *Battleship Potemkin* and *A Man There Was*.

PAUL D. MILLER, AKA DJ SPOOKY, making his first appearance at the San Francisco Silent Film Festival, is an artist and composer with an affinity for silent film. In 2004 he premiered his live remix of D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation—Rebirth of a Nation*—at New York's Lincoln Center and has composed for Oleksandr Dovzhenko's *Earth* and Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, among others. Most recently, he executive-produced the *Pioneers of African-American Cinema* box set, which features his scores for two Oscar Micheaux films.

A chamber ensemble that revives the tradition of silent-film orchestras, **MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA** culls historic libraries of music for its live musical accompaniment. Together, Rodney Sauer, Britt Swenson, David Short, Brian Collins, and Dawn Kramer have recorded and toured widely, creating vibrant, emotional, and historically appropriate musical scores for more than 120 films. This year, the orchestra accompanies two recent archive discoveries, *Filibus* and *Silence*.

Pianist **DONALD SOSIN** scores silent films for major festivals, archives, and DVD recordings. He is the resident accompanist at New York's Film Society of Lincoln Center, the Museum of the Moving Image, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. His scores are heard regularly on Turner Classic Movies and his music accompanies films on more than fifty DVD releases. He has performed at the San Francisco Silent Film Festival since 2007 and, this year, plays for *The Dumb Girl of Portici* and *The Three Musketeers* as well as for the Amazing Tales and Magic and Mirth programs.

Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra at SFSFF 2014. Photo by Pamela Gentile

THE FRESHMAN

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY THE BERKLEE SILENT FILM ORCHESTRA

DIRECTED BY SAM TAYLOR and FRED NEWMEYER, USA, 1925
CAST Harold Lloyd, Jobyna Ralston, Brooks Benedict, James Anderson, Hazel Keener, Joseph Harrington, and Pat Harmon **PRODUCTION** Harold Lloyd Corporation **PRINT SOURCE** Janus Films

There are many great silent comedies worthy of a festival's opening night, but Harold Lloyd's *The Freshman* isn't just funny, it's foolproof. We all love to root for an underdog, and in this masterfully constructed feature Lloyd builds story and character hand-in-hand to a climax that has us cheering out loud.

Although he is remembered for his persona as an all-American go-getter, sporting horn-rimmed glasses and a straw hat, Lloyd played a variety of charactrs in his feature films of the 1920s, including a mama's boy, a henpecked husband, and a bored millionaire. He always won over his audiences, but the eager, wide-eyed innocent trying to make the college football team he portrays in *The Freshman* is irresistible.

NOT JUST FUNNY, IT'S FULLPROOF.

Yet, in real life, Lloyd still battles for respect among film historians and fans. Unlike his contemporaries Charles Chaplin and Buster Keaton, he is rarely cited as an artist or an auteur—despite being just as responsible for his films as they were. The biggest difference is that he never took credit for writing and directing, as they did.

Lloyd labored over his feature films for months on end, constantly working to improve sequences and build a stronger plot structure for the gags. When that was done, he tested his films with theater audiences and then performed further surgery to make them as perfect as possible. Lloyd's work paid off in the 1920s and continues to yield results whenever his films are shown to modern-day audiences. They are not just funny; they are guaranteed to be funny, because the ingredients for laughter haven't really changed over the years, and Lloyd's films are audience-proven.

Harold Lloyd's determination to make his films as good as they could be stemmed from his Horatio Alger-type upbringing. A product of the Midwest who caught the acting bug as a youngster, he broke into the movies with the same kind of ambition and optimism he later portrayed in his comedies.

He started out as an extra, earning several dollars a day and doing his own makeup. He became friendly with another extra named Hal Roach, who inherited some money and decided to try his luck as a producer. Lloyd became his first star. The character they settled on was an ersatz version of Chaplin's Little Tramp called Willie Work; then Lloyd modified his costume and became Lonesome Luke.

In Lloyd's subsequent features, he carefully thought out his characterizations and worked with his writers so that the story and sight gags grew out of that character. This was what set Lloyd apart from other journeymen comics who relied on jokes alone. Lloyd's character changed from film to film, but whatever the premise, he made sure that he never did anything that felt out of character in that particular story.

Lloyd eventually parted company with Hal Roach; he wanted ownership and control of his work. When he

Harold Lloyd. Photo courtesy of Harold Lloyd Entertainment Inc.

set up his own production company, Lloyd gathered a team of comedy specialists and technicians who were on salary year-round, even during lulls between pictures. He had plenty of help to make his films, but as he later remarked, "If anything went wrong and I didn't like it, I had nobody to blame but myself. I had complete control over all my pictures."

Lloyd never released more than two features a year and, after 1924, only one a year, so he was keenly aware of the challenge of making each film better than the last. Every time he and his team worked on an idea they tried to devise ways to take the same basic elements and make them funnier, more elaborate than ever before.

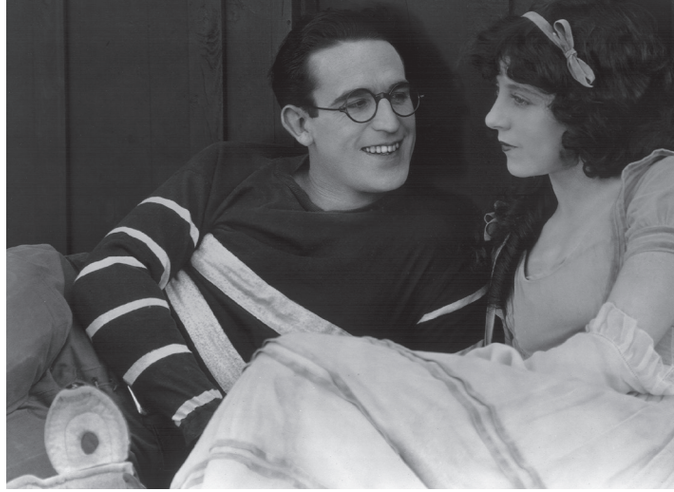
The chase is a good example. In *Girl Shy* (1924) Harold discovers that the girl he loves is about to marry a conniving bigamist, and he races to rescue her at the church, commandeering a streetcar at one point and switching from one vehicle to another in order to meet his frantic deadline. It's a wonderful climax to this deliberately paced film, but the near-misses of his trolley with passing cars are a bit too regulated, too exact to be entirely convincing.

Lloyd vowed to improve on this chase in *For Heaven's Sake* (1926), but this time it's embellished with a variety of hilarious twists and turnabouts. It's a crowd of pedestrians Harold is egging on, and, at one point turning a corner, the angry mob chases after someone who looks like Harold from the rear, leaving the real Harold behind! Undaunted, Harold hops into a taxi, which easily bypasses the runners; he tells the perplexed "double" to jump inside and, as he does, Harold takes his place and continues the chase!

Lloyd's characters, and the spirit of his comedies, represented everything upbeat and affirmative about America in the 1920s. He was the meek inheriting the Earth, an ordinary boy-next-door who survived by his wits, won the girl. Everyone remembers Harold climbing the side of a building and hanging from a clock in *Safety Last* (1923), but it's equally important to recall that the reason he's ended up there is his desire to make good and impress his girl back home.

When sound came to Hollywood in the late 1920s, it caught Lloyd off guard, and he hastily remade much of his then-current production, *Welcome Danger*, to be able to release it as a talkie. But this slow, ponderous production was his first misstep in many years. When Lloyd returned to familiar ground for his next film, *Feet First*, critics and audiences welcomed it as a return to "old-fashioned" filmmaking from the silent era.

Thus Mordaunt Hall in the *New York Times* wrote of Lloyd's 1932 *Movie Crazy*, "After the gangster films and those concerned with the more or less serious activities of gossip mongers and crooners, this offering came to those in the packed theater (last night) as a relief, for it made the spectators forget all about the trials and tribulations of the world outside."



At left: Harold Lloyd. Top right: Harold Lloyd and Jobyna Ralston
Photos courtesy of Harold Lloyd Entertainment Inc.

As the 1930s wore on, Lloyd's brand of humor became scarce on movie screens and his films—which came in intervals of two years—were greeted in similar fashion every time. Of *The Milky Way* (1936), Frank S. Nugent wrote in the *Times*, "It's good to have an old-time Harold Lloyd comedy back in town," while the *New Yorker* critic said, "Without any of those mechanical stunts that you find in a Cantor picture or the Marx Brothers' operettas, this Lloyd film manages to sustain a pleasantly soothing humor throughout. It's a comedy of the untoward catastrophes that may befall one of the world's innocents."

There simply wasn't much room for innocence in Depression-era America and, more and more, Lloyd harked back to a simpler time for moviegoers and critics who appreciated the tranquility of the 1920s.

After *Professor Beware*, a genial but lackluster film in 1938, Lloyd retired from the screen, without announcement or fanfare. He dabbled in producing at RKO but was generally inactive until the brilliant writer-director Preston Sturges coaxed him back to movies in 1946 with a vehicle tailor-made for him: *The Sin of Harold Diddlebock* (ultimately released as *Mad Wednesday*).

The premise was irresistible: The new film opened with the climax of Lloyd's classic football game from *The Freshman*, in which underdog bench-warmer Harold is called into action at the last minute and wins the game. The film then follows Harold's progress as he ages to show (of all things) that the onetime All-American Hero is now a stoop-shouldered clerk whose life has been one long yawn. Fired from his job, Harold chances to meet a street straggler named Wormy, who, through drink and persuasion, changes Harold's personality overnight. He decides to live it up for the first time in twenty years and goes on a mad spree during which he loses track of an entire day and awakens to find that he has somehow purchased a circus! The film even manages to include a brief sequence on a building ledge with Harold and a lion.

Unfortunately, *Mad Wednesday* never quite lives up to its premise. But then, even a genius like Preston Sturges had a tough act to follow: the finale of *The Freshman*. In some ways it marks the pinnacle of Harold Lloyd's screen career—and that, in turn, represents the zenith of silent film comedy.

— LEONARD MALTIN

BSFO COMPOSERS Vincent Isler, Esin Aydingoz, Bernard Duc, Victoria Ruggiero, Andres Gutierrez, Jeffrey Gaiser, and Vinicius Pippa
PLAYERS Gabriela Sofia Gomez Estevez (flute/piccolo), Lindsey Stein (oboe/English horn), Stephanie Clark (clarinet/bass clarinet), Dan Pfeiffer (horn), Joey Epstein (trumpet), Ethan Santos (trombone/bass trombone), Kino Lee (keyboard), Eren Başbuğ (keyboard), Tania Mesa (violin), Nathaniel Taylor (cello), Michael Simon (bass), and Patrick Hanafin (percussion)
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Sheldon Mirowitz
MANAGING DIRECTOR Rob Hayes

Harold Lloyd runs with a tough crowd in "The Freshman" (1925)

Yes Men Need Not Apply

Harold Lloyd says that he has neither the desire nor room for an employee who will not voice an opinion and on occasion differ with him. And therein he is different—oh, very!

By A.L. Wooldridge

"If I had a yes man on my staff, I'd fire him," remarked Harold Lloyd as I sat talking to him at his studio. "When I go to any one in my employ, and say, 'Don't you think it would be better to make that scene the other way?' I expect him to bark, 'I should say not!' if he doesn't agree with me. I want constructive answers. No one ever has or ever will be discharged from my service for having opinions. Great guns, that's what I hire men for!"

Harold Lloyd is about the only producer in Hollywood who isn't surrounded—yes, absolutely walled in—by yes men. There may be one or two others, but not many. The majority keep only those men who agree with their every suggestion, adopt unhesitatingly their every plan, and rise on their hind legs occasionally to tell them how wonderful they are. But not Harold Lloyd!

"I would be in a sorry state, too, if I bluntly refused to listen to suggestions and arguments from members of my staff. Do you remember that scene in 'The Freshman' where my new tuxedo began falling to pieces? Remember how, little by little, it was splitting and coming off? Audiences at the previews roared with laughter at my predicament.

"'Harold,' Francis Marion said to me 'they want to see you lose your pants! You must let 'em come off entirely.'

"Two of my gag men said the very same thing, but I thought that just the suggestion would be better. But, to try it out, we took the scene over again, and this time my pants were ripped entirely away.

"Well, as you know, it proved to be the crowning moment of 'The Freshman.'

"It is strange the way theater audiences react. Things you think are excruciatingly funny are received dully by them. One of my greatest surprises came in 'The Freshman.'

"I, the freshman, was starting to the college ball, arrayed gloriously—as I thought—in my new tuxedo. I came blithely, happily, out of the door of my boarding house and went swinging down the steps, enthusiastic over seeing my girl and dancing at the ball. As I stepped to the street, a four-leaf clover caught my eye.

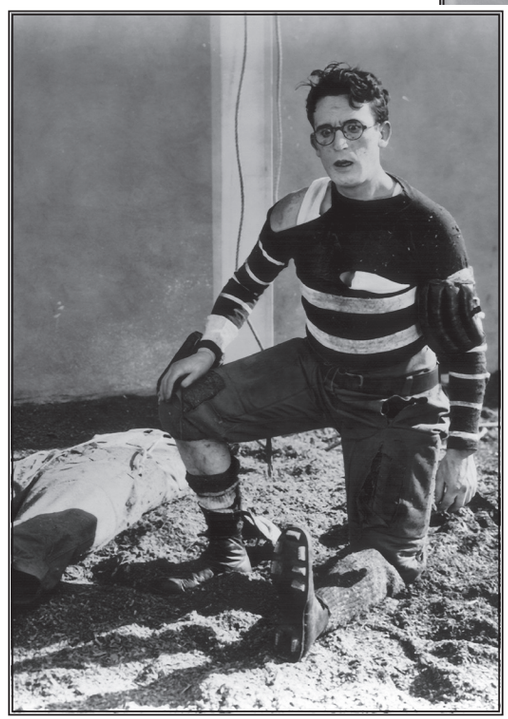
"'Ah, good luck!' I cried. Simultaneously, a hold-up man stepped from the shadows and, poking a gun in my ribs, ordered me to 'stick 'em up.' But I went on after that clover just the same. Just as I plucked it and stood up, a policeman came in sight and the robber darted away. 'Great!' I thought, 'See what my four-leaf clover did!'

"I went on, carrying the precious thing in my hand. Then I snagged a big hole in the seat of my trousers when I backed up against a fence, and pretty soon, an automobile went roaring by, sloshing into a mudhole and spattering me from head to foot.

"I looked at myself, as much as to say, 'Well, as a good-luck piece, that clover leaf's a Jonah,' and I dashed it down.

"Wouldn't you think that a funny piece of pantomime? If you do, you and I are all alone. After a preview or two, we cut it out."

Previews, Harold says, are "bread and meat" to him. A picture of his never is released until it has been tried out "in the sticks" four or five times, and worked over until every foot of film means something. By "the sticks" he does not mean places out in the country, but small neighborhood theaters in Los Angeles and principal theaters in the suburban towns. City audiences, with whom the movies play such an important part of everyday life, are avoided. Such patrons are too critical and have too many acquaintances in the films. Their applause comes at inopportune moments, and sometimes is given in tribute to some favorite in the cast rather than for merit in the play.



Harold Lloyd's no dummy in "The Freshman" (1925)

"Sometimes little incidents which we think don't amount to much make the audiences roar with laughter," Harold continued. "And on the other hand, incidents we have elaborated tend sometimes almost to kill the picture."

There is more democracy in the Harold Lloyd company than in any other in Hollywood. The camera men go to Mr. Lloyd with suggestions and are welcomed. The extra girl or the property man can sit down with him and explain "great ideas" and be assured of kindly interest. While Harold himself conceives and executes nearly all the episodes in his productions, he insists that his staff tell him when they think he is wrong.

Harold Lloyd never yet has turned out a picture which "flopped." And he says he never will—if he can keep the yes men away.

Excerpted and adapted from *Picture-Play* magazine's September 1926 issue.

AMAZING TALES FROM THE ARCHIVES

PRESENTATIONS

HEARING SILENTS

Since the earliest days of moving images, innovators strove to marry sound to picture. Of the two hundred or more Kinetophones that Thomas Edison produced in 1913 and 1914, only a handful of the films and their accompanying sound cylinders survive. Library of Congress preservationist **GEORGE WILLEMAN** shares these unique artifacts, preserved in collaboration with the Thomas Edison National Historical Park.

"THE WORLD'S MOST TRAVELED GIRL"

In the late 1920s Aloha Wanderwell Baker became the first woman to travel around the world by car, deploying her 35mm camera the way travelers today pull out their Go-cams. Stopping to develop footage along the way, she showed her films wherever she could, at an Istanbul movie palace or a tin-shack theater near a diamond mine somewhere in Africa. **HEATHER LINVILLE** delves into the collection of documentary footage that Baker donated to the Academy Film Archive in 1985.

STROLLING THROUGH THE ARCHIVE

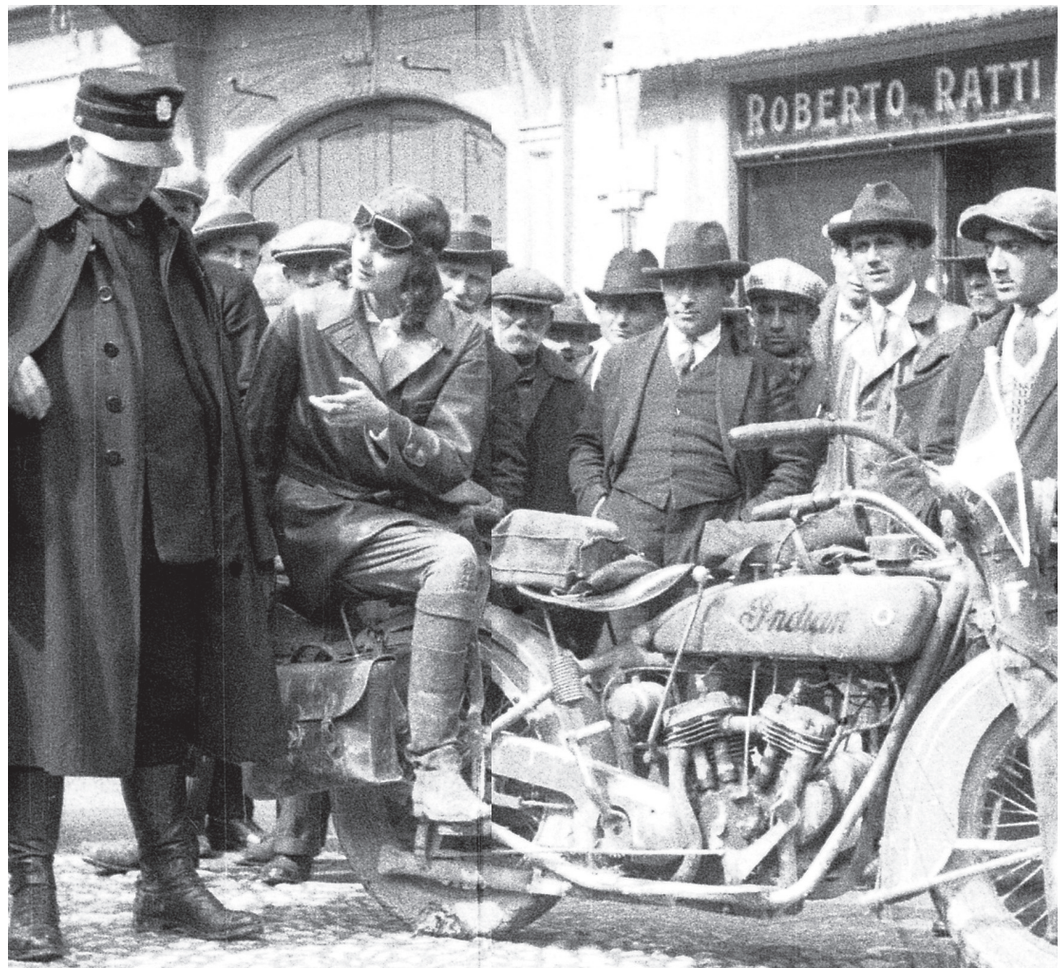
The Desmet Collection of films and ephemera deposited in 1957 at the Netherlands national film archive has since been inscribed in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register for its significance to world culture. Its nine hundred-plus titles, many in color, and its tens of thousands of documents (posters, programs, piano tuner receipts, insurance papers, etc.) have upended previously held notions about the first decades of cinema's silent era. **ELIF RONGEN-KAYNAKÇI**, curator of silent film at EYE Filmmuseum, takes what she calls "an impossible stroll" through the collection, giving a glimpse of what is already known and what might yet be discovered.

Clockwise from right:

Jack's Joke, an Edison Kinetophone, preserved at the Library of Congress.

A poster for *Launch of an Observation Balloon* from the Desmet Collection, from EYE Filmmuseum

Documentary scene from the Aloha Wanderwell Film Collection at the Academy Film Archive.



THE STATE OF PRESERVATION

Mike Mashon of the Library of Congress

Interview by Marilyn Ferdinand

Silent films, TV shows, screwball comedies, instructional films—they're all welcome at the Library of Congress, the de facto national library of the United States. Mike Mashon, head of the library's Moving Image Section, is the person who oversees the collection, preservation, and protection of our moving image heritage. With about 1.4 million moving image items in the collection, it's a big job. As a self-admitted "mid-level government bureaucrat," Mashon devotes himself mainly to administrative duties, but he is passionate about making the library's holdings available to a worldwide audience, particularly online.

HOW DO MOVING IMAGE ITEMS USUALLY COME INTO THE LIBRARY?

There are typically two paths: copyright deposit and by going out and acquiring material. We are the copyright library of the U.S., and moving image material registered for copyright has a permanent place in the national collection. We do actively acquire some of the larger collections, but there are smaller ones as well, not always of well-known figures. There are plenty of people, like film collectors, who have materials they want to give us. There are also acquisition officers within the Library of Congress who work with us to acquire material from overseas.

We're fortunate to have a modest budget for purchasing collections. Maybe a decade ago, there was a gentleman named J. Fred MacDonald who operated a really successful stock footage house in Chicago. I had been talking to Fred for years and years, and finally the time was right—he wanted to get out of the footage business, and we had some money. So we purchased about forty thousand reels of film, really interesting material: television shows that we didn't have in the collection, newsreels that were pitched specifically for African-American audiences. The J. Fred MacDonald Collection is the gift that keeps on giving.

WHAT IS THE LIBRARY'S ROLE IN PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION?

The thing that separates us from a lot of other archives is that we have our own preservation budget. I've got a film preservation laboratory, a video laboratory, and an audio laboratory, so we do all our own work. Sound rerecording and color preservation are the only things we have to send out. We've got about 140 million feet of nitrate, and if we see something's really deteriorated, we try to get it up to the laboratory as quickly as we can. There's this constant stream of preservation that's going through our laboratory, taking nitrate, typically, and making a new safety film copy.

Every once in a while, a film lends itself to restoration. For us, restoration is finding multiple elements, bringing them all together, either doing photochemical preservation or scanning and outputting film. Not everything lends itself to restoration. One film that did was a feature documentary from 1915 called *On the Firing Line with the Germans*, by Wilbur H. Durborough and Irving Ries. We used the best surviving scenes from among thirty-two reels of nitrate film, nine reels of paper print fragments, and supplemental 35mm film from the National Archives and assembled the digital files for the completed version. It is now one of the films streaming on our *Now See Hear!* blog.

"Why collect this material if you can't make it available?"

I JUST WATCHED A DELIGHTFUL 1926 FILM ON THAT BLOG, THE MIDNIGHT MESSAGE.

I was just talking to Stephen Horne, who composed and played the new score for that film. It's part of the Silent Film Project, whose goal is to catalog, digitally preserve, and ensure the availability of silent and certain sound-era films for public viewing and research. I'm really looking forward to making more silent films accessible online, as many with scores as we can manage. In the past year and a half, we have scanned almost one hundred silent features and well over two hundred shorts, newsreels, and other kinds of material. Among them is a short from 1928 called *Coney Island, New York's Playground*. From 1929, we have a home movie of Mary Pickford and twenty-five beauty contest winners who got to spend the day with her when she was shooting *Coquette*. We have both the sound and silent versions of *Coquette* in our collection. From around 1920, there's an informational film called *A Trip Thru a Modern Bottling Plant*. We're very fortunate to be working with collectors on this project.

The thing that's slowed us down is metadata to make the films usable, which may be nothing more than the title, "16mm," "silent." Maybe a release date, maybe not, to enhance the record. One I keep using is *Carbon Arc Demo*. That's a made-up title that indicates the film demonstrates the uses of a carbon arc projector. I don't see any credits, I don't even see a date, but I do see it was a 16mm color composite positive. That's all we know right now. You can have a very minimal record, but the more we can provide in the cataloging record, the more footholds there are for the user.

HOW DO YOU USE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY NOW AND HOW WILL YOU USE IT IN THE FUTURE?

We don't have a very large digital department, but when we decide that we're really going to bear down on something digitally, we have various pieces of software to work with. One project, part of the festival's Amazing Tales program this year, the Edison Kinetophone films, an early attempt by Thomas Edison to sync wax cylinder recordings with film. The Thomas Edison National Historical Park made recordings from the cylinders and we were able to marry them to the film. It would have been pretty much impossible before digital because of variations in the speeds of the films and the cylinders and multiple takes. My colleague, George Willeman, did all of this work in Final Cut Pro.

WHAT IS YOUR AGENDA FOR MAKING MORE FILMS ACCESSIBLE?

We've always rather prided ourselves on the accessibility of our collection. From the origins of this division in 1970 and, even before that, qualified researchers could come to the research center on Capitol Hill and watch movies, now they are digital files or 35mm prints for things we haven't digitized.

But the thing that excites me about digital is that it gives us the possibility of making our collections available online around the world. This is my all-consuming goal as the head of the moving image section; genuinely more than anything else in my career, this is what motivates. Why collect this material if you can't make it available?

In addition to the Edison Kinetophones, the Library of Congress has provided this year's festival with the restored *Get Your Man*.

GET YOUR MAN

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY STEPHEN HORNE

DIRECTED BY DOROTHY ARZNER, USA, 1927
CAST Clara Bow, Charles Rogers, Josef Swickard, Josephine Dunn, and Harvey Clark **PRODUCTION** Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation **PRINT SOURCE** Library of Congress

Preceded by surviving fragments of Paramount's 1927 comedy ***NOW WE'RE IN THE AIR,*** newly restored by the San Francisco Silent Film Festival. (For more about the film, see page 22.)

How lucky are we to get to see the newly restored 1927 comedy *Get Your Man*? Starring the utterly delicious Clara Bow paired with the handsome Charles "Buddy" Rogers (billed without his "Buddy") and directed by Dorothy Arzner in her debut year, it's one of those allegedly minor movies that often reveal an era better than the more so-called important releases do. *Get Your Man* is very much in and of its time and thus free to be what it is: an unknown Clara Bow vehicle that's a whole lot of fun. Watching it is a trip back into 1927 for a great night at the movies, nothing more, but happily, nothing less.

Get Your Man showcases Clara Bow. She's well-directed and supported by a charming costar, but *Get Your Man* is dominated by Bow's natural and unselfconscious pizzazz. She plays a wealthy American girl on holiday in Paris, zipping around town, shopping and seeing the sights. She bumps into Rogers, who inexplicably plays a French heir to a dukedom despite his very all-American clean-cut looks and his "gee whiz" aura. When they're accidentally locked into a museum for an overnight stay, Bow and Rogers fall in love. The complication? He's noble, and thus forced to tell her the next morning that he's already engaged to a girl his father betrothed him to when he was a tot. Does Bow slink away all heartbroken after hearing this? Well, why would she? She's Clara Bow and her problem is only a bunch of men: the guy she just fell in love with, his daddy, and the doomed fiancée's father. If there's anything Clara Bow knows how to handle, it's three rich guys.

IF THERE'S ANYTHING CLARA BOW KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE, IT'S THREE RICH GUYS.

Clara Bow's career is the epitome of the Hollywood silent-film era Cinderella story, warts and all. An unwanted child born into poverty and inherited madness, Bow's young life was as tragic as anything ever connected to Marilyn Monroe. Bow found her ticket to a better life when she won a "Fame and Fortune" movie magazine contest in 1921. First prize was a train ticket to Hollywood. She got onboard and never looked back. Casually gorgeous, red-headed, full of pep and optimism, she appeared in her first film in 1922 when she was barely sixteen years old. After that, she was rarely unemployed, appearing in eight features in 1924, the year she was chosen to be one of the famous WAMPAS Baby Stars, an accolade from movie advertisers who singled out young women they felt had a chance to become real movie stars. (WAMPAS was the acronym of the Western Associated Motion Picture Advertisers.)

Clara Bow

During 1925 and 1926, Bow made an astonishing twenty-two movies. The public fell in love with her, and the film business was happy to exploit that love. She should have become one of Hollywood's highest paid female stars, but she never earned that kind of money. She had no head for business, no education to speak of, and no parent or adult to guide her or look out for her. She did the work, and took up an offscreen hotcha pattern of behavior that embraced fun, fun, fun. Clara Bow liked men and they liked her. Her unrestrained sexuality translated on-screen into an exuberant joyousness, a free spiritedness, that made her popular with women as well as men. She was Betty Boop in the flesh, shaking and shimmying around the frame with her short hair, big eyes, voluptuous body, and boop-a-doop personality. Two of her 1926 movies lifted her to top stardom: *Mantrap*, directed by Victor Fleming, and *Dancing Mothers*, by Herbert Brenon. By the end of 1926, Clara Bow was getting thousands of fan letters, and she found movie immortality by being cast as the embodiment of writer Elinor Glyn's clever and daring idea to define sex appeal as "it." (Someone said "it" was a great concept but that Glyn had left off the "sh.") Bow became "the It girl," starring in 1927's simply named *It*, arguably her most definitive movie. The huge success of *It* prompted the release of three quick "Clara Bow" pictures to follow, one of which was *Get Your Man*.

SHE WAS BETTY BOOP IN THE FLESH, SHAKING AND SHIMMYING AROUND THE FRAME.

Bow's self-confident costar Charles Rogers has a great deal of sex appeal of his own (at least in his day). He doesn't seem particularly worried about his acting skills, no doubt having learned early in life that looking good, wearing clothes well, and smiling warmly was going to make his day turn out all right. Because Bow and Rogers both have a very American 1920s vibe and a natural ease, they pair up well. Their other 1927 film, the famous *Wings*, winner of the very first Academy Award for Best Picture, used their compatibility to the max. (Today, Rogers is not well known, but he was a successful bandleader who married superstar Mary Pickford, twelve years his senior.)

Get Your Man is also of interest because of its director, Dorothy Arzner, who has been much analyzed and written about as a feminist icon. She doesn't always get the credit she deserves for simply being very, very good at the basic job of directing a movie. The only woman behind the camera in the studio system of the 1930s and early 1940s, Arzner worked her way up through the ranks, learning all aspects of filmmaking. She was a highly skilled editor, and *Get Your Man* benefits from her pacing and understanding of when to cut to Bow and/or Rogers to show off their good looks and keep the audience involved in their characters. (Arzner also knows how to show off expensive sets and costumes and elaborate set pieces such as the carefully created waxworks museum designed by Marion Morgan.) *Get Your Man* is one of three Arzner movies from her first year as a director: the first was *Fashions for Women*, starring Eleanor Ralston, and the other was *Ten Modern Commandments*, also with Ralston. Arzner's career is marked by her ability to help define and create movie stars, her consideration of the woman's role in modern society, and her championship of the outspoken and liberated heroine. (She went on to direct Clara Bow's first sound movie, *The Wild Party*, in 1929.) *Get Your Man* is lighthearted, but it ultimately reveals an Arzner signature—a celebration of triumphant female sexuality, which in this case is repurposed as female determination of the "I will get my way" variety.

Lovingly restored by Bow's biographer David Stenn and the staff of the Library of Congress (about twenty minutes of footage was lost to deterioration but has been filled in with strategically placed stills and intertitles), *Get Your Man* was reviewed in *Photoplay* magazine as one of the best pictures of the month. The reviewer pointed out that "Men have called Clara Bow irresistible and women admit it." Watching the movie today, even with the missing scenes, we can all admit it. *Get Your Man* not only has Bow, but also Rogers and Arzner—a triple bonanza.

— JEANINE BASINGER

Charles Rogers and Clara Bow

COVERING DOROTHY ARZNER

BY SHARI KIZIRIAN

A misplaced scrap of the "A Little from Lots" column in a 1927 edition of *Film Daily* obscures a review with, among other sundries, a correction in bold type: "A newspaper report to the effect that Dorothy Arzner is the first woman to direct is in error, as Lois Weber, Ida May Park, Vera McCord, and Mme. Alice Blache have directed pictures." The brief item also occupies its rightful place on the next page, as if history were trying to double the chances of it being seen—someone, it seems to want to say, had tried to get it right.

With Paramount's announcement that former studio typist, "script clerk," and editor Dorothy Arzner had been signed to direct, the trades prepared profiles on the studio's first woman to man "a megaphone." *Photoplay*'s took the form of a lament, "Good-bye to Another Tradition," which spends four paragraphs describing how Arzner almost cried when given the "little megaphone made out of red cardboard," as if she'd gotten "a diamond tiara or sea-going yacht." (The author imagined, too, Queen Victoria tearing up when she got her crown.)

Arzner did continuity under the exacting Alla Nazimova, read scripts and wrote, then she gained a reputation as one of the best cutters in the business, editing fifty-two titles for Paramount, including the Valentino vehicle *Blood and Sand* for which she directed bullfight scenes and weaved in stock footage, saving the studio money. The *Photoplay* writer saw fit to spend his first page explaining why men direct, acknowledging "that women have directed before but they have nearly always been their own producers," as if that makes it easier. It might have been more instructive to note that Paramount extended her the job after she leveraged an offer to direct from a competitor or that she added a viewfinder to her megaphone to facilitate directing.

Lillian W. Brennan of *Film Daily* found Arzner's promotion encouraging, in a way: "there looms a possibility of further competition among women, perhaps it will whet the appetites of others." After seeing her first, *Fashions for Women* starring Esther Ralston, Brennan concludes "Miss Arzner has been watching the methods of her brother directors." *Picture-Play*'s coverage neglects almost the whole history of women making movies while simultaneously nailing why there aren't more: "Other women have undertaken to direct from time to time ... but the studios haven't been very eager to encourage them."

Arzner directs a second picture starring Ralston and *Photoplay* played up the strengths of the director-actress matchup: "Paramount thinks so highly of the team that it has told the two gals to make some more pictures. The newest of these ultra-feminine concoctions is called *Ten Modern Commandments*."

Get Your Man is Arzner's third film and first with the valuable Clara Bow. *Photoplay* reported even more news on that film's female front: "Women are getting further and further in this motion picture business. Now we introduce the first woman production manager, Henrietta Cohn ... The entire responsibility for the cost of the production falls on Miss Cohn's shoulders." Good thing she wasn't also directing.

Arzner soon became "the only woman director in talkies," coaching Bow through her first dialogue picture (*The Wild Party*), dangling the microphone from a fishing pole in the first ever "boom" mic. A headline in a 1929 issue of *Screenland* exclaims: "Directed by Dorothy Arzner!" giving her credit for keeping up with the fellahs by "cleverness, a great capacity for absorbing knowledge, and a genius for accomplishing grinding, nerve-crushing mountains of work"—but not before assuring us that she hides "her generalship" behind "an artful feminine fantasy." Writer Julie Lang spends the last few paragraphs of the article speculating about Arzner's marriage prospects, perhaps to deflect rumors Arzner dressed as a boy when young or that she shared her life with choreographer Marion Morgan.

In 1931 Arzner became the first woman to direct an actor to an Oscar nod, Ruth Chatterton in *Sarah and Son*. More profiles were prepared. *Silver Screen* titled its, "She Thanks her Lucky Stars: Dorothy Arzner Is the Movies' Only Woman Director and She's Never Had a Failure." By now the "only woman director in America" had grown tired of her assignments: "I suppose the reason I am always given women stars to handle is because that's a man's idea of what a woman's work in pictures should be." The writer concludes that Arzner "possesses a combination of shrewdness and imagination to a degree not yet attained by any other woman who has ever penetrated behind in the picture world."

Paramount continued to promote the female angle, rounding out its behind-the-camera foursome in "Paramount Has Clever Quartet of Women" with the head of the lot's school and nursery. A later such piece stretched it to include the lot masseuse. Before long Paramount lost its only woman director, and its publicity angle. *Variety* let everyone know in "Only Femme Director Quits Over Pay Slice." Perhaps she had discovered how much her brother directors made.

She began to freelance and continued to garner praise for her direction. Her *Christopher Strong*, starring Katharine Hepburn as an aviator, contained, according to one reviewer, "one of the most beautiful love scenes we have ever seen in pictures." Studios also gave her stars they didn't quite know what to do with, like Russian import Anna Sten (*Nana*, 1934) and Joan Crawford, somewhere between her flapper luster and her noir appeal. A 1937 article about films in production visits Crawford on the set of *The Bride Wore Red* long enough to take the kind of swipe at the director familiar to women from all walks of life: "When the scene is finished, Dorothy Arzner who is directing the picture and *whom I have never seen smile*, says to Joan, 'You look like Napoleon coming out of that door and marching down the steps in that cape.'" (Emphasis mine.)

Arzner made her last film in 1943 then went on to direct training films for the Women's Army Corps and fifty commercials for Pepsi Cola. She did other things, including teaching at UCLA, which turned her into an inadvertent footnote in student Francis Ford Coppola's career. The year of the second *Godfather* film, no doubt at Coppola's behest, the Directors Guild of America finally honored Arzner, alongside King Vidor, William Wellman, Robert Wise, and the thirty-five-year-old Coppola. The headline read: "No chauvinism."

Dorothy Arzner with her combo megaphone-viewfinder on the set of *Get Your Man*

NOW WE'RE IN THE AIR TRAVELS THE WORLD

BY THOMAS GLADYSZ

SILENT films have a funny way of traveling the world. In 2016, the festival's own Robert Byrne mentioned to English film historian Kevin Brownlow about a trip he was taking to Prague to visit the Národní filmový archiv, the Czech Republic's National Film Archive, known for its extensive silent-era collection and for housing the only remaining nitrate copies of many American silent-era films. Brownlow provided Byrne with a list of titles he should ask about that included the long missing *Now We're in the Air*, a World War I comedy about a pair of fliers who wander onto a battlefield near the front lines and get tangled up with a traveling circus and a spy. Though popular in its time, the film has been sought today as one of four missing films Louise Brooks made in 1927.

WHEN Byrne inspected the contents of film cans labeled *Rif a Raf, Politi* (the Czech title for *Now We're in the Air*), he found it had only partially survived, with scenes out of order, some nitrate decomposition, and Czech intertitles. The archive had held the print, at least this twenty-minute chunk of it, since 1971 when it was repatriated to Czechoslovakia by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Why MoMA had a Czech-language title is unknown, but then silent films have a funny way of traveling the world.

ONE of a number of aviation-themed stories released in 1927, *Now We're in the Air* incorporates leftover aerial and battle footage from *Wings*, visible in the Armistice scene in the last reel.

SHOT between August 1 and September 8 at Paramount's studio in Hollywood, the production also made use of a local ranch, an airfield, and an amusement pier in Venice, California.

FIFTEEN airplanes were hired, among them a seventy-six-foot Martin Bomber, which was deliberately wrecked in one of the film's "big thrill scenes."

THE FILM'S cinematographer Harry Perry photographed two other notable aviation pictures, *Wings* (1927) and *Hell's Angels* (1930), and was nominated for an Academy Award in cinematography (with Tony Guadio) for the latter, produced by Howard Hughes.

RAYMOND HATTON and Wallace Beery were a popular comedy team in the late silent era and *Now We're in the Air* is one of the duo's "service comedies." The year prior, Paramount released *Behind the Front* and *We're in the Navy Now*, both directed by Brooks's husband, Eddie Sutherland.

EARLY ON, William Wellman, James Cruze, and even Mauritz Stiller were announced as director but Frank R. Strayer was eventually assigned the project. Also an actor, writer, and producer, he has directing credits totaling ninety titles, including thirteen movies in the series based on the Blondie comic strip.

BROOKS plays twin sisters—"Griselle" raised German and "Grisette" raised French—who are the love interests of the two goofy fliers. Only Grisette appears in the surviving fragment, in a black tutu. The French actor and silent-era director Émile Chautard plays Brooks's father, the carnival barker, and the stern-faced Fred Kohler has an uncredited appearance as an officer.

RELEASED as sound was coming in, *Now We're in the Air* almost had dialogue scenes added to it, according to Brooks. The distinction of the first Paramount film with added dialogue actually goes to another picture featuring Brooks, 1928's *Beggars of Life*.

DESPITE its reliance on crude humor, the Beery-Hatton film was generally liked by the critics and did big box office wherever it showed. It enjoyed an extended run in New York City and ran for a month in San Francisco, at a time when most new releases played only one week. It opened simultaneously in five theaters in Boston, where one reviewer wrote that the audience "was so moved by mirth that they were close to tears."

SEVERAL reviews singled out Brooks, with the *New York Post* sardonically noting, "Louise Brooks wanders in and out between gags. She is very beautiful. She is especially beautiful when seen beside Mr. Berry."

ALL'S well that ends well. Mae Tinee, the cine-pseudonymously named *Chicago Tribune* critic, put it this way: "Louise Brooks as twins, is—are—a beautiful foil for the stars and if you think she doesn't marry both of them before the picture ends, why, cogitate again, my darlings."

THOUGH silent, it continued to be shown into the early sound era. In January 1930, it played Fairbanks in a pre-statehood Alaska, and, in December 1931, in the city of Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory. *Now We're in the Air* then faded into obscurity, until a hunch led to surviving fragments in Prague.

Raymond Hatton, Louise Brooks, and Wallace Beery in *Now We're in the Air*

THE DUMB GIRL OF PORTICI

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY DONALD SOSIN AND FRANK BOCKIUS

DIRECTED BY LOIS WEBER, USA, 1916
CAST Anna Pavlova, Rupert Julian, Douglas Gerrard, and Wadsworth Harris **PRODUCTION** Universal Film Manufacturing Company **PRINT SOURCE** Milestone Films

Even for those with little knowledge of ballet, the name of early twentieth century Russian dancer Anna Pavlova evokes gauzy images of the grace and elegance of that most romantic of arts. But posed photographs and brief filmed excerpts of Pavlova dancing, however lovely, give little evidence of the charisma and artistry that earned her the reputation as one of the greatest ballerinas of all time. Pavlova appeared in only one feature-length film, *The Dumb Girl of Portici*, a drama based on Daniel Auber's 1828 French opera about an Italian fisherman Tommaso Aniello, known as Masaniello, who led a revolt against Hapsburg Spain's occupation of Naples in the 1600s. Although Pavlova only dances in a brief prologue and epilogue, the film gives audiences a sense of her magnetic presence.

PAVLOVA'S PERFORMANCE IS EARTHY AND ROBUST.

Pavlova plays Masaniello's young sister Fenella, described in an intertitle as "the lightest slip of thistledown girlhood," who is seduced and abandoned by a Spanish aristocrat. The incident is the breaking point that incites revolution. Pavlova's role is an acting one, not a dancing one—Fenella is a peasant, not a sprite. That means there's nothing wispy or ethereal about her. Pavlova's performance is earthy and robust. Her beauty, intensity, and modernity are on full display, even when she is not the focus of a scene. Because the character is mute, she expresses herself with movement. Director Lois Weber mostly photographs Pavlova full-length, showing the eloquence of her body, although that directorial choice may have been a fortuitous necessity, since the star, then thirty-four years old, was far from the "girlhood" of the intertitle.

Weber was as singular in films as Pavlova was in dance. A concert pianist turned actress, Weber had already made a name for herself as the first American woman to direct a film, in 1908. As her career progressed, she tackled provocative social issues such as poverty, drug addiction, and abortion. In a 1913 interview, Weber referred to her work almost as a sacred calling, according to her biographer Shelley Stamp: "Cinema, she said, was a 'voiceless language,' able to engage popular audiences in the era's most contentious debates. Likening her films to a 'daily newspaper's editorial page,' she aspired to 'deliver a message to the world' via celluloid." But Pavlova and Weber's professional affinities were not the primary reasons for their collaboration. Weber was assigned the film by Universal, the studio where she was under contract, and Pavlova needed the money.

Born in St. Petersburg and trained at the Imperial Ballet School, Pavlova had danced with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes and with famous partners, traveling the world and becoming an international sensation before forming her own company in 1911. By mid-1915, Europe was at war, and Pavlova, deeply in debt, had

Anna Pavlova. Photo courtesy of Milestone Films

decided to wait out the conflict in the safety of the United States. She scheduled a North American tour, teaming up with impresario Max Rabinoff's Boston Opera Company. A combined troupe of about two hundred people—sixty musicians, three conductors, and seventy chorus members, as well as the dance company—set off on a nationwide tour. Pavlova needed to come up with $75,000 for her portion of the partnership, and the production costs for each stop came to $35,000. In order to raise the money, the star agreed to appear in a film that would earn her fifty percent of its profits, to be written and directed by Lois Weber.

By the time she directed *The Dumb Girl of Portici*, Weber was one of the most prolific filmmakers in the business. *Dumb Girl* was just one of ten films Weber directed in 1915. Universal studio head Carl Laemmle assigned her to the project and trusted her to develop it however she wanted. Unlike Weber's earlier issue-oriented films set in modern times, Weber went full-on epic in style, expertly handling the scenes of crowds and chaos. The credits for the films Weber wrote and directed while she was married to Phillips Smalley, including *Dumb Girl*, list both Weber and Smalley as directors and Weber alone as writer. Despite official credits, film historians have concluded that Weber was the creative force behind the couple's collaboration. After they divorced, in fact, Smalley was never again credited as director on any film. Reporters who visited the couple's sets during the marriage noted that Smalley always deferred to Weber on decisions during production, and most articles at the time also referred to Weber as the producer and director of the film, without mentioning Smalley. According to Shelley Stamp: "Of all the women active in the first decades of moviemaking, Weber produced the most sustained and substantial body of work, writing and directing more than forty features and hundreds of shorts for close to thirty years."

Anna Pavlova as Fenella. Photo courtesy of Milestone Films

The Dumb Girl of Portici began filming in July 1915 in Chicago, where Pavlova was appearing at an outdoor theater designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Next door to the theater were the remnants of an old amusement park that had been erected for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, where the film company built a series of outdoor sets. Filming began in the morning, took a break while the star danced in the matinee, then resumed shooting until she had to leave for the evening show. It turned out to be an expensive choice; stormy weather rained out many of the scheduled shooting days. An article in the *New York Herald* detailing the plans for the production, deluxe travel arrangements for the great ballerina, and for the film's release, make it clear that *Dumb Girl* was going to be a prestige (and expensive) production: "The work will be accompanied by full musical scores and full orchestras. The pictures will be exhibited in the biggest theatres throughout the country. From Chicago a special train will take the company to Universal City, near Los Angeles, Cal., with wigmakers, costume makers and shoemakers ... On the trip Pavlova will have a private car for herself, two maids and a secretary, and in Universal City she will have a bungalow."

PAVLOVA IS A TENDRIL—SKINNY, BENDABLE—BUT WILD.

After *The Dumb Girl of Portici* was completed in California, the film was released on a staggered schedule over the next two years. Reviews were mixed at best—*Variety* called Pavlova "not quite camera broken." Still, it was apparently a success everywhere it was shown, stoking the mystery of why Pavlova never appeared in another movie, although press reports at the time said that she planned to dedicate the next two years to filmmaking. Perhaps she never had the time, since she continued to tour around the world almost until her death in 1931, shortly before her fiftieth birthday.

A century after it was made, the film was finally restored. *New Yorker* dance critic Joan Acocella was enthralled by the star's presence. "Pavlova was only five feet tall, but here she seems long and tensile. She doesn't just raise her arms; she stabs the air with them, and splays her fingers like prongs, or tendrils. She is a tendril, too—skinny, bendable—but wild." Film critic Richard Brody praised "Weber's bold and imaginative direction ... [her] own imagination is inflamed by the passions it unleashes, and she delivers visual flourishes of a mighty inspiration."

Even seeing the film in a scratchy, pre-restoration state, Acocella concluded, "Pavlova's artistry is something that we are often asked to take on faith, something where you had to be there. Watching *The Dumb Girl*, you are there."

— MARGARITA LANDAZURI

CASTS OF THOUSANDS IN REVOLT

By Fritzi Kramer

What's the point of having a cast of thousands if they can't rise up in revolt once in a while? Filmmakers quickly realized that masses of extras on the screen would attract masses of customers to the movie theaters, especially with spectacle and chaos in the offing.

Beginnings: Torn from the Headlines

Smaller sets and limited cinematography options meant that the earliest filmmakers had to satisfy themselves with casts of dozens but they compensated by diving into hot political topics. Nearly two decades before *Battleship Potemkin*, Lucien Nonguet recreates the Odessa mutiny in the 1906 film *La Révolution en Russie*. The deck of the battleship is plainly a painted set but the cast makes up for any deficiencies in realism by enthusiastically hurling around mannequins dressed in officers' uniforms. Limitation can lead to innovation and such is the case with the ninth episode of Georges Méliès's 1899 series *L'Affaire Dreyfus*, which ends with the pro- and anti-Dreyfus factions rushing the camera. The comparatively cramped space of the Méliès studio means that the performers have nowhere to go but downstage and the result is an unusually kinetic sequence for the period.

Scope: Bigger Gets Better

As the epic spectacle continued to be perfected throughout the 1910s by directors like Giovanni Pastrone and D.W. Griffith, portrayals of uprisings, strikes, and revolts grew larger as well. The 1899–1901 Boxer Rebellion, or Yihequan Movement, provides an example. The West's perspective of the event had been shaped by newsreels of marching British soldiers and small bands of actors dressed in Chinese garb committing trick photography beheadings. When Albert Capellani adapted this history for the screen in the late 1910s, he was no stranger to uprisings, having directed a nearly three-hour adaptation of *Les Misérables* in 1912. For 1919's *The Red Lantern*, he takes the still-fresh images of the previous decade and turns the rioting Chinese citizens into a living wave made up of hundreds of extras that undulates back and forth against makeshift barricades.

Frenzy: All Riled Up for $2 a Day

The French Revolution provided an excuse for filmmakers to embrace the more emotional aspects of revolution. In his saucy historical epic *Madame Dubarry*, also from 1919, Ernst Lubitsch whips his sans-culottes into a frenzy that cannot be contained by the massive sets; it seems to spill off the screen. They burst through the streets leaving battered soldiers, hanged aristocrats, and a decapitated Pola Negri in their wake. Back in Hollywood, Rex Ingram, a master of light, smoke, and shadow, presents a moody, stylish French Revolution in *Scaramouche* (1922). Fires smolder as palaces are stormed, bodies thrown, limbs hacked, women in wild hair and full makeup lead the charge with swords drawn. It is violent, anarchic, and strangely beautiful.

Primal Urges

Food triggers a revolt in Lois Weber's *The Dumb Girl of Portici* and Sergei Eisenstein famously made maggot-ridden meat the spark that ignites a mutiny in *Battleship Potemkin*. In *October*, he further embraces the primal in the service of propaganda. Revolutionaries are scattered with rhythmic machine-gun fire and the tsarists rise up in counter-protest, bourgeois ladies gnawing at the protesters' flags with their teeth. Hollywood wasn't about to let an event as cinematic as the Russian Revolution pass it by, but American filmmakers had the luxury of sidestepping the political aspects if they so chose. The revolution of Cecil B. DeMille's *The Volga Boatman* is not caused by complicated partisan factors so much as poor boys longing for rich girls and vice versa. DeMille circumvents any discussion of communism by essentially filming the French Revolution with furrier hats and sprinkling "comrade" throughout the intertitles, leaving lust as the prime mover in the plot.

On Location, Location, Location

While riots, mutinies, and uprisings were often filmed within the controlled conditions of a movie studio, plenty of filmmakers went on location to capture the action for newsreels and to lend authenticity to fiction films. Such ventures were invariably lauded—and often exaggerated—in marketing materials. The 1928 British production *Emerald of the East* portrays an uprising of a mountain tribe against a pro-Raj ruler and was partially filmed in and around Gwalior, center of the actual 1857 rebellion. Press releases crow that the filmmakers were granted use of thousands of soldiers as well as the state elephants and jewels. The slick action scenes feature rebels weaving through the underbrush but they are soon persuaded to lay down their arms in a rare instance of cinematic revolt being resolved diplomatically. Of course, the real struggle for Indian independence was not settled with anything as simple as a few minutes of friendly title cards.

Camera Ready

While Georges Méliès's protesters rushed the static camera back in 1899, Raymond Bernard's *The Chess Player* (1927) takes the opposite approach, benefiting from technological innovations that allowed for more fluid movement. By now cameras had been mounted on anything that moved and swooped through the air, the streets, ballrooms, circus tents, and sometimes even down a performer's throat. The Polish soldiers in Bernard's film mutiny against the occupying Russians and the fully unchained camera charges into the action, lurching wildly through the combatants and dragging the audience with it. Just like being there but without the contusions.

Pola Negri (center) in Ernst Lubitsch's *Madame Dubarry*

Paul Robeson

BODY AND SOUL

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY DJ SPOOKY

DIRECTED BY OSCAR MICHEAUX, USA, 1925
CAST Paul Robeson, Lawrence Chenault, Marshall Rodgers, Mercedes Gilbert, and Julia Theresa Russell
PRODUCTION Micheaux Film Corporation **PRINT SOURCE** Kino Lorber

Handsome, dynamic stage actor Paul Robeson appeared on the screen for the first time in *Body and Soul*, a 1925 silent film that showcased his versatility and charisma in a dual role. A stepping stone for Robeson from the theater to the movies, it is treated as a footnote in the career of this prominent African American star and was even disavowed by Robeson himself. Yet, *Body and Soul* is the only film he made with an African American director, a relatively unacknowledged fact. While Robeson gives a vibrant, naturalistic performance, *Body and Soul* is perhaps best understood as a work by Oscar Micheaux, the most prolific and enduring director of "race" movies.

Body and Soul stars Robeson as an escaped convict, described in a title card as "a man of many aliases." As the Right Rev. Isiaah T. Jenkins, he returns to his hometown of Tatesville, Georgia, where he captivates the parishioners with his fiery sermons. Unbeknownst to his congregation, he also frequents the local juke joint, where he drinks heavily and gambles. When Yellow-Curley Hinds (Lawrence Chenault) drifts through town looking for girls to shanghai for a burlesque show, he recognizes Jenkins as his former cellmate. Over several drinks, the pair hatch new schemes to get rich quick.

The reverend plots to rob his most loyal parishioner, a hard-working laundress named Martha Jane (Mercedes Gilbert) of her life savings. Martha Jane is determined that her daughter Isabelle (Julia Theresa Russell) will marry the reverend, but the young girl is in love with his twin brother, an inventor and conscientious man named Sylvester, also played by Robeson. Mother and daughter quarrel over Isabelle's future, and Martha Jane's refusal to see through the reverend yields bitter results for both her and Isabelle. When Martha Jane finally sees the truth, the narrative is propelled to a startling conclusion.

OSCAR MICHEAUX MADE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO CINEMA OPERATING INDEPENDENTLY OF THE HOLLYWOOD INDUSTRY.

Oscar Micheaux made a major contribution to cinema operating independently of the Hollywood industry. As an outsider and black man, he had extreme difficulties securing financing and also faced racial discrimination often codified into the laws of Jim Crow-era America. These circumstances, however, are sometimes tempered with an acknowledgment that he was not a top-notch craftsman. He did not seem to have an affinity for pacing or shot variance. Too many medium shots on the screen for too long interfered with the rhythm

of scenes, stalling the story. Many point to cost-cutting measures as the reason for his film's low-production values. Micheaux made enough money for his company to survive, but he never made enough for it to be solvent, so every penny counted. He refused to do retakes even when lights blew out, walls shook, or actors forgot their direction, and these compromised shots made it into the final cut of his films. He also used title cards as a cost-efficient way to advance or condense the narrative.

Complicating any assessment of individual films is the censorship Micheaux experienced at the hands of state and local censor boards. New York censors did not accept the director's original nine-reel version of *Body and Soul*, rejecting it outright on November 5, 1925, for being sacrilegious and for inciting audiences to commit crimes. Micheaux resubmitted the film a few days later, making it clear through title cards and an insert of a news article that Isiaah T. Jenkins is an escaped convict masquerading as a reverend. The censors rejected *Body and Soul* again, prompting Micheaux to reduce the film to five reels, cutting it nearly in half. The worst behavior of the reverend was passed on to another character and most of the scenes involving drinking and gambling were eliminated. In February 1927, he submitted a seven-reel version to the Chicago censors, who rejected it for its scandalous depiction of a Protestant minister. He recut it for those censors as well.

In addition to being an independent producer-director, Micheaux was also a do-it-yourself distributor, traveling around the country by train or car to deliver prints to theaters. He was accustomed to the peculiarities of state and local censorship and he submitted different versions of his films to censors in different regions. For this reason, no complete nine-reel version of *Body and Soul* exists. Now restored to eight reels, the film reveals Micheaux's strengths as a storyteller. He deftly weaves flashbacks and dreams with present time into a nonlinear narrative that culminates in an unexpected ending.

Micheaux may not have had a gift for edge-of-your-seat suspense, but he understood the narrative power of intercutting to shape his characters. Shots of Martha Jane standing tirelessly at her ironing board contrast with Jenkins shaking down the owner of the juke joint. Both are obtaining money, but one does it through labor while the other extorts it. Elsewhere, an intimate scene of Isabelle and Sylvester holding hands is intercut with the reverend sweet-talking Martha Jane, foreshadowing that one action will have an impact on the other. Some of the most sophisticated editing occurs in a scene in which the reverend holds the money he stole from Martha Jane. Iris shots of his hands clasping the precious money are intercut with shots of Martha Jane's hands ironing and picking cotton, implying the hard work that went into earning it and underscoring the cruelty of the theft.

NOW RESTORED TO EIGHT REELS, THE FILM REVEALS MICHEAUX'S STRENGTHS AS A STORYTELLER.

Many interior sets of *Body and Soul* are sparsely decorated but rife with meaning. In the juke joint, pages from the *Police Gazette*, a tabloid that specialized in lurid murder stories, girlie photos, and sports news, decorate the wall, while the walls of Martha Jane's modest home are covered with pictures of angels as well as portraits of President Abraham Lincoln, former slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass, and statesman Booker T. Washington. Micheaux believed in Washington's exhortation that former slaves and their descendants should "lift themselves up" through education and enterprise rather than directly confront the injustices of racism. The prominent portrait of Washington on Martha Jane's wall indicates Micheaux's faith in Washington's "bootstraps" philosophy. It's a way of life he had followed from his early years as a homesteader on the prairie to his days as a self-published novelist to his experiences as an independent filmmaker.

Paul Robeson and Julia Theresa Russell

Despite his preference for uplifting tales of social mobility and self-improvement, Micheaux was not afraid of controversy. In *Within Our Gates*, he confronted white racism by depicting lynchings and assaults on black women by white men. He also never shied from criticizing behavior he believed was undermining the progress of his race. Drinking, gambling, passing for white, violence against women, and the corruption of the church were also frequent targets in his films. In this light, Robeson's twin roles represent two archetypes familiar to African Americans: Stagger Lee the hustler/trickster versus Booker T. Washington's self-made man. In Micheaux's view, they represent the two paths available to African American men and his mission was to point out the folly of the wrong path.

The black press of the time regularly took Micheaux to task for negative portrayals in his films, while Harlem Renaissance intellectuals (who embraced Robeson) dismissed his admiration for the conservative Washington. When it was released, *Body and Soul* received a mixed reception. The Baltimore *Afro-American* raved that it was "a magnificent combination of Negro brains and art," but an angry letter to the *Chicago Defender* claimed it "painted us as rapists." And, for reasons unknown, Robeson never acknowledged the film, most often naming *The Emperor Jones* (1933) as his first screen appearance. If Micheaux did not please his detractors, it did not stop him from producing films for the next twenty years. By continuing to explore issues and problems relevant to African Americans, he created a cinema far removed from the limited, demeaning stereotypes of Hollywood.

— SUSAN DOLL

DJ Spooky Mixes It Up for *Body and Soul*

Interview by Sean Axmaker

As DJ Spooky (That Subliminal Kid), Paul D. Miller has been a trailblazer in the realms of hip hop and trip hop and a master of the remix. He's also a philosopher, teacher, historian, science fiction author, and media artist whose work has circulated the globe. And, for more than a decade he has been passionately involved in silent film. He composed scores for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *Earth*, and the films of Dziga Vertov. He produced the documentary *Birth of a Movement*, executive-produced the landmark DVD box-set *Pioneers of African-American Cinema*, and brought the deejay concept of remix to his live-cinema essay *Rebirth of a Nation*.

To score Oscar Micheaux's *Body and Soul*, Miller drew from a spectrum of musical traditions: "You have blues, you have jazz, you have gospel, you have all the religious music of the South, you have slave work chants, songs that people sing when they're in the fields, music that comes out of the black experience," he explained in a phone interview. "So how to update that for the 21st century?"

Traditional silent movie scoring tends to feature distinctive themes for the characters and for situations or locations. Your score for *Body and Soul* is more tonal and atmospheric than theme-driven. I'm trying to navigate a fine line between our contemporary sensibility and how people think about the history of the film. I wanted to figure out ways to give the viewer a sense of complexity and momentum and add to the way we see the characters in the film. With silent film you are telling the story with the characters' body language and that body language can mean very different things with different sounds. And Paul Robeson was a brilliant orator, one of the best public speakers before Obama.

So you were trying to find a musical equivalent to the vocal power that you heard in Paul Robeson? To an extent. When you hear him speak, he has this powerful bass voice, *basso profondo*, as they say. To me it was powerful as a composer to think how that voice would sound with the right soundtrack. That's what I was going for.

You bring the concept of remix from deejay culture to other arts. Is that in your mind when you compose for silent films, bringing a modern musical perspective to the classic silent images and narrative? Yes, that was the whole point. Think of it as a sonic counterpoint or an audio-visual counterpoint: the visual and sound bounce off one another in a way that gives the collaboration room to evolve but also to unfold. I did this album *Rebirth of a Nation* with Kronos Quartet and the idea was that you would have a string quartet that could be sampled and mixed with hip hop and electronic music. With *Body and Soul* I went much more for a jazz approach: sampling a jazz ensemble and mixing it, but at the same time leaving it organic. I'm looking for ways to improvise but also have structure. For most soundtracks, composers make what the director demands. That's cool. But for me, I wanted to have the director as deejay.

So as the deejay you interact with and accompany the live musicians? That's what a mix is. It's kind of a collision between two different time periods. The film was made in a radically different era and the score would have been different every time somebody played it. So I try as much as possible to reflect that open sensibility. I can make every single performance totally different and I love that.

Out of all the films featured in the *Pioneers of African-American Cinema* box set, you chose two Oscar Micheaux features to score yourself: *Within Our Gates* and *Body and Soul*. Is there a reason you chose those two particular films? They are both extremely powerful statements. *Body and Soul* has really got some powerful themes for the black community: the notion that the church was deeply tied to the everyday community, but also some deeply structural issues about authenticity, with the preacher as a kind of confidence man in the film. Some people don't like Micheaux's work because they feel it was too accommodating to the political system at the time—that he almost accepted segregation. But he just said, Look, we need to make our own world. I like the idea that he was a firebrand who owned his own studio, he owned his own publishing company, and I always celebrate when African Americans own their own businesses. Oscar Micheaux set the tone for early African-American cinema and he was dealing with some of the earliest forms of collective narratives. That was all new for everybody. People were responding to seeing their own stories on the screen. It's very powerful because they'd been suppressed for so long: the slave trade, the Civil War, all of those things had left huge gaps in African-American narratives and he was filling that in, giving people stories and reflections of themselves.

Is there something you hope audiences will take away from seeing *Body and Soul*? After D.W. Griffith made *Birth of a Nation*, Micheaux made his films as a response or a correction, and it opened up a whole new area of the culture in a smart and dynamic way that empowered African Americans. So the takeaway for me, at least, would be that anything is possible. Why do we limit ourselves to some of the most annoying and limiting stereotypes when there's an entire universe of approaches to contemporary art? That's my takeaway: anything goes.

Paul D. Miller. Photo by Roberto Masotti

THE INFORMER

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY STEPHEN HORNE, GUENTER BUCHWALD, AND FRANK BOCKIUS

DIRECTED BY ARTHUR ROBISON, UK, 1929
CAST Lya de Putti, Lars Hanson, Warwick Ward, and Carl Harbord **PRODUCTION** British International Pictures
PRINT SOURCE BFI National Archive

"This wasn't Irish stew—it was bouillabaisse mixed with ghoulash." Many decades after the release of Dublin-set thriller *The Informer*, a member of the stunt team reflected on the multicultural makeup of this ostensibly British-made film. "Here they were, making a purely Irish story with a German director; the leading man was a Swede named Lars Hanson; the leading lady was a Hungarian named Lya de Putti; the whore was being played by a French girl who was born in Mexico City, named Mona Goya; and the informer was played by an Anglo-Dutchman named Carl Harbord." The stunt shooter describing this casserole (and mixing up Harbord and Hanson) was a Welshman: future Oscar-winning actor Ray Milland, fresh out of the army and starting his movie career behind the scenes, shattering glass windows with blank machine-gun fire. The clash of languages, and accents, on set must have been truly cacophonous. The partially dubbed sound version of the film attempted to replace that multilingual mayhem with the King's English, but in the superior silent version those European influences shine.

THE CLASH OF LANGUAGES, AND ACCENTS, ON SET MUST HAVE BEEN TRULY CACOPHONOUS.

Although it was filmed at London's Elstree studio by British International Pictures, *The Informer* was long intended to become a German film. The movie was based on a hugely popular novel by Irish author Liam O'Flaherty, a gritty thriller about a band of revolutionaries in Dublin. When Gypo (Hanson), a grim, desperate member of the group, informs on a comrade, Francis (Harbord), he stalks the streets in guilt and shame, hoping his fellows won't discover his crime. It's a fast-paced and dramatic book, with an unforgettable lead character. As O'Flaherty wrote in his memoir *Shame the Devil*: "I would treat my readers as a mob orator treats his audience and toy with their emotions, making them finally pity a character whom they began by considering a monster." The novel was to be, in his words: "[a] high-brow detective story and its style based on the technique of the cinema. It should have all the appearance of a realistic novel and yet the material should have hardly any connection with real life." The cinematic technique O'Flaherty had in mind was German Expressionism's ability to project psychological terror into dark shadows. "It would make a good German film," he wrote to a friend while writing the book, "but would be, I fancy, too rough for presentation to a public that protested against steer-roping at Wembley." That's a reference to the first international

Carl Harbord. Photo courtesy of the British Film Institute

rodeo event held at the stadium in North London, which was closed down by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Clearly O'Flaherty felt British audiences were too delicate for his Gypo.

And so *The Informer*, while it was shot in Britain, had a German director: Arthur Robison, who had done so much to reveal guilt in darkness with his Expressionist classic *Warning Shadows* (*Schatten*, 1922). The scheme to make Gypo a monster on-screen, or at least to have the cast of one, is clear in the shooting script. Part four begins: "Katie is asleep in her bedroom when, Nosferatu-like, a figure climbs in her window. It is Gypo." The crucifix shadow that pins Gypo to the ground in the closing frames is sketched out here, too. Robison's use of fluid camerawork and revelatory shadows (as when marked man Francis casts a cloud over his own Wanted poster) marks *The Informer* as what the scholar Patrick F. Sheeran called "a late outrider of Weimar expressionism foundering in the 'porridge factory' of Elstree." That contemporary term for the studio was not as derogatory as it sounds, merely a reference to the sheer number of films Elstree was producing, rather than their quality. In fact, while Robison was shooting *The Informer*, elsewhere on the site Alfred Hitchcock was making *Blackmail*, another great of late-period British silent cinema.

The Informer's stars summoned up an atmosphere of violent passion and romantic doom for any 1920s audience. Hungarian vamp Lya de Putti (as Katie, Gypo and Francis's girl) and Englishman Warwick Ward (as Party commandant Dan Gallagher) had costarred in E.A. Dupont's *Variété* (1925) and Swedish Hanson was known for high-strung Hollywood fare such as *Flesh and the Devil* (1927) and *The Wind* (1928). For many actors, the silent era was their last chance to collaborate internationally. Poignantly, despite the grotesque rendering of her Hungarian accent, De Putti told the British magazine *Picturegoer*: "Zat is why most of the continental artists are coming here. Zey make one or two pictures in Europe while zey wait and see how ze talkie craze lasts."

The film was just as international as its cast. O'Flaherty disingenuously claimed that the events of his novel, which was written mostly on an English beach, were not lifted from the fight for Irish independence, but "from happenings in a Saxon town, during the sporadic Communist insurrection of about nineteen twenty-two or three." That's probably a little white lie, to cover his own involvement in the struggle, but Robison's film, while recreating certain Dublin locations, scales back on the Irishness of the book, and contains no discussion of politics. We could be in, say, late

Lya de Putti and Carl Harbord
Photo courtesy of the British Film Institute

... A UNIVERSAL STORY OF GOOD AND EVIL, FEAR AND DREAD ...

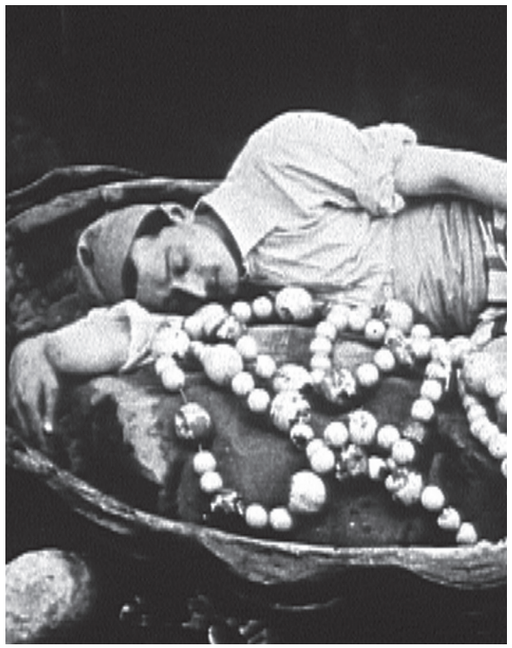
1920s Germany, with universal police surveillance, the prostitute Katie remodeled as a Weimar New Woman, and Gypo driven by poverty to a desperate act.

In fact, it's not just Expressionism that colors *The Informer*'s style: its broke and brutalized characters and gritty urban mise-en-scène recall German street films, such as those by G.W. Pabst and Gerhard Lamprecht. This, too, comes straight from the pages of the novel. For hard-bitten Gypo, the backstreets are full of danger: "he feared the darkness, the lurking shadows, the suggestion of men hiding in alleyways to attack." The narrator takes a wider, more sociological view of the Dublin slums, where poverty and municipal neglect force angels and devils to live cheek-by-jowl: "the brothels, the Bogey Hole, tenement houses, churches, pawnshops, public-houses, ruins, filth, crime, beautiful women, resplendent idealism in damp cellars, saints starving in garrets, the most lurid examples of debauchery and vice, all living thigh to thigh, breast to breast, in that foetid morass on the north bank of the Liffey."

Robison's film is far more sanitary than O'Flaherty's novel, casting out the less savory aspects of Gypo and Katie's characters along with the politics. What remains is only the "high-brow detective story" disconnected from real life. The first third of the film concerns Francis's exile from the Party and his dramatic demise on his return to Dublin (whereas in the book a brief hundred-word chapter covers his death). The second third of the film covers Gypo's attempt to evade discovery by his former comrades and the last act is a cat-and-mouse game between Gypo and Gallagher.

As Bryony Dixon wrote in the November 2016 issue of *Sight and Sound*, *The Informer*, more than most Expressionist titles, plays out like a true forerunner of film noir, the Hollywood genre that owes so much to émigré European artists working far from home. This European brew even seemed American at the time—at least to the censors in the Irish Free State, who banned the film on the grounds that it was so very far removed from Dublin's fair city: "The sordid show of Chicago gunmen, armed police, and prostitutes are shown at gunplay and soliciting in the standard slum of movieland ... It is a pity that the citizens cannot take actions against the producers for a libel against our City." Rooted neither in Dublin, Berlin, London, or even Chicago, *The Informer* becomes a universal story of good and evil, fear and dread, with Gypo himself falling somewhere between a sympathetic Expressionist monster, and the luckless tough-guy hero of classic noir.

— PAMELA HUTCHINSON



MAGIC AND MIRTH

In Fond Memory of Film Preservationist David Shepard (1940–2017)

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY DONALD SOSIN AND FRANK BOCKIUS

The San Francisco Silent Film Festival owes an enormous debt of gratitude to film collector and preservationist extraordinaire David Shepard, a valued member of the festival advisory board since 1994. Hardly a year has gone by when Shepard's hand could not be seen in at least one of the programs and this year is no exception, with *The Lost World* and *A Page of Madness* restored largely because of his efforts. Since 2000, Shepard's Film Preservation Associates had been working closely with Serge Bromberg of Paris's Lobster Films to restore classic films and silent-era treasures. Some are still to come, including Cecil B. DeMille's 1927 epic spectacle *The King of Kings* and the breathtaking 1933 film *La Maternelle*, directed by Jean Benoît-Lévy and Marie Epstein (released in the U.S. in 1935 as *Children of Montmartre*). In honor of his friend and partner-in-preservation who died this past January, Bromberg has selected some early silent-era magic and mirth that over the years made them both smile.

THOSE AWFUL HATS

D.W. Griffith for American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, USA, 1909

Short and sweet, *Those Awful Hats* was often a bonus film given out to customers of Blackhawk Films, whose collection Shepard later purchased. A gregarious latecomer in a top hat disturbs a screening already in progress but that's nothing compared to the ladies bedecked in increasingly top-heavy millinery who soon filter into the front rows. Advertised in its day as "a splendid subject to start a show with instead of the customary slide," the film uses a matte effect to create the movie playing on the theater's screen. Director Griffith's then-wife Linda Arvidson plays a troublesome moviegoer, Mack Sennett is the boisterous man in the checkered suit, and Flora Finch is hoisted away in a solution that will be applauded by anyone who's had to shush chatty patrons or their buzzing cell phones.

PRINTS SOURCE Lobster Films

CARTOON FACTORY

Fleischer Studios, USA, 1924

Another Blackhawk favorite, this inventive mix of live-action, animation, and still cutouts from the Fleischer brothers studio was one of the Kodascope prints Shepard began collecting as a teenager. Eventually restored from a 1931 sound reissue, it now boasts a more complete, crisper image. It begins when the artist dips his pen into an inkwell to conjure Koko the Clown, who then conjures his own fun. When an army of toy soldiers wreaks more anarchy than even Koko had bargained for the artist has to shut it all down. Eldest of the Fleischer brothers is Max, the artist seen in *Cartoon Factory* and inventor of the technique of rotoscoping, which smoothed the jerky movements of frame-by-frame animation to make them seem more realistic. The Fleischers made more history in the sound era with cartoon versions of Popeye the Sailor, Betty Boop, and Superman comic strips and, of course, the sing-along bouncing ball.

Clockwise from top left: *Down in the Deep, Fantasmagorie, The Masquerader, When the Devil Drives*. Photos courtesy of Lobster Films

THE MASQUERADER

Charles Chaplin for Keystone Film Company, USA, 1914
The Keystone phase of Chaplin's career had been largely neglected until Shepard spearheaded a massive project to restore all Chaplin's short subjects. In this fifth film Chaplin directed at Mack Sennett's legendary slapstick studio, the action takes place on a movie set. Charlie is supposed to enter a scene to save a baby from a knife-wielding intruder, but he's too busy flirting off camera. Fired on the spot, he gets his job back by dressing as an actress. Seeing him in high heels and wrapped in fur startles at first, until the effete gestures of the Tramp we've come to know also seem to suit this masquerader.

FIRST PRIZE FOR CELLO PLAYING (Premier prix de violoncelle)

Pathé Frères, France, 1907
Found in France by Lobster Films this unique bit of chaos will make you laugh as mightily as Shepard and Bromberg did when they first saw it. A cellist decides to treat the neighborhood to a serenade, but the neighbors aren't having it and express their displeasure by vigorously heaving at him every single thing in their homes.

FANTASMAGORIE

Émile Cohl for Gaumont, France, 1908
Lost for many decades this animation first was returned to the world after one of Shepard's school chums turned out to be the grandson of a Lumière cameraman in possession of the only print known to survive. In the early 1900s, fifty-one-year-old caricaturist Émile Cohl turned to the *cinematographe* to supplement his dwindling income. His first film, and the first film to be made frame-by-frame from start to finish, turns a single line into a graphic universe of movement. According to historian Richard Abel, Cohl "made more than seven hundred individual line drawings, recorded each twice (frame by frame), and had the laboratory print the footage in negative in order to produce a white-on-black chalk-line effect." Cohl went on to more than earn his moniker as the father of the animated cartoon and is an important link to the twentieth century's avant-garde, with its elemental aesthetic and predilection for satire.

TIT FOR TAT (La Peine du talion)

Gaston Velle for Pathé Frères, France, 1906
Another Shepard favorite, this stencil-colored fairy film was one of a genre popularized by Pathé Frères. A tutor and his two students are capturing butterflies and grasshoppers for study when the beautifully colored specimens suddenly transform into winged women who decide to teach the collectors a lesson of their own. Director Gaston Velle was an amateur magician hired by Pathé to make films to compete with Georges Méliès. He later ran the Italian studio Cines, which produced 1913's epic spectacle *Quo Vadis?* Velle's value as a director is evident in the close-ups of the butterflies trapped under the magnifying glass and another shot high above the tutor pinned to a giant mushroom.

WHEN THE DEVIL DRIVES

Walter Booth for the Charles Urban Trading Corp., UK, 1907
Slated for Shepard and Bromberg's next collection of short films, this British production about a family's train trip hijacked by the devil was found in France. Amateur magician turned filmmaker Walter Booth shared the early twentieth-century fascination with the dangers and delights of combustion-powered locomotion, directing titles for British producer R.W. Paul that include *A Railway Collision* (1900), *The Voyage of the Arctic* (1903), and *The "?" Motorist* (1906), whose highlight is a spin around the rings of Saturn. In 1906, Booth moved to the Charles Urban Trading Company, establishing a studio in his own garden in London where he made this film, the first British animated film (*The Hand of the Artist,* 1906), and several proto-science-fiction subjects in the Méliès vein.

DOWN IN THE DEEP (Le Pêcheur de perles)

Ferdinand Zecca for Pathé Frères, France, 1906
From Shepard's Blackhawk Collection and the only surviving print, this maritime take on the fairy film has a fisherman's dreams come true in dazzling Pathé stencil-color. Deep-sea fairies, puppet seahorses, a bug-eyed octopus, and a colossal starfish populate the magical underwater world where he hopes to find treasure. One of early cinema's most important directors, Ferdinand Zecca was hired to run Pathé's pavilion at the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle and stayed on to make trick films that could compete with those of Georges Méliès. He had a long career that included running the company's exchange in the United States from 1913 to 1920.

THE DANCING PIG (Le Cochon danseur)

Pathé Frères, France, 1907
A popular music-hall act recreated and filmed for Pathé Frères, this strange delight was a gift from David Shepard to his goddaughter Marie Bromberg, Serge's eldest child. The actor underneath the pig costume has recently been uncovered as vaudevillian Alfred Latell, whose entire career was built on playing animals.

THE WITCH (La Fée Carabosse)

Georges Méliès, France, 1906
Narrated live by Serge Bromberg
To know his future, a young troubadour consults the wicked witch of fairy-tale notoriety. When he pays for her services with a purse filled with sand, the wicked witch swears revenge. Head of the Star Film Company and an illusionist extraordinaire Georges Méliès charmed the world with his whimiscal "trick" films that set a global standard others strove to emulate. David Shepard owned the camera negatives of the Méliès films distributed in America and restored them in collaboration with Lobster Films.

— THE EDITOR

A Tribute to David Shepard
by Russell Merritt

When I remember David, I think of high adventure, the kind that turns film reclamation into a series of quests, conspiracies, improbable partnerships, witty banter, and second story work. Take, for example, the way we met. It started with a phone call, when in 1976 he asked me to collaborate on a TV series featuring radio broadcaster and world traveler Lowell Thomas. To an academic like me, it all sounded exotic, in a homespun sort of way. David was calling from Iowa, sitting on a stack of Fox Movietone newsreels acquired from a Hollywood lab, which he was supplying to a PBS station in South Carolina. He wanted me to help him ghostwrite scripts for Lowell, which Thomas would review from his office on Park Avenue. Although the show was called *Lowell Thomas Remembers*, the great man didn't have time to remember much of anything. So David and I banged out copy that gave Lowell something to recall from the 1930s. It was the start of a forty-year friendship, and it was typical of a man who spent his life cooking up adventures to bring vintage films back to life.

To those who knew him his generosity is legendary but he will be best remembered, I suspect, for his work in saving movies. As Leonard Maltin recently wrote, "If you've seen a superior print of a film by Chaplin or Keaton, Griffith or Murnau, chances are David had a hand in restoring it." By the time I met him, David was already a major force in film preservation. He had been hired as a curator by the newly-formed American Film Institute in the late 1960s and made his mark negotiating a historic deal with Paramount. When he was done, two hundred Paramount films had been deposited in the AFI Collection at the Library of Congress.

Then there was his stint with the Directors Guild of America where, to borrow another phrase from Leonard, he did more favors for posterity. He created an oral history project to record the careers of veteran filmmakers, including his friends King Vidor, Henry King, Rouben Mamoulian, Gilbert Cates, and Robert Wise. In an all-too-rare gesture to bridge the gap between academia and the industry, David established an all-expense-paid weeklong summer seminar for college faculty to watch Hollywood at work, which on one occasion included a get-together at George Sidney's house in Bel Air to meet with film and TV directors.

In between these phases of his career he was reshaping Blackhawk Films. From 1973 to 1976, he brought Kent Eastin's company into the first ranks of nontheatrical distribution. Blackhawk had long been known for selling 8mm and 16mm films to the home market, then David turned it into a prime source for university and other professional libraries. I knew his Griffith Biograph restorations best (full disclosure: I helped). But the great stories were about how he cornered those sparkling prints of Chaplin Mutual comedies. He discovered them as reissues that Van Beuren made in the 1930s and set out to buy the studio's entire library of cartoons, shorts, and B movies simply to get his hands on them. At first he was ready to write off the rest of the library as slag, but when we started watching them (guests at David's house never escaped without an evening of screenings), he discovered the joys of Van Beuren cartoons and declared that Blackhawk's customers needed to see those strange Technicolor Rainbow Parades for themselves.

That was vintage David. He never distributed films that he wasn't passionate about, no matter how obscure or noncommercial. He lost his shirt on Gance's *La Roue* and didn't do much better on *Caligari* or Griffith. As he put it, he could push more Laurel and Hardy in a month than he could sell Russians in a lifetime. It never mattered. He was particularly proud of his collaboration with Anthology Film Archives and Bruce Posner on the seven-disc collection of early American avant-garde film (*Unseen Cinema*), and of his work with Serge Bromberg on the brilliant and all-too-little-seen French serial, *La Maison du mystère* (1922). But then, he could always count on the Chaplin shorts. He named the cabin he built in the wilds of Northern California "Wit's End," but subtitled it "The House That Charlie Built."

When home video arrived in the late 1980s, David started Film Preservation Associates, the high-water mark in his film distribution career. His releases meant not only first-rate prints of rare and classic films but also enabled him to recruit first-class musicians to accompany his reconstructions, making him one of the foremost producers of silent film music. Meanwhile, finding kindred spirits in Serge Bromberg at France's Lobster Films and Jeff Masino at Flicker Alley in Los Angeles, he was able to build a durable company whose work continues. As I write this, Serge is completing a restoration of DeMille's *King of Kings* that David hoped would be unveiled later this year at Grauman's Chinese Theatre. It has been ninety years since the film's premiere, which was also the grand opening of the legendary L.A. movie palace.

The man behind all this was a wonderful friend, bristling with fresh, imaginative ideas. He was unbelievably generous, and his gifts were as inventive as he was. As much as he loved movies, he was equally passionate about all things mechanical: vintage projectors, cameras, bicycles, printing presses, trains, practically anything with gears or springs. One of his gifts that I treasure most, certainly the one that sums him up best, is the Leatherman Skeletool, a combination wire cutter, knife, bottle opener, screwdriver, and needle-nose pliers. I never use it without thinking of him. Like him, it is multifaceted, ingenious, full of sharp edges, and, above all, complicated.

From left to right: Stacey Wisnia, Russell Merritt, Serge Bromberg, David Shepard. Photo courtesy of Pamela Gentile

The original, more complete version of Russell Merritt's tribute is available at silentfilm.org.

A STRONG MAN

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY GUENTER BUCHWALD AND SASCHA JACOBSEN

DIRECTED BY HENRYK SZARO, POLAND, 1929

CAST Grigorij Chmara, Agnes Kuck, Artur Socha, and Maria Majdrowicz **PRODUCTION** Gloria

PRINT SOURCE Filmoteka Narodowa

One of the few surviving silent films made in Poland, *A Strong Man* (*Mocny Człowiek*) is also one of the most stylistically advanced. It opens with a stately pan along the riverfront of Warsaw—capital of the nation's film production—blending into a montage of majestic old buildings. But something quickly goes awry: the images begin to overlap and fragment, dissolving into a confused blur of urban modernity. The double exposures may at first seem like an avant-garde gimmick, but they appropriately introduce a film haunted by doubles, one that will end with the eerie vision of dancers wearing masks that give them two faces. The story's two-faced protagonist, Henryk Bielecki (Grigorij Chmara), is a would-be writer whose ambition vastly outweighs his talent. Obsessed with fame, he filches a manuscript from another writer and passes it off as his own, first helping the sickly author to die by supplying him with morphine. Bielecki winds up caught between two women, the long-suffering girlfriend who knows his secret, and a friend's wife, whom he steals while the friend is tied up in boozy "conferences" with an actress. Cheating and fakery are rampant in a world of glitter, indulgence, and empty celebrity that feels all too close to our own.

A WORLD OF GLITTER, INDULGENCE, AND EMPTY CELEBRITY THAT FEELS ALL TOO CLOSE TO OUR OWN

Director Henryk Szaro, who adapted the story from a novel by Stanislaw Przybyszewski, draws liberally on German Expressionism, Soviet-style montage, and good old-fashioned gothic melodrama in bringing it to the screen. Though many scenes are shot outdoors, in the city and the countryside, the film has a claustrophobic and feverish subjectivity, as though everything is playing out in the warped brain of Bielecki, a man consumed by his own sense of resentful entitlement. Chmara, a Ukrainian actor born in what was then the Russian Empire, got his start in the Moscow Art Theater as a pupil of legendary acting teacher Konstantin Stanislavski and has a potent intensity that turns this shabby fraud into a compelling antihero. In a career that spanned fifty years and at least four countries (and a variety of spellings of his name), Chmara played the title role in *Raskolnikov*, Robert Wiene's German Expressionist adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, and Jesus in the same director's *I.N.R.I.* (both 1923). He appeared in G.W. Pabst's *Joyless Street* (1925) with Greta Garbo and his

Agnes Kuck. Photo courtesy of Filmoteka Narodowa

then-paramour Asta Nielsen, sang gypsy songs in cabarets, emigrated to France in the 1930s with actress Lila Kedrova, and made his final appearance in a French TV adaptation of *Crime and Punishment* in 1970, the year he died. He has the fierce gaze of a bird of prey and the furrowed brow of a habitual malcontent.

The first time Bielecki smiles in the film is when, with calculating malice, he tells his tubercular friend Górski (Artur Socha) that his just-finished novel is "mediocre," driving the poor man to suicidal despair. The lurid scenes of his morphine overdose and Bielecki's subsequent theft of the manuscript are submerged in murky, noirish shadows, complete with an electric sign blinking fitfully outside the window. We never know much about the stolen novel, though its title—*A Strong Man*—invokes Nietzsche's *übermensch*, a concept with obvious appeal for the arrogant Bielecki. The individual set apart from society by his genius or his demons was a fixation of Przybyszewski, whose scandalous writings, filled with lurid decadence and extreme psychological states, belonged to the innovative, modernist Young Poland movement that flourished around the turn of the twentieth century.

It is easy to imagine that the purloined novel, which becomes a sensation, is just such a work; the one excerpt that makes its way into an intertitle suggests that the book's popularity lies in its titillating steaminess. Indeed, once Bielecki moves from brooding in smoky cafés to hobnobbing at the racetrack in a sea of summer hats, sex takes the place of ambition as the plot's driving force. Tired of his live-in lover, the loyal but sullenly reproachful Łucja (Agnes Kuck), Bielecki is instantly smitten with the sensual, dark-eyed Nina (Maria Majdrowicz), his friend's neglected wife.

With her entrance the film opens out from its cramped urban settings and takes on a more fluid, organic naturalism. A stroll to a ruined fortress in the country is thrillingly animated by wind that shakes the wheat fields and ripples through the leaves, snatches at Nina's scarf and flattens her diaphanous white skirt against her legs. The cinematography by Giovanni Vitrotti makes each image seem at once freighted with meaning and quivering with life. Like Chmara, Vitrotti represented the internationalism of silent cinema: starting in Italy, where he was known for his pioneering use of traveling shots, he worked on German films throughout the 1920s, including the 1924 Italian coproduction of *Quo Vadis?* starring Emil Jannings, as well as shot movies in Russia and Poland.

CHMARA TURNS THIS SHABBY FRAUD INTO A COMPELLING ANTIHERO

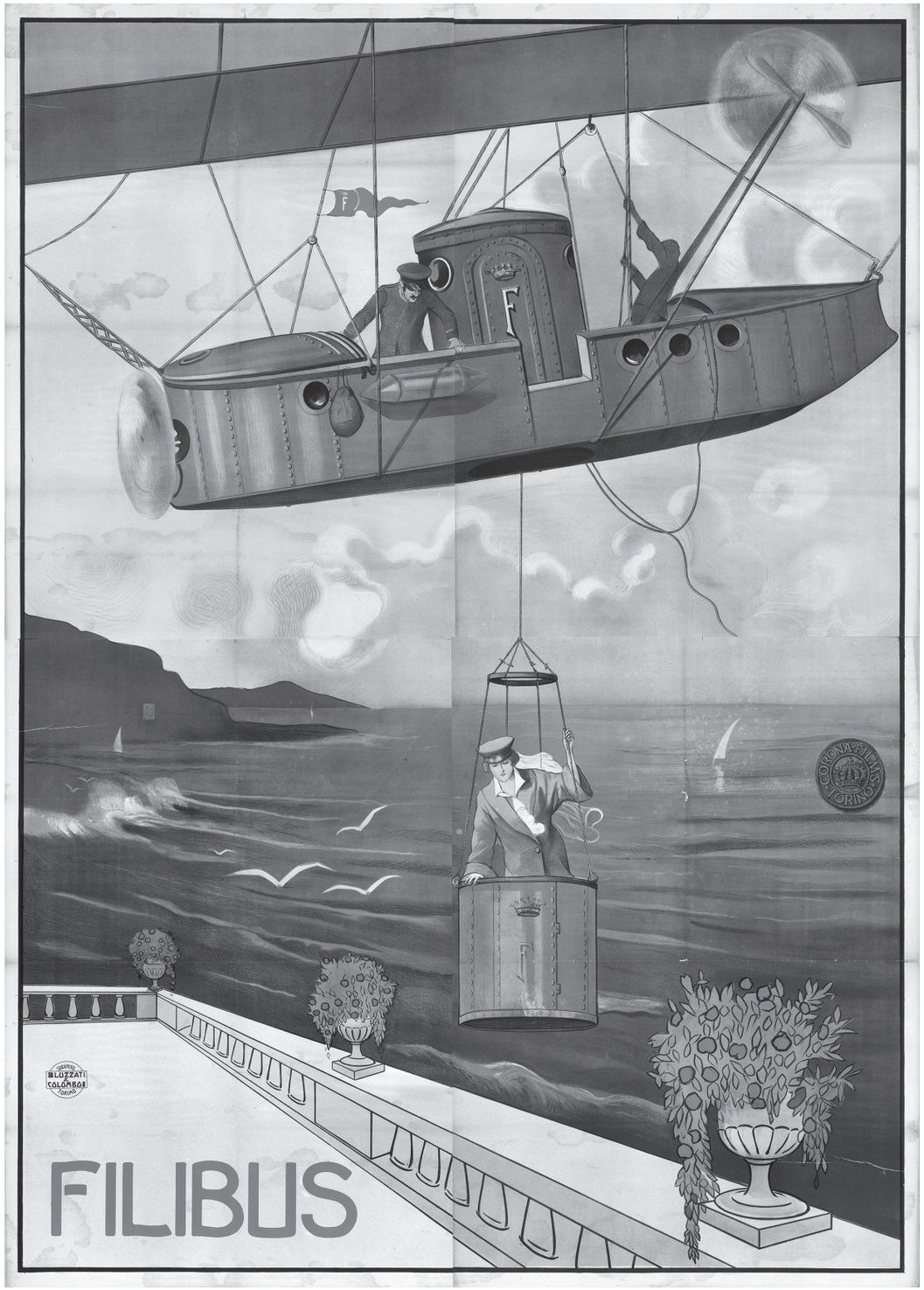
The film shuttles between city and country, sometimes distilling familiar visions of the two and sometimes playing against expectations. The metropolis is a kaleidoscopic whirl of nightclub signs, champagne bottles, leggy chorus lines, and twitchy jazz bands—all the classic symbols of sin—but it is in the countryside that lust and violence break loose. In a memorable set piece, Bielecki takes Nina to a large, gloomy mansion where the furniture and chandeliers are swaddled in white dustcovers, and an old, forbidding housekeeper comes to the door with a candelabra. Suddenly we are in the realm of gothic romance, presided over by a sinister, Munch-like painting of lovers that hangs above the fireplace. The torrid love scene accompanied by a raging thunderstorm must have been a cliché even then, but this instance is so superbly crafted that it feels fresh. A rapid, rhythmic montage of wind tearing at trees, clouds boiling, curtains billowing, and rain hammering the street is intercut with images of Bielecki feverishly kissing Nina's leg, their embrace lit by strobe-like spasms of lightning. A sharp cut reveals the abandoned Łucja sitting at home, waiting, with the pendulum of a clock slicing the foreground of the shot.

The last part of the film brilliantly uses such bold juxtapositions and counterpoint to illustrate the way everything falls apart for Bielecki, whose betrayal of the woman who knows his secret and threatens to expose him crowns his self-destructive hubris. The final unraveling coincides with the premiere of a play adapted from the novel *A Strong Man*. Szaro's theater background is evident in his richly detailed presentation of the backstage world. Early in his career, Szaro had studied in Moscow with the groundbreaking theater artist Vsevolod Meyerhold, whose influence is evident in the experimental stage production, with its stylized makeup and costumes, constructivist sets, and masked dancers with faces on both sides of their heads. The successful premiere, which should be his ultimate triumph, is ruined for Bielecki who can't take his eyes off a single empty seat in the audience. The contrast between the elaborate spectacle onstage and his anxious fixation on Nina's absence illustrates how false glamour crumbles at the touch of real feeling. Posters for the play multiply, its title taunting the man whose own weakness is now laid bare.

The film's jagged, bitter depiction of a society that has lost its moral bearings feels even more consequential given the horrors that consumed this part of the world within the next decade. Vsevolod Meyerhold, a mentor to Sergei Eisenstein, was tortured and killed in the Great Purge of 1940, his theater productions already suppressed by Stalin. Henryk Szaro, who was born Henoch Szapiro, was interned and then killed in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942. World War II decimated Polish cinema—the industry had been heavily Jewish—and *A Strong Man* was believed to be lost until a print turned up in the Royal Film Archive of Belgium in 1997. The rediscovery of this film, with its heat-lightning energy, emotional resonance, and Art Deco swank, resurrects a lost world. Its message, that lies in the end will unmask themselves, has not lost its relevance.

— IMOGEN SARA SMITH

Grigorij Chmara. Photo courtesy of Filmoteka Narodowa



FILIBUS

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA

DIRECTED BY MARIO RONCORONI, ITALY, 1915
CAST Cristina Ruspoli, Giovanni Spano, Mario Mariani, and Filippo Vallino **PRODUCTION** Corona Film
PRINT SOURCE EYE Filmmuseum

Preceded by the 1912 Vitascope film ***LAUNCH OF AN OBSERVATION BALLOON***

"No other crime thriller compares to Filibus!" trumpeted a double-page ad in the April 1915 edition of Italian film magazine *La Vita Cinematografica*. For once, studio PR was no exaggeration. *Filibus*, which follows the exploits of a futuristic female super-villain who pounces on her prey from a zeppelin manned by a crew of loyal henchman, is one of a kind. "Who is Filibus?" asks the ad. Contemporary viewers might also wonder how this cross-dressing antiheroine, heralded by some as cinema's first lesbian, managed to emerge from an Italian cinema dominated by swooning divas and historical epics.

...THE EXPLOITS OF A FUTURISTIC FEMALE SUPER-VILLAIN...

In the course of the serial's five episodes Filibus plays cat-and-mouse with the great Detective Hardy, pocketing some diamonds along the way. The film is a precursor to today's gadget-driven techno-thrillers: in her various schemes Filibus employs not only her zeppelin but something called a heliograph, a tiny camera, a miniature gun, lots of soporific drugs, and a fake handprint. She commutes between zeppelin and terra firma in a kind of tin can (complete with phone), which Detective Hardy fails to notice, even when it's hovering over his terrace. The special effects are endearingly low-budget, but who cares, when the action is fast-paced and just plain fun?

Like any self-respecting super-villain, Filibus is a mistress of disguise, posing as the Baroness Troixmonde for a visit to the detective and later insinuating herself into his household camouflaged as the aristocratic dandy Count de la Brive. This male impersonation was part of what film historian Angela Dalle Vacche describes as a widespread questioning of gender identity that, at the time, "was at the very center of Italy's modern daily life." Divas and socialites went to Futurist parties wearing "jupe-culottes," and Francesca Bertini played the male lead in 1914's *L'Histoire d'un Pierrot* (directed by Baldassarre Negroni). Filibus's trim suit and newsboy cap give gender boundaries a fairly forceful push compared to the jupes-culottes (a pants-skirt hybrid); but still more radical is the way the film destabilizes appearances in general, constantly oscillating between reality and illusion, whether it's diamonds, kidnappings, or wardrobe until it seems that all of life is one big masquerade. When Filibus, disguised as the Count, takes the detective's sister for an evening stroll, it's anybody's guess whether the flirtation is opportunistic, genuine, or a combination of the two. Filibus bamboozles Hardy so thoroughly that he questions the evidence of his own senses, and even his sanity.

Poster art courtesy of EYE Filmmuseum

The obvious model for *Filibus* is Louis Feuillade's popular crime serials *Fantômas* (1913–1914). Contemporary reviewer Monsù Travet noted the pilfering "from certain detective masterpieces of French writers" in his 1915 review, concluding: "I would hate to see the director of *Filibus* sued for literary plagiarism." Filibus copies Fantômas's mask and use of multiple disguises, but as a modern-day reviewer for the online journal *Á Voir à lire* notes, while she may be as intrepid as her French cousins, "her character is prankish rather than genuinely malevolent." An even more pertinent predecessor, given its female protagonist, is Victorin Jasset's *Protéa* (1913). Protéa is a kind of super-spy, chasing after a secret treaty (in the run-up to World War I spies and double agents began to proliferate on European screens). The opening credits introduce Protéa's various covers—including a male soldier—in a series of dissolves similar to the introduction of Filibus's alternate personas at the beginning of *Filibus*. However, there are important differences between the two. Filibus has no *Charlie's Angels*-type boss to call the shots and, where Protéa shares screen time with her male sidekick known as the Eel, Filibus is flanked by interchangeable male minions. Even more interesting, Protéa may disguise herself as a man, but when answering the telephone at home she's dressed in skirt and blouse. In contrast, *Filibus* suggests that the Baroness's skirts and ostrich-trimmed hat are as much a disguise as the Count's evening clothes and monocle. Lounging on the zeppelin pondering her dastardly schemes, Filibus prefers her suit and cap.

While Filibus was flying over Italy in 1915, the women below were lagging behind their western European sisters when it came to civil rights. Married women couldn't get divorced, they couldn't inherit property, or even subscribe to a newspaper without their husband's authorization, according to Dalle Vacche. Diva film melodramas depicting women driven out of their homes, losing custody of their children, shamed and suffering, were a gaudy reflection of this reality. But as Dalle Vacche points out, lower profile, action-oriented shorts like *Nelly la Domatrice* (*Nelly the Lion-Tamer*, 1912) and *La Poliziotta* (*The Policewoman*, 1913) suggest another facet of female experience. If the diva genre reflected Italy's victimization of women, then these short action films of women in charge reflected a new vision of female autonomy.

Cristina Ruspoli, who plays Filibus, starred in some of these action-women shorts, but information on the actress, as well as the rest of the film's cast and crew, is scant. From 1912 to 1916, Ruspoli accumulated some thirty credits, including a few big-budget historical epics typical of Italian cinema in the 1910s, like *Salambo* (1914). Producer Corona Films had an equally short run; the Turin-based company made about twenty-six films between 1914 and 1918, "for the most part adventure and small time features interpreted by second-rate actors," according to Cinema Ritrovato's 1997 festival program notes. Actor and director Mario Roncoroni had a longer, more eclectic career, codirecting *La Nave* (1921) with poet Gabriele d'Annunzio and then moving to Spain, where he continued to make films through the late 1920s.

An investigation into scenario writer Giovanni Bertinetti yields intriguing fodder for speculation on *Filibus*'s origins. In addition to his film work, Bertinetti wrote children's adventure stories featuring the gadgets and science-fiction fantasy elements that animate *Filibus*. Film historian Silvio Alovisio places him as part of Turin's intellectual circles, then abuzz with the Futurist ideas that Filippo Marinetti proclaimed in his 1909 manifesto: a love of technology and speed, a belief in the cleansing power of war and violence, a disdain for the past, and call to destroy museums and libraries. Marinetti might have been describing Filibus herself when he wrote, "the essential elements of our poetry will be courage, audacity and revolt."

Futurism also called for the destruction of feminism, which complicates its connection to *Filibus*. It's worth noting, however, that some women embraced Marinetti's philosophy and tried to resolve the contradiction. Valentine de Saint-Point released the *Manifesto of Futurist Women* in 1912, rejecting Marinetti's concept of superior man and inferior women ("It is absurd to divide humanity into men and women. It is composed only of femininity and masculinity.") while echoing the Futurist call for an infusion of virility "lacking in women as in men."

Here's where Futurism begins to merge with the Italian craze for physical exercise, championed by Turin-based physiologist Angelo Mosso. Mosso, author of *La Fatica* ("Fatigue"), argued for gymnastics in schools and specifically referred to women when he told a group of educators, "We must stop them on the downward and fatal slide toward hysteria." Italy, like its divas, was enervated, languid, and in need of toughening up; strengthening on the individual level, Mosso suggested, would lead to a stronger civic body.

Scriptwriter Bertinetti seems to have agreed with Mosso. In addition to films and novels, he also wrote self-improvement books like *Il Mondo è tuo* ("The World Is Yours," 1907) under the pseudonym Ellick Morn as well as an essay in 1918 for *La Vita Cinematografica*, "Il Cinema. Scuola di voluntà e di energie"

("Cinema: School of Willpower and Energy"), in which he argues for cinema's power to "solicit even the most passive individuals to act by imitating the deeds and actions projected on the screen." Was *Filibus* possibly conceived as an inducement to the droopy divas to pull themselves off their chaise longues?

Although the final frames of *Filibus* hint at a sequel, it was not to be. A few months after the film was released, Italy declared war on Austro-Hungary and Italian film production dropped precipitously over the next few years—possibly explaining why Cristina Ruspoli's credits seem to stop in 1916, why Corona Films went out of business, and why Mario Roncoroni moved to Spain. By rights, a film as minor as *Filibus* should have vanished from history as quickly as its creators. That it has survived for us to watch, analyze, and marvel at is a small miracle.

— MONICA NOLAN

At left: Leo Sandy, the antiquities collector. Above right: Filibus disguised as Baroness Troixmonde
Photos courtesy of EYE Filmmuseum

EYE ON THE ARCHIVE

THE 2017 SILENT FILM FESTIVAL AWARD RECIPIENT EYE FILMMUSEUM

A 1986 Giornate del Cinema Muto screening caused a sensation among the cognoscenti who frequent the annual film festival in Pordenone and prompted a renovation of what we think of when we think of the silent era. The film was *Fior di male*, an incomplete print of a 1915 Cines studio production, directed by Carmine Gallone and starring the Italian silent diva Lyda Borelli. It was brought to Pordenone by the Netherlands Filmmuseum in Amsterdam, today known as Eye Filmmuseum.

Fior di male, or *Flower of Evil*, had been restored to a pristine condition and displayed an evocative color palette of tints and tones. A testament to the technical and artistic quality of films made in the 1910s, it also demonstrated, what film scholar Ivo Blom later called, "the obsolescence of the film canon," which up until then had focused on familiar and beloved classics from the mid- to late 1920s. It was the first of many revelations to come.

The film was part of Filmmuseum's Desmet Collection named for the distributor Jean Desmet who operated in Amsterdam in the decade before World War I devastated European film industries. Deposited at the archive in 1957 and cataloged decades later with the help of government funding and participating scholars, the collection splashed the black-and-white universe of silent film with vivid color. We now know, as Blom writes in his 2003 history of the collection, that "about eighty percent of the films produced in the second decade of the century were colour-processed in one way or another."

Named by UNESCO to its Memory of the World Register in 2011, the Desmet Collection contains nine hundred-plus titles as well as crucial ephemera—business records, posters, playbills—that help put the films into historical context but are also treasures themselves. It is one of a handful of film collections to join the UNESCO registry, alongside the Lumière actualities, the Cuban Institute on Cinematographic Arts and Industry newsreels, and the Apartheid-era Doxa Collection of South Africa.

Desmet, however, represents just a fraction of the estimated thirty-seven thousand films held by EYE, which began its life as the Dutch Historical Film Archive in 1946. In 2009 it merged with Holland Film, Filmbank, and the Dutch Institute for Film Education to become an even more formidable institution—its new home a must-see destination on Amsterdam's waterfront, its collection enriched, and its imperatives ambitiously expanded.

EYE's silent-era collection of seven thousand titles continues to be the source of new gems. In addition to the Italian diva films and the color restoration of the avant-garde experiment *Ballet mécanique*, EYE has given back to the world the long lost Rudolph Valentino-Gloria Swanson film *Beyond the Rocks*, a 1918 South African feature *The Rose of Rhodesia*, and three features, although incomplete, from Sessue Hayakawa's independent production company, a restoration project whose impetus came from a scholar researching a book about the Japanese-born matinee idol.

It's not just about big names and feature-length titles. Bits and Pieces, an ongoing orphan film compilation series begun in the late 1980s, reveals the intrinsic value of film fragments. Now in its 623rd edition, the series ignited the imagination of former Filmmuseum curator Peter Delpeut to make his 1999 homage film *Diva Dolorosa* and propelled current initiatives that make clips available for the public to create their own films.

It's not just about big names and feature-length titles.

On the forefront of putting its collections online, EYE participated in a collaboration of European archives to upload about six hundred hours of footage related to the First World War in time for the 2014 Centennial. While only a short-lived project, the images of battle-ready (or –weary) soldiers and refugees close the hundred-year and thousands-of-miles distance between them and us and serve as a powerful reminder of the fragility of peace.

EYE has also been collaborating with the National Film Preservation Foundation here in San Francisco on a restoration and digitization project, sharing rarities like a haunting record of the glacier at Oregon's Mount Hood, *The Snow of Many Years*, preserved with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. According to EYE silent film curator Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi, preparing for streaming requires the restoration of the film material, which makes the process time-consuming but ensures long-term preservation.

Since that fortuitous screening of *Fior di male*, many other archives around the world have joined EYE to restore in color and to excavate what were once neglected decades of the silent era. Audiences continue to benefit. From EYE's collections, SFSFF has shown the 1913 San Francisco earthquake feature *When the Earth Trembled* and Lois Weber's *Shoes*, from 1916, as well as last year's program of early hand-painted films, Fantasia of Color, and this year's *Filibus*, with its original tints and tones. Rongen-Kaynakçi promises more to come, including a 1915 Hungarian feature, one of a handful of surviving silents from that country, recently uncovered. We eagerly await EYE's next treasure.

— THE EDITOR

Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi accepts the San Francisco Silent Film Festival Award on behalf of EYE Filmmuseum where she is the silent film curator.

PAST SILENT FILM FESTIVAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

2016 David Robinson
2015 Serge Bromberg
2014 BFI National Archive
2013 Cinémathèque Française
2012 Telluride Film Festival
2011 UCLA Film and Television Archive
2010 Photoplay Productions
2009 China Film Archive
2008 David Shepard of Film Preservation Associates
2007 Turner Classic Movies
2006 Library of Congress and Melissa Chittick
2005 National Film Preservation Foundation
2004 George Eastman House
2003 Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film

The award was sponsored by Haghefilm from 2003 to 2006.

OUTSIDE THE LAW

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY STEPHEN HORNE AND FRANK BOCKIUS

DIRECTED BY TOD BROWNING, USA, 1920
CAST Priscilla Dean, Ralph Lewis, E.A. Warren, Lon Chaney, Wheeler Oakman, and Stanley Goethals
PRODUCTION Universal Film Manufacturing Company **PRINT SOURCE** Universal Studios

Outside the Law stars the legendary "Phantom of the Opera" and is written and directed by the creator of *Dracula* and *Freaks*—but don't expect a horror film.

This movie has more in common with the pioneering crime fiction of Dashiell Hammett, who became synonymous with stories set in the San Francisco underworld—the *demimonde* director Tod Browning brings to vivid life in this 1920 drama—released two years before Hammett's first short story was published. In fact, so many elements of *Outside the Law* later appear in Hammett's "Continental Op" stories, I wonder if the one-time Pinkerton detective didn't see Browning's film at a local movie house.

Oddly, the only thing missing from *Outside the Law* is a detective. And some competent cops. One of the most striking aspects of this film is, in fact, its lawlessness. Vestiges of the infamous Barbary Coast remain in streets and alleyways rife with Irish gangsters and prowling tongs. The local cops are gullible pawns in a scheme by Black Mike Sylva (Lon Chaney) to railroad gang boss Silent Madden (Ralph Lewis) into jail, so Mike will get a crack at becoming the town's new vice lord. Browning renders this nefarious terrain with the pungent exotica that was his specialty, from the sawdust-strewn saloons, to the mysterious maze-like corridors of Chinatown, to the opulence of a Pacific Heights society gala.

NOT JUST STANDARD UNDERWORLD STUFF

But this isn't just standard underworld stuff. Browning has a few surprises up his sleeve. Before you cringe at white actors playing all the main Asian roles* (Chaney's makeup as the omniscient Ah Wing is, of course, monstrously grotesque) consider that the story posits the Chinese as the stabilizing force in this wide-open seaport town. It's the sagacious Chang Low (E. Alyn Warren, white as rice) who convinces Silent Madden to cease his criminal ways and go straight; it's Chang Low from whom the police seek inside "dope" and guidance; it's Ah Wing who susses out the motives of the crazy white men.

Most surprising of all, however, is that the story revolves around Madden's daughter, Molly—known in the underworld as Silky Moll. As portrayed by Priscilla Dean, Moll is the feisty flipside to silent cinema's many shrinking violets. She may swan around in a bustle skirt and favor flamboyantly feathered hats, but nothing shows off Moll to better advantage than a gun gripped in her fist. Once her father gets sent up, she scuttles all talk of reform and leaps at a plan to steal jewels from some high society swells. Her partner in this daring caper, Dapper Bill Ballard (Wheeler Oakman), has one-tenth her tenacity—and once they're on the lam, Moll proves herself the brains

* Only the women are allowed to actually be Chinese; look for an all-too-brief appearance by a fifteen-year-old Anna May Wong.

Lon Chaney as Black Mike Sylva. Photo courtesy of Universal Studios

and the brawn of this chaste (chased?) pair. Moll's disdain toward Bill's attempts at intimacy is even more amusing when you know Dean and Oakman were married in real life, a union that only lasted the few years they were atop the movie business. At times, Oakman flashes the buoyant charm of Jimmy Cagney, minus the piss-and-vinegar panache. By the late '30s, however, the once debonair actor was dissipated, reduced to playing lechers in "Adults Only" sleaze like *Gambling with Souls* (1936), *Slaves in Bondage* (1937), and *Escort Girl* (1941).

Hiding out in a "Knob" Hill walk-up (a glaring goof by title writer Gardner Bradford), Bill fights off cabin fever while Moll staves off Bill's growing ardor. A scene-stealing little boy (Stanley Goethals, credited merely as "The Kid Across the Hall") makes a habit of barging into the apartment and trying, with all his mini-might, to melt Moll's hardened heart. Dean plays it so frostily you expect her to pitch him out a second-story window.

For modern viewers the most shocking (and suspenseful) aspect of *Outside the Law* may be the uproariously unsafe ways "the kid" amuses himself—with axes and loaded guns. Interestingly, all this cutesy domestic stuff was retained in Browning's 1930 sound version of *Outside the Law*, in which Mary Nolan took the Moll role and Edward G. Robinson—warming up for *Little Caesar*—filled Lon Chaney's shoes. In 1946 Universal realized it still owned Browning's original story and remade it again as *Inside Job*, a goofy B-movie that again got good mileage from the pesky punk across the hall.

So what of Lon Chaney? As Black Mike he's a sinister presence, but the role is tame compared to the physically deformed and psychically scarred characters that soon made him a legend. Some accounts contend there was more of Chaney as Ah Wing in the film's initial release but that parts of the Chinatown subplot were reportedly cut for the film's 1926 reissue. Fortuitously, a nitrate print of the original release was discovered in a Minnesota barn in the 1970s, left there sometime in the '20s by a traveling roadshowman. The Library of Congress transferred it to safety stock, which is what the restoration team at Universal used to reclaim the film. Although sections had degraded beyond repair, these patches fortunately occur when it's easy to imagine the characters being licked by the flames of eternal damnation, not just nitrate decomposition.

Priscilla Dean is virtually forgotten today, which is shameful—she was a feminist icon before such a label ever existed. After appearing in a slew of one-reel comedies in her teen years, she broke out in 1917 as "Morn Light," a comic opera star battling male villains in the sixteen-chapter crime serial *The Gray Ghost* (now lost). She starred the same year in the extraordinary Lois Weber-directed *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*, a pro-birth control tale in which she played Mrs. Graham, "a young wife whose frail strength is overtaxed by a repetition of motherhood." Dean, it seems, took the film's message to heart; she never had children.

The actress developed her mature screen persona for Universal-Jewel, the studio's premier production unit. In the late 1910s, Dean radiated from American screens as a beautiful, formidable, and undomesticated woman who proved herself equal, if not superior, to men. She would ride, shoot, and even brawl with her male costars. Studio publicity mavens bolstered her indomitable image by dutifully reporting that the actress performed all her own stunts. Grace Kingsley, film editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, called Dean "The wild girl of the films, 1920 model," and more than one reviewer noted her propensity for portraying "dominating females." The public loved the power she wielded on-screen; especially the skeptical sneer that became the actress's trademark, alerting audiences that there soon would be hell to pay and Miss Dean would be cashing the checks.

Kiss or Kill (1918), *The Wildcat of Paris* (1918), *The Silk-Lined Burglar* (1919), *Pretty Smooth* (1919) were all Priscilla Dean crime pictures, but it was her flinty performances for Tod Browning that earned her the title "The Queen of Crookdom." Between 1918 and 1923 they made nine pictures together: *The Brazen Beauty* (1918), *Which Woman?* (1918), *The Wicked Darling* (1919), *The Exquisite Thief* (1919), *Outside the Law* (1920), *The Virgin of Stamboul* (1920), *Under Two Flags* (1922), *White Tiger* (1923), and *Drifting* (1923).

In all these films Dean demonstrated what contemporary critics call "female agency." Her talent agency also had great savvy: with the expiration of her Universal contract in 1924 Dean became the prize in a bidding war between the major studios. Eventually signing an exclusive pact with producer Hunt Stromberg worth $3 million, she never worked with Tod Browning again. He found his next muse in the twisted and maniacal persona of Lon Chaney, with whom he went on to make the string of perverse and memorable melodramas for which they are both remembered.

But this is Priscilla Dean's picture, and what a pleasure it is to see her back on a movie screen. One hopes that her other films will be rediscovered and that her underappreciated role in Hollywood history will be redeemed.

— EDDIE MULLER

At left: E. Alyn Warren as Chang Low, Anna May Wong seated beside him. Above right: Priscilla Dean as Silky Moll Madden.
Photos courtesy of Universal Studios

Potemkin's sailors

BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY THE MATTI BYE ENSEMBLE

DIRECTED BY SERGEI EISENSTEIN, USSR, 1925
CAST Aleksandr Antonov, Vladimir Barksy, and Grigori Aleksandrov **PRODUCTION** First Factory of Goskino
PRINT SOURCE Kino Lorber

Few films have made an impact on the history of cinema like Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronenosets Potyomkin*). In 2016 it was ranked the eleventh best film of all time in a *Sight and Sound* magazine critics poll, one of only a handful of silent-era films to make the list.

Commissioned in 1925 by the Soviet government to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the thwarted 1905 revolution, the film accomplished that and much more. Chosen to direct was Eisenstein, whose first film, *Strike* (1925), marked him as a leading Soviet filmmaker at the age of twenty-seven. Both an artistic and a political ideologue, Eisenstein had theories about filmmaking, not just talent and revolutionary views, and had already experimented with innovative techniques in *Strike*.

A REVOLUTION UNTO ITSELF

In *Battleship*, Eisenstein creates a dramatized version of true events, the mutiny of the crew of the Potemkin, led by sailors Vakulinchuk (Aleksandr Antonov) and Matyushenko (Mikhail Gomarov), in a gesture of solidarity with the revolution breaking out all over Russia. The sailors are faced with deplorable conditions onboard. When they realize they are about to be fed meat infested with maggots, they refuse to eat, provoking a showdown with the officers.

Senior officer Golikov (Vladimir Barksy) threatens to execute the mutinous sailors. But when the ship's marines are called on to fire, they refuse to shoot their comrades. Nonetheless, several sailors are killed in the takeover of the ship, Vakulinchuk among them. The rifles are then turned on Golikov, and the rebels exact their justice.

The ship heads for Odessa, a city in Ukraine that has already taken up arms against the tsar's forces. From the Odessa Steps, a huge crowd greets the Potemkin as the crew raises a red flag. The sailors receive a massive heroes' welcome, and Vakulinchuk is hailed as a martyr. However, government soldiers have been dispatched to quell the crowd. They march inexorably down the steps, shooting, bayoneting, and trampling those not quick enough to get out of the way, resulting in a bloody massacre of men, women, and children.

An admiral's squadron heads for Odessa to retake Potemkin, and the rebelling sailors decide to confront them. However, the admiral's crew also refuse to fire on their comrades. The Potemkin sails on, we know not where.

The 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War was nearly the Romanovs' undoing. Japan crushed Tsar Nicholas II's attempts at expansion in Manchuria and Korea. As a result, Russia's already failing economy went into further decline. Peasants and workers rose in massive numbers, forming councils (soviets) that threatened to put an end to the hated tsarist regime once and for all. But the revolutionary forces were not yet strong enough

to finish the job. The Romanovs defeated them with a combination of repression and concessions.

The Bolsheviks took the lessons of the 1905 revolution to heart. The suppressed uprising validated Marx's view that a decaying capitalist society would be drawn into wars that would further its demise. Workers and peasants would overthrow the regime and become the new rulers. Lenin later called 1905 the "dress rehearsal" for 1917.

The intended audiences for *Battleship Potemkin* were the millions of victorious workers and peasants in 1925, decimated by the recent civil war, in need of the inspired example of their revolutionary predecessors. There was hardly a person in Russia who would not have been deeply moved by the scenes of sailors being forced to bear terrible conditions and yet refusing to shoot their comrades. The use of bold imagery and sparse intertitles ensured that even an illiterate peasant could understand what the film was about. *Battleship* was a revolution unto itself.

The film's reputation spread quickly. There were efforts to show it throughout the world, starting with Germany, which, in 1926, was in the throes of its own deep and bitter class struggle. Fearful of the film's incendiary potential, German authorities severely censored it. They found the breach of military discipline depicted in the film especially disturbing. The distributor was forced to eliminate nearly one hundred feet of film, crippling the film's message, in order for it to be shown. Censored German versions are what most people outside the USSR saw.

Coincidentally on a European tour at the time, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford attended the Berlin premiere, after which Fairbanks declared, "*The Battleship Potemkin* was the most profound emotional experience of my life." Realizing that profound emotional experiences could be very profitable, Hollywood rushed to see if its studios could capture some of Eisenstein's lightning in a bottle. After seeing it himself, producer David O. Selznick raved to MGM's Harry Rapf that the film was "gripping beyond words" and "unquestionably one of the greatest motion pictures ever made ... It possesses a technique entirely new to the screen."

Selznick was a savvy enough observer to be able to pinpoint what was at the heart of the film's effectiveness: Eisenstein's brilliant and innovative use of film techniques to elicit an emotional response from an audience. His bag of tricks centered around shot composition, casting for types, and montage, used in a way never before seen.

"GRIPPING BEYOND WORDS"

Instead of editing to create a smooth or seamless narrative, Eisenstein threw disparate images against each other to elicit an emotional response or to stimulate an intellectual association. To explain his approach, Eisenstein often used the example of Japanese characters, which he had thoroughly studied. For example, when writing in Japanese, the character for "water" could be combined with the character for "eye" to produce the concept of "tears." In this same way, Eisenstein combined two seemingly unrelated shots in his films in order to create something new. This technique is used throughout the onboard rebellion sequence to create suspense, dread, and revulsion.

His approach to casting, which he called "typage," was to hire people, not necessarily professionals, who instantly conveyed who they were: a student, a grandmother, a sailor. "Instead of looking for creative revelations of talent," Eisenstein wrote, "[I] sought the correct physical appearances." He was known to go into the field and study dozens of persons who have a particular role in life, for example, street cleaners. After synthesizing an idea in his mind of what a street cleaner looks like, he would find someone who fit the bill, even if the individual wasn't actually a street cleaner.

Refining these methods in what was only his second film, Eisenstein reinvented cinema. The iconic Odessa Steps sequence has been quoted throughout film history, for example, in the shower scene in Hitchcock's *Psycho* and in the final bloody gunfight in Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*, with the camera cutting from stabbing and shooting to bloodshed, rather than showing both in the same frame. The world would not see another brash wunderkind like Eisenstein until Orson Welles made *Citizen Kane*.

After a long history of the gutting and rearranging of *Potemkin*, including by latter-day Soviet censors, Eisenstein scholar Naum Kleiman began in 1976 trying to piece together Eisenstein's intended sequence of the film. In 1986, Enno Patalas, working at the Munich Filmmuseum, also began reassembling the film, a process that culminated with a new restoration by the Deutsche Kinemathek, which debuted at the Berlin Film Festival in 2005. This new version with 1,374 total shots includes all the material that had been cut by the German censors in the 1920s and had been missing ever since.

— MIGUEL PENDÁS

On the Odessa Steps. Photo courtesy of Kino Lorber

BATTLESHIP POTEMKIN

With it the first stone of a heroic epic of the Revolution is laid.

by Adrian Piotrovsky

A worker, a student, a woman in a shawl, a clerk, a schoolboy—the hearts of the whole motley Soviet public move with a single emotion, a single indignation, anger, hope or pride. A work of art has rarely been so omnipotent, but it was just like that at the showing of *The Battleship Potemkin*, the first part of Eisenstein's epic on 1905. The impressive force of this film, which is not at all agitational but simply made by a brilliant artist and revolutionary, is so staggering that it seems at first as if this strict alternation of simple pictures has not been devised by anyone, as if a broad wave of heroic life is rolling over us and can roll in no other way.

In fact this is a work of the most refined mastery and, more than that, it is a new kind of cinema art, a masterpiece of Soviet film style. As in his first picture, *The Strike*, Eisenstein seems to give new life to objects and people, showing them from quite unexpected and cleverly selected points of view. *Potemkin* is an amazing review of the men and the objects of the sea. The *contrejour* photographs of the port of Odessa are the height of marine lyricism but this is far from being the most important thing. The shots in this film are locked into sequences, into 'parts' elevated by a pathos that is both great and pure. The indignation, the mutiny, the heroic grief for the dead man, the monstrous tsarist revenge, the extreme tension of waiting (the approach of the government squadron), the boundless rejoicing: these are the six emotional blocks that make up this poem and each block divides into hundreds of crystal-like shots, criss-crossing details, human faces, machine fragments, that are pierced through and through with a single burst of will characteristic of a particular part as a whole, and driven by an ever increasing tempo. The montage of pure pathos is Eisenstein's basic method.

That is why his *Potemkin* is monumental. The everyday precision, the authenticity of the stripes and badges that is favoured by others, left him virtually unmoved. Potemkin, Odessa: these are, in generalised terms, a mutinous battleship stirring a city. That is why the effect of his 'Odessa Steps' sequence is so irresistible: the wide white steps down which the crowd, pursued by gendarmes, runs, slides and cowers—a genuine staircase into hell, real steps of horror. That is why your heart sinks when you see the solitary guns of the mutinous ship. For all its terrible concreteness and its absolute vitality. Eisenstein's art is symbolic and it is great enough to act like gigantic generalisations.

Does *Potemkin* have a plot? Yes, more so than *The Strike*—or, rather, the development of the pathos is here more firmly grounded and linked. But this crystal-clear and tremendously gripping plot unfolds without any intervention from the individual intrigue and personal romance that others consider necessary to a film. The hero is the sailors' battleship, the Odessa crowd, but characteristic figures are snatched here and there from the crowd. For a moment, like a conjuring trick, they attract all the sympathies of the audience: like the sailor Vakulinchuk, like the young woman and child on the Odessa Steps, but they emerge only to dissolve once more into the mass. This signifies: no film stars but a film of real-life types. It is as if the director is letting our eyes roam through the crowd: 'Look how rich simple life is!'

But the more public value of *Potemkin* cannot yet be measured. With it the first stone of a heroic epic of the Revolution is laid, an epic that is like the daily bread of popular education in our country. It would be rash to leave this monumental fragment on its own. Stone by stone, by precisely these simple and sublime methods, we must make a film epic, a glorious monument to Soviet film style. Glory to Soviet cinema!

The original Russian was published in the Leningrad newspaper *Krasnaya Gazeta* on January 20, 1926. The English translation by Richard Taylor was published in *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896–1939*, edited by Richard Taylor and Ian Christie and first published by Routledge in 1988. It is reprinted here with permission.

A PAGE OF MADNESS

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY ALLOY ORCHESTRA

DIRECTED BY TEINOSUKE KINUGASA, JAPAN, 1926
CAST Masao Inoue, Yoshie Nakagawa, Ayako Iijima, Hiroshi Nemoto, and Misao Seki **PRODUCTION** Shin Kanaku-Ha Eiga Renmei **PRINT SOURCE** Lobster Films

When's the last time you were surprised by a silent film? Impressed, dazzled, yes, but genuinely surprised? You'd think by 2017, with all the silent-era history scholarship behind us, that authentic, mutant-DNA "Holy Crap" moments would be rare on the ground, and, of course, they are. But there's no amount of buckling up that can prepare a well-versed silent cinephile for the utter unheralded weirdness of Teinosuke Kinugasa's *A Page of Madness* (*Kurutta Ichipeiji*). Scan the sacred texts, from Paul Rotha onward—it's not there, as if it were a disturbing dream filmgoers may've thought they'd had, fleeting but creepy, after a big meal and too much wine.

A MONSTER OUT OF TIME

Of course, the fact of it being an Asian silent—and not a silent made marketable by bearing the mega-auteur imprint of either Yasujiro Ozu or Kenji Mizoguchi—automatically means it passed little seen by Western audiences for decades, and thus fell out of the "official story" of cinema's evolution. Even the annals of scholarship about avant-garde or experimental film, a legacy to which Kinugasa's movie definitely belongs, rolled on for decades ignorant of its existence. Even in Japan it was largely unknown, a lost film, until the director discovered a copy in his own storage shed in 1971, years after he'd retired.

The historical anomalies don't stop there. The film itself is a monster out of time, perhaps the most psychotic Japanese silent film ever made but also a piece of work that completely muddies how we thought film history happened, and when. The fact that Kinugasa was etching his fever-dream (with the help of an avant-garde theater company) at more or less the same exact time as the Surrealists and the Soviet mad scientists were creating theirs, and with little or no cross-pollination, scans something like evidence for a conspiracy theory. How did this freakazoid come to be? Decades later, Kinugasa admitted to seeing some American silents, singling out the work of Rupert Julian, of all people (like Kinugasa, Julian also worked as an actor), and, significantly, loving F.W. Murnau's *The Last Laugh* (1924), but that was as far as his influences are thought to have gone. Murnau's film, we surmise, had a major impact, but even so, the frantic layering and electric montage of Kinugasa's film feels sui generis, a film born accidentally, organically, out of its own primordial cinematic soup.

In Japan, it got nominally noticed. It was deemed so unique it was booked only in theaters specializing in foreign films, frequented by adventurous moviegoers, and led to Kinugasa (who had made thirty-four earlier films, all now lost) forming his own production company, getting distribution by Shochiku, and launching into a far more orthodox career lasting more than forty years and another eighty films, including *Gate of Hell* (1953), winner at both Cannes and the Oscars. Looking at *Page*'s unfettered modernist assault, Kinugasa's evolution into one of the giants of mainstream Japa-

Photo courtesy of Bret Hampton

nese cinema may seem inexplicable, but take another look—the mise-en-scène is so narratively clear, aided by flashbacks and nonstop subjectivity, that not a single intertitle card of exposition is needed. (In Japan it was accompanied, as almost all films were, by a benshi narrator, and the rare museum screenings of the last few decades have often included neo-benshi participants.) Set almost entirely in an insane asylum, the movie relates the tribulations of a beleaguered man (Masao Inoue) who works as a janitor in the institution where his insane wife (Yoshie Nakagawa) is a patient. How she became this way, and what guilt the man bears, is revealed in time (the fragmented backstory involves a storm, and the death of an infant), as he attempts to connect with her through the bars, and save her during a climactic riot of patients. His sanity begins to crumble, too, after his daughter (Ayako Iijima) visits with news of an impending wedding. As the perspectives begin to twist, the matter of who belongs on which side of a locked cell door becomes frighteningly unclear.

It's the film's unforgettable visual intensity that leaves a footprint in your memory. It begins with a vision out of the madwoman's fantasy life: a dancing princess in front of a vast, spinning ball carpeted with striped fur—what?—and from there, Kinugasa brings a murderously inventive battery of ideas to bear, using double and triple and sometimes quadruple exposures to disorient us. A guard will open a barred door, and the bars will remain; a nervous tracking shot down the central hallway is layered atop a tracking shot going in the opposite direction. Memories are seen through the hazy windows of hallucinations, while in-the-moment experience is literally, visually, haunted by the past. In one disarming moment, during a walk on the institute grounds, the foreground characters are clear while others, just a few feet away, are whited-out, shot perhaps through a vast white veil, creating a vivid sense of ghostly dislocation.

You never know where the camera will go or when or why, or when the movie will erupt into a free-associative montage seizure. But it's not random; most of the film is formally very rigorous, as in the tour-de-force memory sequence of the wife at various points in her life—socializing, laughing, brooding, raving—in a series of short shots connected by the motion blur of swiveling, circular pans. The imagery itself is never less than chilling and ghostly, with the inmates' hyperspeed manic dancing (and creepy use of Japanese girls' long filthy black hair, presaging the J-horror trope of the last twenty years), the foggy and insinuating sense of psychotic danger, and the climactic freakout, in which, post-riot, the janitor doles out homogenous, smiling Noh masks to the lunatics, including his wife and himself, calming everyone and creating a spontaneous tableau of placid happiness, in lieu of an actual resolution to everyone's torment. For the Japanese, the masks signify a traditional mode of High Culture, a familiar if ironic flourish in this hothouse avant-gardism. For most of the rest of us, the effect is still fantastically spooky, the masks seeming to further dehumanize the characters, robbing them of identity and will.

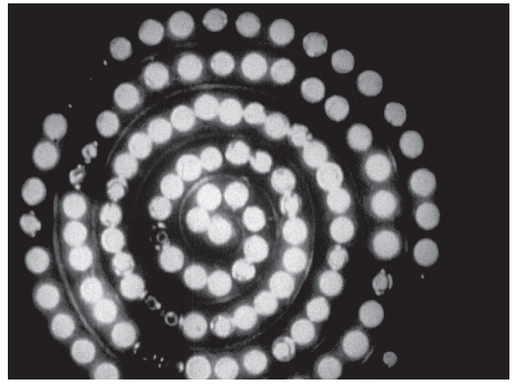
MURDEROUSLY INVENTIVE BATTERY OF IDEAS

As Nipponophile-scholar Donald Richie has pointed out, expressionism per se has always been welcome and understood in Japanese culture, where realism and naturalism were secondary to stylized and anti-naturalistic representation. The German Expressionism of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920), so radical a step in every other cinema culture's evolution, was simpatico for Japanese audiences, and catnip for Kinugasa's clique of avant-garde artists (which included *Page* scenarist and eventual Nobel-winning novelist Yasunari Kawabata). But in terms of disjunctive flow and pacing alone, it remains that Kinugasa's film was an alarming departure from the simple visual syntax of Japanese silent films, and it doesn't resemble the Germans very much either.

Ultimately, it may be the best—that is, the most fascinating and the most terrifying—madhouse movie ever made and makes all other efforts at visualizing the subjective experience of mental and emotional disarray look childish and campy by comparison. Looking at the film's evocative textures, it's difficult not to align it as an influence or a prophecy on or of everything from Carl Dreyer to Picabia to Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, despite going almost entirely unseen in the West. (One might feel compelled to claim an exception to that idea: Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon*, shot in 1943, feels so haunted by Kinugasa's film that you could be convinced that Deren had seen it in her 1930s avant-garde circles, somehow, and seen in it a way to express the ineffable on film.)

The feeling of *A Page of Madness* is of being exposed to a secret cinema, a covert subconsciousness-caught-in-amber history of movies, happening beneath the culture we thought we knew, perhaps while we sleep. There are, thank God, still mysteries to unearth in the forgotten closets of the world, and still unknown movie experiences that seem to have come out of nowhere.

— MICHAEL ATKINSON



Photos courtesy of Bret Hampton

Silent Scream
Going Mad Without Sound

BY NORA FIORE

SECRETS OF A SOUL
(G.W. Pabst, 1926)

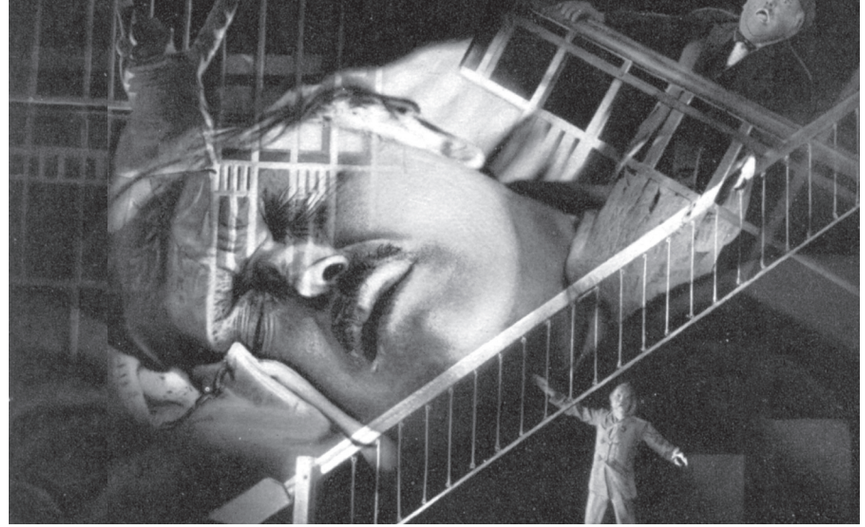
Like Teinosuke Kinugasa's *A Page of Madness*, *Secrets of a Soul* probes the anguish of a man fearful for his family's future. Fortunately, Martin Fellman can afford the talking cure. Tempting though it is to classify *Secrets of a Soul* as a testimonial for Freudian psychoanalysis (it was written in consultation with two noted psychologists specializing in dream interpretation), the film's surreal subjectivity transcends the plot's jigsaw approach to consciousness. A stop-gap animation village sprouts from the ground. A mysterious ray of light caresses the blade of an oriental sword. Memories replay as pageant-like vignettes. By immersing us in the patient's psyche, the imagery builds empathy for Fellman's anxiety. Indeed, the film's second shot holds up Fellman's reflection like a mirror to the audience, as if to say, "*You could be him*." Werner Krauss's performance, spiraling from rumpled charm to shuddering panic, then struggling toward self-discovery, elicits the spectator's compassion. Fellman's happy ending can be bought, and it is, in the epilogue granting him the paternal joy he craves. But the pastoral, sun-dappled look of this coda contrasts with the rest of the film, smacking of wish fulfillment. Is it fantasy? Is it reality? In the cinema, as in the mind, the answer is always both.

INGEBORG HOLM
(Victor Sjöström, 1913)

In *Ingeborg Holm*, the eponymous heroine is separated from her family by force, exposing the link between the criminalization of poverty and mental illness. The viewer never sees inside the heroine's mind as in *Secrets of the Soul*. Instead, Sjöström shows the traumatic external pressures that cause her breakdown. When Holm first visits the workhouse, this small, dignified widow waits on a long bench of paupers whose grotesque agitation foreshadows her own fate in the dehumanizing system. As a board of administrators hog the frame and decide Holm's future, she haunts the edge like a ghost. The elaborate shifting focus when Holm gives up her children makes the viewer feel the wrench of a mother's grief. When Holm's mind gives way, she frets in the midst of a busy visitation room, just one case among many. *Ingeborg Holm* reminds us that the definition of sanity hinges on power. Callous authority figures—like the superintendent who laughs over Holm's pleas—are normal because they say so. If privilege and cruelty are the norm, then poverty and love are deviant. That's the twisted logic of *Ingeborg Holm*'s world, not so far from our own.

THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI
(Robert Wiene, 1920)

Is Caligari a malevolent, unhinged authority figure or merely the object of his patient's delusions? The framing story of this proto-horror movie plunges the audience into uncertainty, paralleling the narrator's paranoia. Regardless, the film portrays an unsettling dynamic: the psychiatrist wants to keep the patient in his place and the patient wants to institutionalize his psychiatrist. Mental illness is a spectacle that *Caligari* capitalizes on. The doctor exhibits Cesare as a curiosity and the main room of the asylum resembles a circus arena. The



Secrets of a Soul

film's jagged Expressionist decor thrilled audiences of the day as if it were a rollercoaster of the mind, a funhouse simulation of a cracked psyche. As *Photoplay* enthused in 1921, "The scenery ... reels and totters like the tumbling minds whose mad processes built its ugly but fascinating plot." Like a mountebank posing as the cure, *Caligari* shocks and entertains with its technical bravura but lacks the empathy found in *Ingeborg Holm*, *A Page of Madness*, or *Secrets of a Soul*.

MALOMBRA
(Carmine Gallone, 1917)

Just as Caligari takes on a violent alternate identity after discovering a grim manuscript, so does *Malombra*'s Marina. As she reads a letter by her ancestor Cecilia, the past dissolves into the present; Marina's image flickers over Cecilia's. By embodying another woman's sorrow and rage, Marina becomes an agent of revenge against patriarchal oppression, a *diva furiosa*. Lyda Borelli as Marina veers from convulsive upside-down close-ups to quiet scenes of glamorous gothic rumination, imparting a kind of triumphant hauteur throughout. Gloating over her uncle's deathbed, Marina's thrashing movements, wild eyes, and shark-like rictus convey extremes of pleasure and pain at once. Her illness does not diminish her; it expands her. *Malombra* explores connections among female creativity, passion, and madness in a society that punishes women's rebellion as sickness. In *A Page of Madness*, the dancer's fantasies liberate her from the asylum, resulting in the film's most beautiful images. In Marina's case, her dissociation endows her with the dark power to wrest Cecilia's narrative away from the men who controlled it and write her own ending.

THE WIND
(Victor Sjöström, 1928)

Motifs of confinement and vengeance intertwine in both *Malombra* and *The Wind*. However, the gothic stillness of *Malombra*'s interiors contrasts sharply with what the star of *The Wind*, Lillian Gish, called the latter film's "pure motion." The Texas desert's unrelenting wind torments Letty and drives her to madness. As he did in *Ingeborg Holm*, director Sjöström composes the shots to emphasize the pressures bearing down on the heroine. In one chilling example, Letty's fragile figure looks through her shack's grimy window while Roddy looms behind her. Nature, marriage, and a human predator combine to trap Letty mentally and physically. Sjöström also gives us the view from inside Letty's mind: a phantom horse rides in the sky and a sandblasted corpse suddenly opens its eyes. Like *Secrets of a Soul*'s happy ending, the conclusion of *The Wind* may feel too tidy. Yet, surviving mental illness often depends on finding freedom within—not freedom from—painful circumstances and memories. As sunshine transfigures Letty's features and the once-frightening wind streams through her hair, the audience can see that freedom is finally hers.

THE DOLL

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY GUENTER BUCHWALD AND FRANK BOCKIUS

DIRECTED BY ERNST LUBITSCH, GERMANY, 1919
CAST Ossi Oswalda, Hermann Thimig, Victor Janson, and Gerhard Ritterband
PRODUCTION Projektions AG Union **PRINT SOURCE** Filmarchiv Austria

Deliciously weird for 1919 or any other year, Ernst Lubitsch's *Die Puppe* (*The Doll*) declares its intent to please from the first shot. An appealing twenty-seven-year-old Lubitsch himself is the first person to appear, as he refuses to look his own camera in the eye. Instead, from a toy box he busily assembles a cute little diorama composed of a felt lawn and an S-curved driveway, a series of cutout trees on pencil-size trunks, and a house with one door, one window, and a removable roof. He opens the house, places two dolls inside, and presto—the story begins. Our director is the doll-maker's doll-maker, E.T.A. Hoffman with a camera, manipulating the characters for all they are worth.

A MAD PICTURE-BOOK COME TO LIFE

Lubitsch made seven movies that year, as his career roared into high gear and his comic vision took shape. Born in Berlin in 1892, he began as a comic actor playing ethnic roles, often as a Jewish character named Meyer. He was a good actor, but Lubitsch gradually discovered that he was an even better writer and director. He'd made his mark as a "serious" director only the year before, with an exotic Egyptian horror outing called *Die Augen der Mumie Ma* (*The Eyes of the Mummy Ma*) starring Pola Negri. Thereafter Lubitsch's time in Berlin was somewhat oddly divided between lush historical dramas such as *Madame Dubarry*, with the heavy-breathing duo of Negri and Emil Jannings, and comedies, of which *The Doll* is an enchanting example.

Written by Lubitsch and frequent collaborator Hanns Kräly, from the same Hoffmann story that gave us the ballet *Coppélia*, this fairy tale has even less truck with dreary reality than the all-dancing version. Made at Germany's Ufa the year before *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *The Doll* unfolds like a mad picture-book come to life. The backdrops are mostly forced perspective, full of slanted picture frames and out-of-scale doorways. One character's kitchen has the hanging pots and pans painted straight onto the flats. A carriage arrives pulled by two horses that are actually four men in vaudeville-style horse costumes. When one of the string tails falls off, the coachman casually sticks it right back where it belongs. The sun and moon are embodied by paper cutouts with faces—the movie often looks as though it were designed by a precocious seven-year-old.

The jokes, however, are not necessarily for children. *The Doll* is essentially a sex comedy, about an effete young man who tries to marry a mechanical doll, only to discover that she's flesh and blood, and more fun that way. The protagonist (he is in no sense a hero) is Lancelot, played by Hermann Thimig with a series of ill-fitting frock coats, a Percy Shelley coiffure, and a personality firmly under the thumb of his mother.

Ossi Oswalda and Hermann Thimig

Lancelot is the heir to the family name and his uncle's fortune, which is all right, but that also means he must marry and have little Lancelots, a prospect that fills him with whimpering horror. His uncle, the Baron of Chanterelle (Max Kronert), opts for marital shock therapy, by offering an enormous dowry and inviting all the maids of the village to come to the town square so that one may be chosen. This unnerves Lancelot to the point that he jumps out the window and, pursued by peasant lasses who foreshadow the vast bridal mob in Buster Keaton's *Seven Chances*, runs like hell, back and forth across the frame.

Eventually Lancelot must hide, and where else to escape feminine clutches but in a monastery. The one he chooses is occupied by monks who keep up their spirits and stout figures with a steady diet of pork, which they are at first reluctant to share. But then they hear of the money involved and come up with a scheme: Lancelot can keep them all in pig knuckles simply by marrying a doll. And lo, the nearby village features Hilarius (Victor Janson), a maker of lifelike mechanical dolls, "offered," as his advertisement states, "to bachelors, widowers, and misogynists!"

Here the film takes flight, when we meet Ossi, played by Ossi Oswalda: daughter to Hilarius, model for his latest creation, and soon-to-be human substitute for a broken doll. Petite, charming Oswalda was sometimes called "the German Mary Pickford," although she had a far more unruly mane of blonde hair, and more of a hint of sex. Lubitsch also used Oswalda's sprite-like talents in *I Don't Want to Be a Man* in 1918 and *The Oyster Princess* later in 1919. Scott Eyman, in his Lubitsch biography, suggests that she may have had a crush on her director, but nothing came of it. Be that as it may, they work marvelously well together. Oswalda's joyous energy is, quite deliberately, the most natural element of the film.

Ossi Oswalda and Hermann Thimig

FAST-MOVING, BURSTING WITH ENERGY AND CAREFREE EXPERIMENTATION

Jokes and emotions dash across Oswalda's big-eyed face like Mack Sennett actors. Her goofy allure has ensnared her father's adolescent apprentice (Gerhard Ritterband), who necessitates the whole deception by trying to dance with Ossi's mechanical replica and breaking the thing's arm in the process. When her temporary masquerade as the doll turns into an elopement, her alarm lasts only a few minutes. By the time she's in the carriage headed for the wedding, Ossi is back to finding the situation irresistibly funny and amuses herself by falling against her reluctant groom a few times. The wedding itself brings an impressive demonstration of her mime abilities, especially in a scene where she is trying to sneak some food. She chews, Lancelot looks, she stops; he looks away, she chews again, he checks again, and again, faster and faster.

Eventually, of course, the deception must be unmasked, and in the marriage bed (although safely on top of the covers—as ever, Lubitsch didn't need the explicit), Lancelot discovers he likes girls after all, and Ossi is happy to help, at least for now. The thought occurs that a woman so adept at deception will have no trouble finding a solution if Lancelot turns out to be a boring husband.

When he arrived in Hollywood in 1921 to make a movie for Mary Pickford, Lubitsch was asked to name his favorite of his films; he answered *The Doll*. As Eyman points out, even toward the end of his life, he cited the movie as one of the best he had made in Germany. *The Doll* is a young man's picture, fast-moving, bursting with energy and carefree experimentation, its jokes ranging from sophisticated winks to groaning eye-rollers. The bizarrely suggestive intertitles pile up: "Familiarize yourself with the mechanism," Hilarius admonishes Lancelot about his doll-wife, along with later instructions to "Always dust her well" and "don't forget to oil her every two weeks." Lubitsch was already using a skill he would perfect in Hollywood: risqué, but deniable.

— FARRAN SMITH NEHME

SILENCE

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA

DIRECTED BY RUPERT JULIAN, USA, 1926
CAST H.B. Warner, Vera Reynolds, Rockliffe Fellowes, Jack Mulhall, Virginia Pearson, and Raymond Hatton
PRODUCTION De Mille Pictures Corporation **PRINT SOURCE** San Francisco Silent Film Festival Collection

The 1920s were booming times for the American theater, with more than 200 new plays being produced on Broadway each year, peaking at 264 in the 1927–1928 season. Among the top playwrights of the time, Max Marcin, the author of the 1924 hit Broadway crime drama *Silence*, is largely forgotten today. Marcin, a Polish immigrant who came to the United States as a child, was a well-respected *New York Press* crime reporter, and crime writing, in one way or another, occupied his interest for the rest of his career. He was twenty-seven when assigned to cover the sensational 1906 Stanford White murder case. After the second of its drawn-out trials, Marcin left the newspaper business in 1907 to take up magazine writing, selling dozens of serials and short stories to popular periodicals of the day. When he sold the dramatic rights to one of his stories in 1910, he switched to playwriting. His first big Broadway success was 1915's *The House of Glass*, about a woman falsely accused of a crime, and his first to be adapted for the screen. Eventually Marcin entered the movie business himself, writing, directing, and producing, notably a 1931 talkie remake of *Silence* starring Clive Brook.

Since the earliest years of cinema, both vaudeville and the legitimate stage have been a major source of material for motion pictures. In 1894, audiences could see the finale to the first act of Charles Hoyt's *A Milk White Flag* filmed for Edison's Kinetoscope machine. Filmmakers were used to simply stealing ideas from plays until the Kalem Film Company lost a court case for an unauthorized 1907 adaptation of *Ben Hur*. Decided in 1911, the case led the way for playwrights to make money and take credit while reaching a wider audience.

The movies associated itself with theater as a way to earn legitimacy in this young profession. In 1912, Adolph Zukor formed the Famous Players Film Company, advertising "Famous Players in Famous Films" as their slogan, and imported the French production of *Queen Elizabeth* starring the internationally renowned Sarah Bernhardt as its first American release. The best plays of the theatrical stage in the 1910s and 1920s were adapted for movies, and anyone associated with the theater, famous or not, found that films could be their economic salvation.

CECIL B. DEMILLE WAS ONE OF THE MANY STRUGGLING UNKNOWNS OF THE STAGE.

Cecil B. DeMille was one of the many struggling unknowns of the stage, overshadowed by his older brother William and parents Henry and Beatrice, all successful playwrights. Despairing of his status, DeMille was looking for a change when his friend Jesse

H.B. Warner and Vera Reynolds. Photo courtesy of Donna Hill

Lasky and Lasky's brother-in-law Samuel Goldfish (later Goldwyn) made DeMille a partner in the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company. Their first film, *The Squaw Man* (1914), an adaptation of the successful stage play, launched the trio into the business. They soon combined with Zukor's Famous Players Company to form Famous Players-Lasky, eventually known as Paramount Pictures.

In 1924, DeMille (who then spelled his name De Mille) struck out on his own, buying a co-ownership of the fledgling Producers Distributing Corporation and taking over the old Thomas H. Ince studio property in Culver City. As he had done at Famous Players, DeMille looked to the theater to supply him with stories, among them was Marcin's *Silence*, about a career criminal refusing to speak of the murder he's blamed for even as he awaits the hangman's noose. The play was still touring on the theatrical circuit when DeMille bought the rights in May 1925. Already working on an adaption of another play, Beulah Marie Dix's *The Road to Yesterday*, to direct himself, DeMille signed Rupert Julian to direct *Silence*.

Rupert Julian had just seen his prestige as a director climb with the 1925 release of *The Phantom of the Opera*, starring Lon Chaney, but he was also an actor, first on the stage in his native New Zealand, then on tour in the United States beginning in 1911. In 1913 he began to appear in movies for Lois Weber and her husband Phillips Smalley's Rex brand at Universal. Julian worked on more than forty films with the couple and directed for Universal between his acting assignments. His big success came in 1918, cowriting, directing, and starring in *The Kaiser, the Beast of Berlin*. DeMille hired Julian to direct three features for PDC, but he continued for seven. When talkies came in, he didn't survive the transition, making only two more films, his last 1930's *The Cat Creeps*.

Silence was scheduled to start filming November 1, 1925, but was delayed when DeMille signed the celebrated stage and screen actor H.B. Warner to reprise his role from the original stage play and had to wait for him to come off tour. (The next year, the fifty-one-year-old Warner played Jesus in DeMille's *The King of Kings*.) In the meantime, Julian directed *Three Faces East* (1925) for PDC and the delay gave more time for Marcin's play to be turned into a screen scenario.

Beulah Marie Dix had been working with DeMille as a screenwriter off and on since 1917. By the time she was assigned to adapt *Silence*, she was a veteran, having written her first vaudeville sketch in 1895 as a teenager. She studied English at Radcliffe College, when it was still Harvard's sister school, and, in 1897, became the first woman to win the university's George B. Sohier literary prize. She made her living writing short stories, novels, and plays, and, eventually, movie scenarios. Since 1917, she had written or adapted thirty-seven features, the last being *The Road to Yesterday* (1925) from her own play.

H.B. Warner and Virginia Pearson. Photo courtesy of Donna Hill

Also hired to work with her on *Silence* was Bertram Millhauser, who had written for *The Perils of Pauline* (1914) serial early in his career. Dix and Millhauser had already collaborated with DeMille on Famous Players-Lasky's *Feet of Clay* (1924). The two writers continued to work together on seventeen projects over the years, into the television era. If Millhauser is recognized today at all, it is for his writing on the Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes films in the 1930s and '40s.

It was a hectic time on the lot with DeMille in production on his own film and under pressure to make a success of PDC, and, during one heated meeting, Millhauser got into a fistfight with director Julian. It apparently did not affect their working relationship as Dix, Millhauser, and Julian all collaborated in the future. Shooting was delayed again to accommodate H.B. Warner, portraying the lead in *Whispering Smith* (1926) for Metropolitan Pictures (co-owned by DeMille). At the end of January 1926, production on *Silence* finally began, and it was in the cutting room by the beginning of March.

Silence was supposed to be released to theaters on April 25, 1926, but was slow rolling out and didn't premiere in New York until May 19. The postponed release did not affect its critical reception and it was uniformly praised in reviews. *Moving Picture World* called it "unusually powerful" and *Variety* called it "the best movie melodrama in a long time." *Picture-Play* magazine singled out H.B. Warner as giving "one of the strongest, most moving performances of a year rich in individual successes."

Box office returns were not so positive; gross receipts totaled $268,630.74, lower than its production cost of $290,921.58. None of the ten Producers Distributing Corporation productions that year showed a profit, except for DeMille's Bolshevik Revolution story, *The Volga Boatman*. The low returns continued for the company, with 1927's lavish bible story *The King of Kings* holding PDC together. DeMille decided to give up his independence as a producer after four years and fifty-six films, signing with Paramount Pictures in 1932. From then on there was no stopping DeMille—every production until his last in 1956 was a moneymaker.

— DAVID KIEHN

SILENCE RESTORED

For decades, *Silence* was considered lost until last year when a 35mm nitrate print surfaced in the collection of the Cinémathèque Française. It initially appeared complete, however, there was a significant difference between the length of the original American release (8 reels, 7,518 feet) and the surviving French version (6 reels, 5,033 feet). U.S. studios commonly produced separate export negatives for foreign distribution, but it is unknown if this film was abridged by the studio prior to export or shortened by the French distributor.

We found no definitive records such as the original film script or cutting continuity, but we did locate an original cue sheet for the music, censorship records, film reviews, and trade press synopses, as well as the 1924 play on which the film is based. All these sources indicate that the excised portion, from early in the film, involves a subplot of the saloonkeeper, Mollie Burke, blackmailing thief Jim Warren into marrying her instead of Norma, the woman he loves. The entire episode is conveniently papered over in the French print by the single intertitle, "Jim Warren spent six years abroad. When he returned ...." For ethical as well as practical considerations, this restored print does not attempt to explain the excised portion and represents the version distributed in France. **— ROBERT BYRNE**

A MAN THERE WAS

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY THE MATTI BYE ENSEMBLE

DIRECTED BY VICTOR SJÖSTRÖM, SWEDEN, 1917
CAST Victor Sjöström, August Falck, Edith Erastoff, and Bergliot Husberg **PRODUCTION** AB Svenska Biografteatern **PRINT SOURCE** Swedish Film Institute

Preceded by ***FIFTY MILLION YEARS AGO*** (Service Film Corporation, 1925) in which millions of years of evolution unfold in seven minutes of remarkable stop-motion animation. Print courtesy of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

What's immediately striking about *Terje Vigen*, released in the U.S. as *A Man There Was*, is the power of its imagery. Stripped to its bare essence, the film is a visual encomium to the sea, or rather, to a Romantic understanding of the sea's might as wedded to man's emotional state. Based on a poem by Henrik Ibsen published in 1862, before the great dramatist's international fame was secured, the film is remarkably true to the original source, stripped down in parts, amplified in others, yet achieving a thrilling balance between elemental storytelling and bold scenes using nature's power to enhance interior intensity in more than merely decorative ways. While the word "painterly" is frequently used to describe *Terje Vigen*, it's painterly only in terms of composition, since its dramatic effects depend on movement, exemplified by the constantly shifting silvery glints on the sea's choppy surface; there's nothing static here even though the film is not noted for camera movements. No wonder it is credited with launching the Golden Age of Scandinavian Cinema.

The director and star Victor Sjöström (called "Seastrom" in America) was already talked about as one of Sweden's most accomplished filmmakers, especially following *Ingeborg Holm* (1913), lauded for its incisive sense of drama. Clearly Sjöström was already sensitive to how nature can be used to evoke mood, and an affinity for sea settings may be surmised from his films *The Ships that Meet* (*Skepp som mötas*) and *Predators of the Sea* (*Havsgamar*), both from 1916. Yet something revolutionary happened during the making of *Terje Vigen*, when the director's skills for combining a palpable sense of realism with a refined eye for pictorial effect came together in a way that had a lasting influence on Nordic cinema.

A PALPABLE SENSE OF REALISM WITH A REFINED EYE FOR PICTORIAL EFFECT

It's been said that Sjöström was going through a difficult period: his first marriage was ending, news from the battlefields of the First World War was less than cheering, and he needed a break from his grueling schedule acting and directing in both theater and film. A cycling trip fit the bill, so he set off for his birthplace in western Sweden and then continued south to Norway, heading to Grimstad, the town of Ibsen's teenage years where the writer's encounters with an elderly ship pilot named Svend Hanssen Haaø ultimately led to the composition of *Terje Vigen*, set among islands off Grim-

Victor Sjöström (left) as Terje Vigen. Photo courtesy of the Swedish Film Institute

stad's coast. The trip wasn't the catalyst for making the movie, as producer Charles Magnusson already had a script by the fall of 1915, written by newcomer (and future director) Gustaf Molander, but Sjöström's time in the location that inspired Ibsen must have significantly influenced the film's conception.

The poem was a patriotic ode that experienced a resurgence of popularity following Norway's independence from Sweden in 1905. Using a bookended structure, it tells of a sailor during the Napoleonic Wars who braved the British blockade (Denmark and Norway were allied with the French) to smuggle food to his wife and child on the island of Håøya. Caught by an eighteen-year-old English captain, Terje is imprisoned for five years; when he returns home he learns his wife and child died of starvation (Ibsen's terse lines are moving in their simplicity: "His house was a stranger's / and how they fared / those two, that was easily found / The husband forsook them, and nobody cared / they came to the plot that the paupers shared / in the parish burial-ground"). Some years later, having aged into a "remarkably grizzled man," Terje rescues an English yacht in distress, only to discover that its owner is the self-same captain who heartlessly imprisoned him earlier.

"TRULY A MASTERPIECE"

Magnusson negotiated the rights to the poem from Ibsen's son Sigurd in 1915 (a little-known German adaptation, produced by Deutsche Bioscop, was made in 1910), and, in the summer of 1916, Sjöström was scouting locations among the islands of Stockholm's outer archipelago, the same general area where he had shot *Predators of the Sea*. Shooting began in August and was budgeted as one of the most expensive Swedish productions to date—three times more than the average feature. For Magnusson, the idea was to make fewer but bigger films, a gamble that paid off so well it transformed the entire industry. Opening in late January 1917 in Sweden and Denmark, and ten days later in Norway, the film received glowing reviews, including from respected culture critics not generally given to praising motion pictures. It's said that audience members recited stanzas during the screenings—prompted no doubt by intertitles taken directly from the poem—and spectators of the time would undoubtedly have felt an additional emotional tug given similar blockades then in force in the North Sea.

Like the poem, the film starts with an older Terje (played with iconic gravitas by the director himself), his eyes blazing as he gazes at the sea. Sjöström sits in a darkened cottage then rises and leans out the window as the waves pound against the rocks just outside; the effect is electric, whipping up the melancholy sailor's soul into a roiling passion matched by nature's untamed majesty. The man behind the lens was the great Julius Jaenzon (credited as J. Julius to avoid confusion with his cameraman brother Henrik), already on his thirteenth film with Sjöström; their fruitful collaboration later included *The Outlaw and His Wife* and *The Phantom Carriage*, not to mention Jaenzon's work with Mauritz Stiller on *Sir Arne's Treasure* and *The Saga of Gösta Berling*, among other key titles in the history of Swedish cinema.

While honoring the tenor of the Ibsen text, Sjöström and Jaenzon add their own imaginative interpretations, such as a memorable image of a pastor from behind, preaching to his disconsolate flock on a rocky slope. In addition, the editing matches the poem's cleanly economical drive, most notably in the tense sequence in which Terje desperately tries to escape the approaching British skiff, his furious rowing cut back and forth with the rowing of his pursuers. Further stylistic traces can be found in Christian Krogh's illustrations for the 1905 edition of the poem. The Swedish Film Institute's newly color-graded print gloriously captures the tinting and toning of the original release, switching in parts from cerulean blue to a stunning magenta.

World War I prevented the film's release outside Scandinavia until 1919, and it wasn't until February 1920 that *A Man There Was* could be seen in the United States. The press raved, with W. Stephen Bush in *The Billboard* calling it "Truly a masterpiece" and most everyone agreeing with Burns Mantle in *Photoplay*: "It is so simple as to story and continuity and cutting and acting that one wonders why some of our output, not nearly so mighty, should use up so much energy and emerge with so much ostentation." The one criticism, nearly universal, was that the intertitles were too dense, leading to the sales agent, L.E. Miller of Radiosoul Films, to place full-page advertisements in the trade publications announcing that the critics' voices had been heard and the intertitles were being cut down and rewritten. One wonders, though, how much Miller really understood his product given that he placed it as a double feature with Mack Sennett's *Down on the Farm*, starring Ben Turpin and the dog-and-cat pairing of "Teddy" and "Pepper." To make the evening's entertainment complete, the Broadway Theatre included a "girlie" revue called "The Ushers' Quartet," featuring four young ladies "chosen from the personnel of the various Moss theaters." The mind boggles.

— JAY WEISSBERG

At left and above right: Victor Sjöström as Terje Vigen. Photos courtesy of the Swedish Film Institute

1917

Golden Ages Come and Go

Among the casualties of the First World War were many of the national cinemas of Europe, taking Italy's silent divas and nearly everything French down with them. Denmark, neutral for the duration, lost its markets to war and, by 1917, its once flourishing Nordisk studio—built on the foundation of the salacious "white slave" genre—had its output cut in half. By 1920, its feature film releases dropped to single digits. But it wasn't a total loss for Europe. Victor Sjöström's 1917 film *Terje Vigen* was a resounding success and led to a new production model at Sweden's leading studio, launching a golden age. Even in Denmark's decimated industry, which in the words of film historian David Bordwell experienced "an exodus of talent that all but emptied Nordisk," someone crucial stayed behind. Carl Dreyer, who had been scriptwriting for the once powerful Danish studio since 1912, was now in line to direct. Six of his scripts were produced in 1917 and he made his first film, *The President*, in 1919, from his own scenario. Denmark's Golden Age might have come to an end, but Dreyer was just getting started.

Hooray for Hollywood

America entered the war at the tail end, in April 1917, and its industry only picked up steam. According to film historian Stephen Ross, before the war, "the United States produced slightly more than half the world's movies; by 1919, ninety percent of the films exhibited in Europe and nearly all of these shown in South America were made in the United States." Something else happened, too, Ross says: "It was during the war years that the modern entity we call Hollywood took form." Independent production fell away in favor of

centralization as films became longer and costlier and "a powerful studio system ... moved to eliminate all competitors." Coal rationing led to electricity shortages, so producers fled the frigid East Coast for California climes more conducive to year-round shooting. Los Angeles became the center of production and soon transcended its geographic plane to become the metaphysical repository of a century's worth of dreams. Those dreams didn't include all Americans however. For one, Oscar Micheaux decided to adapt his 1917 novel *The Homesteader* into a feature-length film, joining other independent producers telling the kinds of African American stories sorely lacking on movie screens.

City of Arc Lights

France's Pathé, once the biggest supplier of films to the

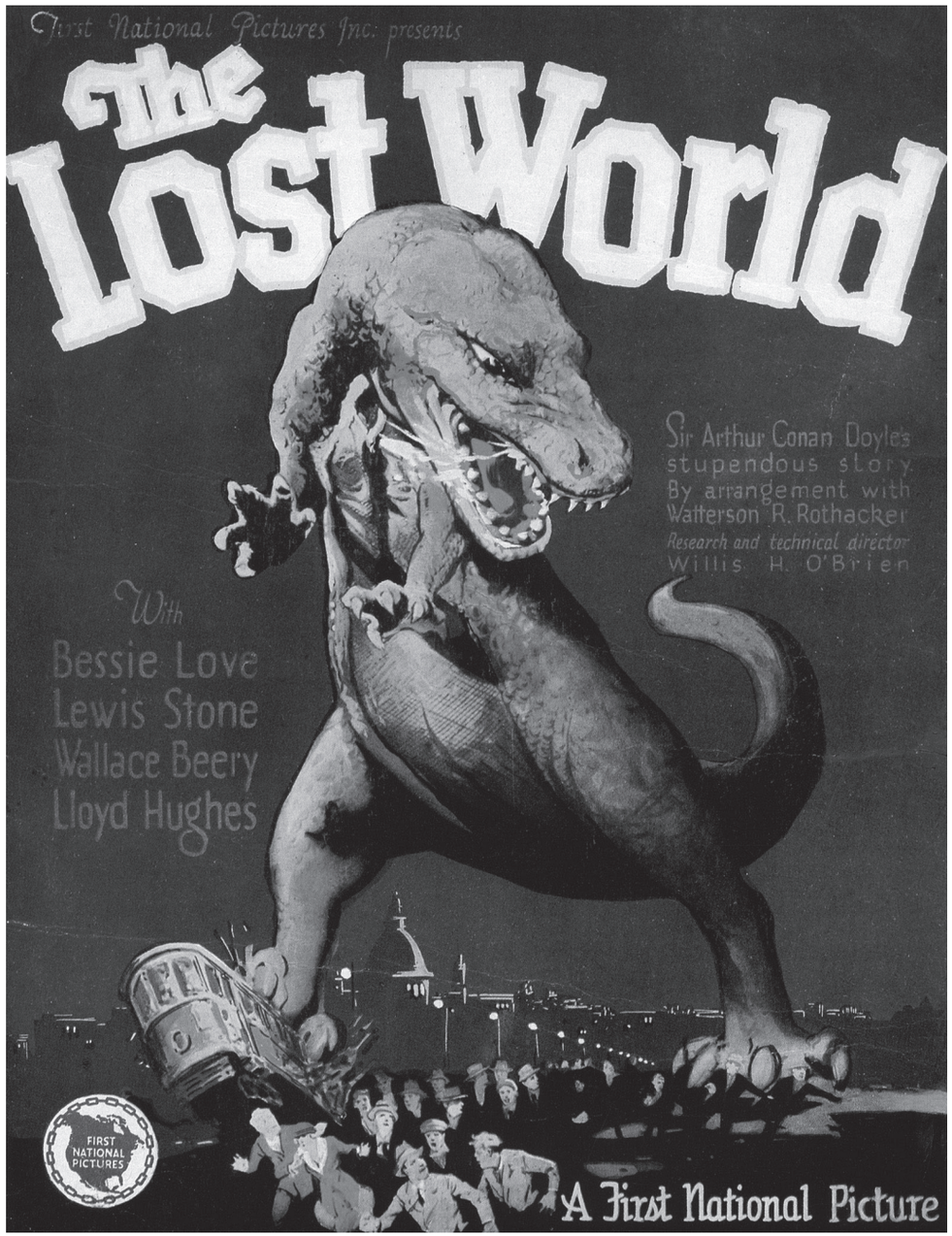
THE YEAR THAT CHANGED THE MOVIES

American market, came to a virtual stand-still during the war. The gap left space for American films to fill but also for a new kind of national cinema, one that fostered experimentation and welcomed artists from around the world. With the Bolshevik Revolution that October, Paris soon became home to skilled film professionals from the East who began to pick up the slack in French filmmaking. In fact, an entire "Lost Generation" famously found itself in Paris—writers, painters, photographers, musicians, performers, filmmakers, pushing past the limits of known forms and, specific to cinema, forging an artistic narrative tradition that distinguishes French moviemaking to this day—the costs of war their frequent subject.

The Battle for Hearts and Minds

Already on the forefront of using film for war propaganda, Britain changed the game with *The Battle of the Somme*. The 1916 feature-length documentary provided moviegoers with a lasting impression of the western front (rows of trenches, barbed wire) and the government with a powerful new tool. Britain stepped it up once again in 1917 by inviting America's most famous filmmaker, D.W. Griffith, to create "an authentic history of the World War" on the Crown's dime. Lillian Gish later said of the resulting *Hearts of the World* that "Its depiction of German brutality bordered on the absurd" and that the director regretted it, telling her "War is the villain not any particular people." (He proved it in 1924 when he shot *Isn't Life Wonderful* in Berlin.) American producers began to bank on wartime propaganda as the U.S. moved away from neutrality and toward putting boots on European battlegrounds. In 1917, Mary Pickford played a plucky heroine who survives a German U-boat attack in the Cecil B. DeMille-directed *The Little American*. Before long, America's Sweetheart was on tour with Douglas Fairbanks and Charles Chaplin shilling for Liberty Bonds. Through the Committee on Public Information, Woodrow Wilson speechwriter George Creel deployed the Four-Minute Men into neighborhood movie theaters beginning in 1917 in order to spread pro-war propaganda. "How can we reach them?" Creel wrote. "Not through the press, for they do not read; not through patriotic rallies, for they do not come. Every night eight to ten million people of all classes, all degrees of intelligence, black and white, young and old, rich and poor meet in the moving picture houses of this country." Simultaneously, according to film historian Richard Koszarski, "the U.S. Army Signal Corps established a training school at Columbia University ... Among those who passed through this program either as students or instructors were Josef von Sternberg, Alan Crosland, Ernest B. Schoedsack, Irvin Willat, and Lewis Milestone." Behind in the movie propaganda game, Germany didn't catch up until a July 1917 letter to the country's Ministry of War urged action: "the war has demonstrated the supremacy of picture and film as instruments of education and influence." Ufa—future home of Ernst Lubitsch, Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau—officially came into being on December 18, 1917. The year's repercussions continued. Less than a decade after the Russian Revolution, a new generation of filmmakers was deployed by the Soviet government to one aim: unify its vast, diverse population into a single heart and mind.

Based on Shari Kizirian's 2014 article "The Cinematic Legacy of World War I" published on Fandor's daily blog.



THE LOST WORLD

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY ALLOY ORCHESTRA

DIRECTED BY HARRY O. HOYT, USA, 1925
CAST Bessie Love, Wallace Beery, Arthur Hoyt, Lewis Stone, Lloyd Hughes, George Bunny, Finch Smiles, and Jules Cowes **PRODUCTION** First National Pictures **PRINT SOURCE** Lobster Films

Sherlock Holmes made his first print appearance in 1887 and quickly became a widespread sensation. Unlike the public, British writer Arthur Conan Doyle grew quickly sick of him and tried to abandon him for other literary endeavors, creating another character with an enduring impact, though he's hardly a household name today. Professor Edward Challenger was everything the coolly intellectual Sherlock Holmes was not: Bullish of build and demeanor, bushy-bearded, hot-tempered, a man of impulsive action. If Holmes was a model of Victorian propriety even in the most garish crime-scene circumstances, Challenger was a combative manchild clad in a torn waistcoat. Forever getting into fights, he was also the chap very likely to get you *out* of some harrowing scrape. Befitting his outsize personality, Professor Challenger appears in five stories with far more fantastical settings than Holmes typically hazarded, extending into realms of science fiction.

BUT HOW TO CREDIBLY DEPICT THE WORLD DOYLE CREATED?

The first and still most famous Challenger adventure is 1912's *The Lost World*, in which he leads an expedition (chronicled by young reporter Edward Malone) to prove dinosaurs and other supposedly long-extinct creatures still exist in a hidden corner of the Amazon. This very Boy's Own Story "ripping yarn" was a great success, widely imitated (most notably by Edgar Rice Burroughs's *The Land That Time Forgot* twelve years later), and an obvious candidate for screen translation. Sherlock Holmes had already made numerous celluloid appearances by then (nearly all since lost), but how to credibly depict the world Doyle created, with its brontosauruses, pterodactyls, the ferocious iguanodon, and other beasts known only by fossil record?

Enter Oakland native Willis O'Brien, born the same year Doyle conceived Holmes. An erstwhile ranch hand, newspaper cartoonist, boxer, and odd-jobber (including a significant stint helping USC scientists find prehistoric artifacts) he'd stumbled into a career of sorts that made him ideal for the job. In 1915, O'Brien made an eighty-second test reel that convinced San Francisco exhibitor Herman Wobber to fund *The Dinosaur and the Missing Link: A Prehistoric Tragedy*. That six-minute "clay puppet" extravaganza, animating both comedic cavemen and giant critters, was a striking enough novelty to attract distribution from Thomas Edison's company. Its success prompted a series of hastily produced follow-up shorts, most now lost.

Increasingly disenchanted by his working conditions and narrowing creative freedom, O'Brien accepted East Coast producer Herbert M. Dawley's offer to make another dinosaur film in which Uncle Jack conjures a Dream Valley where hermit Mad Dick (played by O'Brien) leads some adventurers to a site inhabited

Poster art courtesy of Lobster Films

by prehistoric animals. *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain*, released in 1919, became another acclaimed novelty. However, a dispute between O'Brien and Dawley over credit led to a rancorous break.

O'Brien had already found a new employer in Watterson R. Rothacker, who was eager to film Doyle's story with the combination of animation, models, and live action pioneered in *Slumber Mountain*, but on a much grander scale. By far the most elaborate special-effects feature made to that point, it would be starry and lavish, delayed over production costs (approaching a million dollars), and done under the cloud of copyright claims made by Dawley. The enterprise was a big gamble both for Rothacker, whose company up until that point provided laboratory services and made advertising films, and for First National Pictures, which was absorbed by Warner Bros. three years later. But it paid off in one of the most spectacular successes of the era.

The Lost World movie hews fairly close to Doyle's original novel. Bent on proving to a scoffing public and scientific colleagues that he's no tall-tale-teller, Professor Challenger (the perfectly cast Wallace Beery) returns to the deep Amazonian jungle he'd barely escaped alive before, losing all his evidence in flight. This time taking along skeptical zoologist Summerlee (Arthur Hoyt), gentleman adventurer Sir John Roxton (Lewis Stone), and junior reporter Malone (Lloyd Hughes), he relocates the hidden plateau where a quirk of nature has preserved life from ancient epochs. The explorers are stranded in this perilous environ for some time before they figure a way back to civilization.

Marion Fairfax's screenplay does impose a few significant changes to the novel, most notably a role for top-billed Bessie Love. As a missing explorer's daughter who hopes to find her father, Love's character provides Hughes with a romantic interest, and the film with an appeal broader than its manly source material. Cute monkey "Jocko," another Fairfax addition, winds up playing a key plot role; and a fiery volcano eruption substitutes for the book's climactic war between primitive humans and savage ape-men.

One idea Doyle merely teased in the novel is altered and expanded in the movie to provide the last act of large-scale action in London, anticipating *King Kong*'s finale eight years later. An alteration that has aged poorly is the refashioning of local guide Zambo—an imposing, fearless, and loyal figure in print—into a stock, wide-eyed stereotype of "darkie" comic relief, played in blackface by Jules Cowes.

Put together over an unusually long production schedule for the period, *The Lost World* presaged Hollywood popcorn fantasies of a century later. The photographing of actors (on full sets, fragmentary ones, and sometimes against pre-"green screen" blank backdrops) was just one part of the puzzle. More time-consuming were the ingenious mixtures of "glass shots," mattes, miniature sets, split-screen effects, stop-motion, and more. To assist, special effects technician O'Brien hired art student Marcel Delgado to make the models of the creatures. (Delgado went on to a healthy career in sound films, including on *The Wizard of Oz*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Fantastic Voyage*.)

Released in early 1925, *The Lost World* was a big hit worldwide, its effects—techniques still new enough that few critics knew how they'd been done—receiving universal praise. Even Arthur Conan Doyle was impressed. O'Brien's contributions as "Research and Technical Director" were highlighted in publicity for the film and clearly delineated on-screen from Harry O. Hoyt's "Dramatic Direction" credit.

Despite the acclaim, *The Lost World* was an exception in O'Brien's checkered career—hampered by his reputation for budget-consuming perfectionism, a disinclination to joust with studio politics, and the major studios' disdain of "monster movies" during Hollywood's Golden Age. Many of his later projects were aborted after extensive pre-production work, or even after shooting had begun.

The enormous success of 1933's *King Kong*—on which "Chief Technician" O'Brien was again the star creative—proved another exception. O'Brien was so dismayed by the cheap, hasty resources allocated for its sequel, *Son of Kong*, that he had his name removed from the credits. Apart from the 1949 quasi-remake *Mighty Joe Young*, his subsequent contributions were erratic and often thwarted, gradually declining to a trickle of small gigs in "big pictures" and bigger ones on low-budget genre flicks like *The Giant Behemoth* (1959).

There have been five official remakes of *The Lost World* (two of them TV movies)—none of which you've likely heard of, and for good reason. The 1960 version by future "disaster flick" king Irwin Allen unconvincingly stuck fins and horns onto real reptiles rather than replicate O'Brien's painstaking animations. On the other hand, onetime protégé Ray Harryhausen faithfully carried on O'Brien's methods in fantasy classics from *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad* (1958) to *Clash of the Titans* (1981).

Sadly, the 1925 version was quickly lost, largely because of an unfortunate 1929 agreement to withdraw prints from circulation. For decades the film was available only in worn 16mm dupes drastically reduced to little more (or sometimes less) than an hour. It seemed unlikely that anything like a complete restoration would ever be possible.

Yet beginning about a quarter-century ago, various missing pieces started to surface around the world, principally a near-complete version at the Czech national archive. Combining elements from eleven sources, the 2016 restoration is no amusingly creaky antique. It's a beautifully tinted, ambitious, and exciting spectacular that more than holds its own against today's FX-laden fantasy blockbusters. (You may recall that the CGI era began in earnest with 1993's *Jurassic Park*, which owes everything to *The Lost World*. Michael Crichton, who wrote the source novel, knew its origins well, giving his 1995 sequel the same title as Doyle's book.) Though it may not offer one hundred percent of what audiences saw ninety-two years ago, the restoration is a near-seamless entity whose appeal goes beyond pure nostalgia and remains shockingly in line with modern popular taste.

— DENNIS HARVEY

A BEAUTIFULLY TINTED, AMBITIOUS, AND EXCITING SPECTACULAR

Photos courtesy of Lobster Films

The Dinosaur Wars

Willis O'Brien, Herbert M. Dawley, and the Articulated Effigy

By Jeff Stafford

In the annals of film history, Willis O'Brien is considered a visionary in the field of stop-motion animation, most famous for his state-of-the-art monsters in 1933's *King Kong*. His experimentation with models of prehistoric creatures can be traced back to his first film short in 1915 and the subsequent "Stone Age" one-reelers he made for the Edison Company. However, his collaboration with film producer Herbert M. Dawley on the more ambitious *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain* (1918) ended badly, with Dawley removing O'Brien's credit from the film. Dawley later attempted to block the release of *The Lost World* claiming patent infringement over a dinosaur model Dawley named his "Articulated Effigy." For years Dawley has been portrayed as the villain to O'Brien's wronged artist, but research by late sculptor and special-effects artist Stephen Czerkas (*Planet of Dinosaurs*), the first to gain access to the papers of Dawley (and other producers), tells a more complete story.

From 1907 to 1916, Herbert M. Dawley works for Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company in the nascent years of the automobile industry. He becomes one of its most important designers, bringing a high level of artistry to the look of its model line.

Willis O'Brien leaves home at an early age, working as a ranch hand, animal trapper, wilderness guide, bartender, professional boxer, draftsman, cartoonist, and brakeman before settling down in San Francisco in 1914 as a sculptor.

Dawley leaves Pierce-Arrow to set up a motion picture company with his wife Verne in Chatham, New Jersey, in 1917. His interest in dinosaurs leads him to construct a brontosaurus model that he photographs with a Kodak camera, assembling the stills as a flip-book. He begins to further explore stop-motion animation.

O'Brien, an avid fan of movies, begins to experiment with photography and special effects using miniature clay figurines. A one-minute test film of a brontosaurus moving against a prehistoric backdrop convinces movie exhibitor Herman Wobber to help fund O'Brien's first short, *The Dinosaur and the Missing Link* (1915). The Edison Company purchases the short for distribution and hires O'Brien to create a series of Stone Age shorts (1916–1917).

Dawley sees O'Brien's work for the Edison Company and approaches him in 1918 about working together on a film. O'Brien agrees, as he has been laid off by Edison during a downsizing phase.

O'Brien and Dawley make *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain* for which Dawley serves as producer, director, and special-effects supervisor with O'Brien as his assistant to receive screen credit for photography and mechanical effects.

The November 1918 premiere of the film at the Strand Theatre in New York is a financial and critical success, but Dawley, away on emergency duty with the New Jersey Militia in the final phase of postproduction, is shocked to discover that O'Brien has distributed programs claiming total credit for the completed film. He also learns that O'Brien is now under contract to Watterson R. Rothacker, a prominent film industrialist who hired O'Brien during production of *Slumber Mountain* without Dawley's knowledge.

Stung by O'Brien's disloyalty, Dawley removes O'Brien's name from the film and closes a deal in May 1919 to distribute *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain* through the Inter-Ocean Film Company. Rothacker tries unsuccessfully to block its distribution and counters with industry ads in June 1919 dismissing Dawley's claims while promoting O'Brien as the true producer-director of the movie.

Dawley embarks on *Along the Moonbeam Trail* (1920), a two-reeler in which two brothers are transported to the moon and encounter prehistoric creatures. Dawley creates all the dinosaur puppets and animates them in a stop-motion process, receiving an official patent in 1920 for the Articulated Effigy.

Rothacker purchases the rights to Arthur Conan Doyle's 1912 novel *The Lost World* and works with O'Brien under a cloak of secrecy to adapt it for the screen. Looking for investors, he signs independent producer Cathrine Curtis in July 1920 with the understanding that O'Brien's involvement is crucial to the film's success.

In January 1921, Curtis views a copy of *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain* and is puzzled by the omission of O'Brien's screen credit. Her investigation into the matter convinces her that Dawley's claims are justified and she tries to negotiate a solution to allow *The Lost World* to proceed without lawsuits but is unsuccessful. (She later produced King Vidor's 1921 film *The Sky Pilot* and, during the 1930s, was a radio commentator for the American Broadcasting System.)

Dawley teams up with renowned puppeteer Tony Sarg on a series of "Shadowgraph" shorts entitled *Tony Sarg's Almanac* (1921–1923).

At a meeting of the Society of American Magicians on June 3, 1922, Conan Doyle amazes the gathering with realistic film footage of dinosaurs, which was ostensibly taken from O'Brien's work-in-progress *The Lost World*. Dawley learns about the publicity stunt and threatens to Sue Rothacker for $100,000 in damages and seeks an injunction against the film's completion, claiming that he had invented the basic design for the animated models they are using in *The Lost World*.

After months of legal sparring, the case is finally settled out of court and *The Lost World* is completed and released to great acclaim in 1925. By this time, Dawley was deeply immersed in a theatrical career, having cofounded the Chatham Community Players in New Jersey in 1922 and he spent the next fifty-two years directing plays.

Far left: Wiilis O'Brien, c. 1916. Above: Herbert M. Dawley, c. 1920

TWO DAYS

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY STEPHEN HORNE

DIRECTED BY HEORHII STABOVYI, USSR, 1927
CAST Ivan Zamychkovskyi, Sergey Minin, and Valeriy Hakkebush **PRODUCTION** All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration (VUFKU) **PRINT SOURCE** Dovzhenko National Film Centre

Soviet silent-era cinema usually conjures images of the perspective-bending stylistics of its most famous maker, Sergei Eisenstein, whose startling camera angles, extreme close-ups, and breakneck rhythms have come to define the entire epoch. But among the Soviet films that survive today several were made outside the Moscow–St. Petersburg axis and were distinctive in other ways. The All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration (VUFKU), with studios in Odessa and Kyiv, operated from 1922 to 1930 with an autonomy not shared by those making movies closer to the Kremlin. A leading writer of the Ukrainian literary renaissance that flourished in the early 1920s even gained a following for advocating an "Away from Moscow" approach to art.

REVOLUTIONARY THEMES GIVE WAY FOR A PERSONAL STORY

VUFKU was home to Oleksandr Dovzhenko, where he made his trilogy about Ukrainian history—*Zvenyhora*, *Arsenal*, and *Earth*. But Russian filmmakers also took creative refuge at this other film factory, where the regional government provided a cushion against Moscow's interference. Viktor Turin, unusual among Soviets for having worked five years in Hollywood, found it a welcoming place to direct *The Struggle of Giants*, which melds the avant-garde with the audience-pleasing into Bolshevik-approved outcomes, before making the film he is most identified with, *Turksib*, a poetic documentary about the building of the Siberian railway. More well known but much less acknowledged as a VUFKU filmmaker is Dziga Vertov, who shot his marvelously imaginative (and devoid of Bolshevik aims) *Man with a Movie Camera* in Odessa, Kyiv, and Kharkiv. From this relatively safe distance hails another film, one that requires an expansion of our idea of Soviet silent-era cinema, Heorhii Stabovyi's *Dva Dni*, or *Two Days*, the first Ukrainian film to be distributed in the United States.

A longtime doorman stays behind to safeguard his employer's mansion (and a stash of valuables) when the family flees the coming Bolsheviks—an option he does not share as a poor working stiff, nor theoretically needs as a member of the proletariat. When the young son (Valeriy Hakkebush) is left behind in the tumult the doorman (Ivan Zamychkovskyi) hides him, caring for him, at the beginning, with the tenderness of family. Inevitably, Bolsheviks arrive and things get complicated as the invaders convert the mansion into their barracks with the boy hiding out in the doorman's cramped attic quarters. Things get more complicated still, as the leader of the band of rebels is the doorman's very own estranged son (Sergey Minin). The basic plot outline doesn't explain why an American distributor would feel confident enough about finding an audience for the film, a microcosm of the dialectic so vigor-

Ivan Zamychkovskyi. Photo courtesy of Dovzhenko National Film Centre

ously scrutinized by Communists. Then you experience its *strassefilm* shadows and its crime-film pacing, and the usual vocabulary doesn't apply. It couldn't have hurt, either, that *Two Days* does not quite toe the Moscow party line.

Two Days falls into a small category of Soviet films that pit parent against child in the great revolutionary struggle. In Pudovkin's *Mother*, the title character betrays Bolshevism to save her activist son, until reeducated through strife, she becomes a more fervent joiner. In *The Night Coachman*, by Ukrainian Heorhii Tasin, a father is caught between his livelihood, dependent on cab-hailing White Russians, and his daughter who helps run a clandestine rebel printing press in their house. But according to a Ukrainian critic at the time, *Two Days* offered something beyond experimental epiphanies: "Tangled pompousness gave way to clear simplicity both in the narrative and the staging. There is movement in this film; it is interesting and expressive."

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE LITTLE PEOPLE WHEN THE BIG FORCES OF HISTORY COLLIDE.

Big revolutionary themes give way for a personal story whose rigorously slim dramatic arc would be the envy of any Poverty Row programmer. But, it has a richness to it, in the visuals, shot in shades of German Expressionism by Dovzhenko's chosen cinematographer Danylo Demutskyi, clearly influenced by the street films coming out of Berlin. And, a depth in the portrayal of the doorman whose struggle with loyalty, integrity, dignity, and love renders moot any political agenda. The actor was praised by an American reviewer, who conferred on him what could be considered the highest compliment possible at the time: "Zamychkovskyi, playing an old servant, delivers an expressively national and impressive portrayal. He resembles Emil Jannings in his thoughtful and detailed acting." At times he can seem indistinguishable from the downtrodden doorman in F.W. Murnau's *The Last Laugh*, but director Stabovyi is less inclined to give his actor the full frame in which to emote.

VUFKU cultivated a broad internationalism, led by a Futurist poet who had the vision (and leave) to invite fellow risk-takers, like Les Kurbas, founder of modern Ukrainian theater who had used lighting effects to mimic close-ups and fade-ins onstage. According to Ivan Kozlenko, head of the Dovzhenko National Film Centre in Kyiv, there was a director from Turkey as well as German cinematographers and production designers, one of whom, Heinrich Beisenherz, did the sets for *Two Days*. They joined the freshly trained local talent and pre-Revolutionary holdovers to produce a sizeable roster of features with enough first-class entertainments to be a force on the world market. According to Kozlenko, by 1926, VUFKU was second only to the United States in supplying films to Weimar-era Germany with which it shared a cinematic and humanist affinity. By 1929, Kozlenko says, VUFKU's output had slowed but its reach expanded, into other European countries as well as the U.S. and Japan.

It didn't last. And now we can deploy familiar vocabulary. The coming of sound made things much more expensive and threatened to grind to a stillness the exalted kinetics of Soviet cinema. But graver than any technological threat was Moscow's iron fist tightening across Mother Russia and its satellites. Like so many authoritarians before him, and apparently after, Stalin had his eye trained on the Ukraine, with its strong national identity, rich culture, and fertile wheat fields. With forced collectivization of an almost completely rural Ukraine, Stalin implemented an administrative famine ("Holodomor" in Ukrainian), starving to death an estimated ten million people to bring the region to heel, one of the grimmest entries, in terms of sheer numbers, in the twentieth-century catalog of genocides.

Artists of all kinds were also brought to heel, and the VUFKU's brief heyday as a haven for its own and artists-in-exile came to an end. *Two Days* remarkably hung onto some favor, getting a new score in 1932, but it was soon slapped with the epithet "petty bourgeois" and disappeared for so long that it missed out on consideration for the canon—until its 2011 restoration by the Dovzhenko National Film Centre. Worse things than that happened, of course. Stalin rounded up and executed Ukraine's folk artists and seemed to spare cinema only a little. *Two Days* cinematographer Demutskyi, perhaps because of his close association with Dovzhenko, was falsely accused of sabotage, arrested, and shipped off to Central Asia. According to Kozlenko, other Dovzhenko comrades "were arrested or shot in the years 1937–38, including the actors Mykola Nademskii, who became famous for his role in *Earth*, and Symon Shahaida, who played the hero in *Aerograd*." The "Away from Moscow" proponent, Mykola Khvyliovyi, committed suicide in 1933 amid the terror of Stalin's selective persecution.

As Stalin well knew, political control is not enough. Art, especially in a popular form like cinema, can inspire dissent and must also be restricted. But doing so comes with a risk. In its nuanced depiction of what happens to the little people when the big forces of history collide *Two Days* has a lesson for anyone willing to heed it. Stripped of everything held dear, a person can choose to gather whatever strength remains and burn the whole thing down with him when he goes.

— SHARI KIZIRIAN

Ivan Zamychkovskyi and Sergey Minin. Photo courtesy of Dovzhenko National Film Centre

THE THREE MUSKETEERS

LIVE MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY THE GUENTER BUCHWALD ENSEMBLE

DIRECTED BY FRED NIBLO, USA, 1921
CAST Douglas Fairbanks, Marguerite de la Motte, Léon Bary, George Siegmann, Eugene Pallette, Mary MacLaren, Barbara La Marr, Nigel de Brulier, and Adolphe Menjou **PRODUCTION** Douglas Fairbanks Pictures Corporation **PRINT SOURCE** Museum of Modern Art

Fresh off the career-defining success playing the swashbuckling man-for-the-people in *The Mark of Zorro* (1920), Douglas Fairbanks set to work to bring his hero of heroes, d'Artagnan of Alexandre Dumas's *The Three Musketeers*, to the screen. More than any other character he portrayed, Fairbanks identified with the brave and inexhaustible musketeer, and he embarked on the project with a brio unseen in any of his previous productions. In fact, he wore the moustache he cultivated to play d'Artagnan to the end of his life. With *The Three Musketeers*, the first of his elaborate costume epics, one of Hollywood's greatest actor-producers had finally found his rightful place in cinema.

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS HAD FINALLY FOUND HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN CINEMA.

Audiences had already had a tantalizing glimpse of Fairbanks as the young hero in *A Modern Musketeer* (1917), in which a gallant Midwesterner channels d'Artagnan to save his new love. In the short history of cinema, the novel had been adapted several times, including for the French production directed by Henri Diamant-Berger that was released the same year as Fairbanks's version. However, Fairbanks had an emotional connection to the character that other filmmakers did not. D'Artagnan, the exuberant Gascon who becomes embroiled in the intrigues of France's royal court, reflected the actor's ideal screen self.

By this time, making his thirty-second feature, Fairbanks is firmly established not only as the main attraction in his films but also as their producer and final arbiter. He gathered the best possible team around him, choosing *Mark of Zorro*'s Fred Niblo to direct and enlisting the services of his old friend and writer Edward Knoblock, who happened to be an authority on French history and the reign of Louis XIV, to adapt the novel and supervise the scenery and costumes. Scenario editor Lotta Woods sifted through the nearly fifteen hundred volumes Knoblock and Fairbanks reportedly collected for the production. Impressed by Arthur Edeson's work as actress Clara Kimball Young's chief cinematographer, Fairbanks signed him to a contract and he went on to shoot Fairbanks's biggest films, *The Three Musketeers*, *Douglas Fairbanks in Robin Hood* (1922), and *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924).

Fairbanks assembled a fine cast, many of whom achieved greater fame in their subsequent careers, including Marguerite de la Motte as Constance Bonacieux, Eugene Pallette as Aramis, Barbara La Marr as Milady de Winter, and Adolphe Menjou as Louis XIII. And, of

Douglas Fairbanks! Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Vance

course, there was Fairbanks himself, riding the upward curve of his popularity and sincerely believing himself to be an ideal d'Artagnan.

However the d'Artagnan of the novel proved problematic for the star. "He went around picking quarrels with everybody and killing folks who hadn't done anything to get killed for," Fairbanks said of Dumas's character. "It was hard to make a picture out of him." So the bullyboy d'Artagnan was softened to make the character more palatable to audiences—and to the actor. Fairbanks replaced these distasteful qualities with familiar "Doug" characteristics audiences had come to expect, emphasizing his athleticism, charm, optimism, and loyalty. The film scenario greatly simplified the story, centering it around the episode to retrieve the queen's diamond brooch. D'Artagnan's love interest, Constance Bonacieux, becomes the niece rather than the wife of M. Bonacieux to avoid problems with film censors.

Edward M. Langley, the art director, went to great pains to make certain the settings, from d'Artagnan's rustic Gascony home to Louis XIII's ornate rooms, were reproduced as faithfully as possible, based on etchings from historical books brought from all parts of the world. The Scottish sculptor William Hopkins created an imitation bronze statue of Britain's King Charles I standing five and a half feet tall in the chambers of the Duke of Buckingham, an expensive detail justified as essential to the success of such an epic film.

All for one and one for all! Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Vance

In the end, it is the action scenes that steal the spotlight. There are more brilliantly staged stunts in the famous fight sequence with the Cardinal's Guards, lasting only a few minutes on the screen, than in some entire action films of the period. Fairbanks and members of the cast spent three months taking fencing lessons from fight choreographer H.J. Uyttenhove. Adolphe Menjou, whose role as Louis XIII required no fencing, even took advantage of the lessons and later recalled that Fairbanks deployed his own interpretation of the instruction once the cameras rolled: "Doug went completely unorthodox. He was all over the set, jumping over chairs and on top of tables, slashing away with his rapier as though it were a broadsword. The fencing instructor, who was an expert swordsman, tore his hair. Never in his life had he seen such an exhibition. He screamed and protested, but Doug did it his way." In his boundless enthusiasm Fairbanks reportedly broke twelve rapiers shooting the film's sixteen dueling sequences. The best of all the stunts, however, remains Fairbanks's left-handed handspring balanced on a short dagger, generally considered the single most difficult stunt of his career.

Fairbanks and d'Artagnan proved as interchangeable to the critics as to the actor himself. *Picture-Play* noted that when Fairbanks "broke loose with his incredible adventures there was a wink beneath his plumes and curls which said plainer than words: 'Under all this fuss and feathers, it's me!'" Curiously, Fairbanks's

"A COMBINATION OF DUMAS, DOUGLAS, AND DELIRIUM"

d'Artagnan has not aged as well as his more nuanced interpretations of Zorro, Ahmed the thief, the Black Pirate, the Gaucho, or even the mature d'Artagnan of his silent film valedictory, *The Iron Mask* (1929). Saddled with a bad wig and a still unfamiliar moustache (at times he twirls it like a villain in a hoary melodrama), Fairbanks gives a performance laden with dramatic poses and gestures, although the "I smell a rat" look he gives when he senses something is amiss has the desired comic effect.

He reveled in performing the athletic feats of derring-do as well as in the comic moments, yet Fairbanks was inhibited playing big emotional scenes. When it came time to play d'Artagnan's reaction to being rejected by the commander of the musketeers, Fairbanks wilted under the pressure. "Fred Niblo, my director, said in a voice of agony and woe, 'Now Doug, remember this is the big scene: this is the picture.' How could I cry after that? Dumas and the spirit of d'Artagnan sneaked away and left me flat and we had to resort to the good old glycerine squirter."

The world premiere on August 28, 1921, was a sensational affair held at the Lyric Theatre, a Broadway house with just two screenings daily as opposed to a conventional cinema with multiple screenings each day. A full orchestra accompanied the film with a specially written score and a spoken prologue written in verse by Edward Knoblock (which Fairbanks later adapted as his prologue to *The Iron Mask*) and performed by the actor Stephen Wright costumed as d'Artagnan. Fairbanks attended with wife Mary Pickford and friends Charles Chaplin and Jack Dempsey. *Variety* reported on the turnout: "For an hour before the unwinding of the first reel a crowd lined the sidewalks on both sides and literally jammed 42nd Street to Broadway. $2 tickets for the initial showing sold as high as $5." The *New York Times* noted that during the show the star "was forced three times to respond to the plaudits of the crowd."

Reviews were unanimously enthusiastic, the *New York Herald* being the most ebullient in its praise: "It is a kind of combination of Dumas, Douglas, and delirium. One moment it boils with action and the next it snaps and sparkles with humor like d'Artagnan's own rapier ... It increased in speed and fury as it progressed, until but one word fits it—rip-roaring. Fairbanks ripped and the audience roared." Having acclaimed the cinema as an art as early as 1915, the poet Vachel Lindsay wrote presciently the year of *The Three Musketeers*' release: "The action picture will be inevitable ... Charlie Chaplin and Douglas Fairbanks have given complete department store examples of the method."

The reverberations of the film on Douglas Fairbanks's career cannot be overstated. Its commercial success provided Fairbanks with the artistic capital to proceed wholeheartedly down the road of the costume adventure. The ambitious nature of the production became his standard method of operation on the remainder of his films. And forever after, he embodied for his fans the d'Artagnan screen persona he devised for this film.

— JEFFREY VANCE

Adapted from a chapter in Jeffrey Vance's Douglas Fairbanks *(University of California Press, 2008).*

ABOUT THE RESTORATION

In 1938 Douglas Fairbanks Jr. deposited his father's own negative at New York's Museum of Modern Art. The film has been restored by MoMA in cooperation with the San Francisco Silent Film Festival.

THE FOURTH MUSKETEER

From the Pages of History to the Movie Screen

The young musketeer d'Artagnan is based on the real-life Charles de Batz-Castelmore. Born in Gascony in 1623, he moved to Paris and adopted the surname d'Artagnan. He served in Louis XIV's elite Mousquetaires de la Garde, rising to the post of captain. He died in 1673 trying to take the Dutch city of Maastricht for his king.

French novelist Gatien de Courtilz de Sandras's *Mémoires de Monsieur d'Artagnan* (1700) inspired Alexandre Dumas *père* who immortalized the character in three historical romances. Dumas feigned in the introduction of *Les Trois mousquetaires* that the fictionalized memoir was historical fact.

To create his d'Artagnan, Dumas also drew on the exploits of his own father, a renowned general in France's revolutionary army and later under Napoleon. The mixed race child of a Caribbean slave and a French nobleman was brought by his father, the Marquis de la Pailleterie, from the French colony of Saint-Domingue (today's Haiti) to Paris, where he was raised as a nobleman, with a fine education, the latest fashions, and a horse and carriage to chauffeur him around town.

With the French Revolution in full swing, young Alexandre Thomas-Davy Dumas rejected his aristocratic title and joined the army at the lowest rank, taking his new last name from his mother. His riding skills, leadership, and bravery led to quick promotion and he was legendary among his men for charging into battle ahead of them, even after becoming a general. Historian David Johnson may have exaggerated Dumas's skill when he wrote in *The French Cavalry, 1792–1815*: "He liked to stand up in the stirrups, take hold of an overhead beam, and lift himself and his horse bodily off the ground."

A respected general-in-chief under the Republic and later Napoleon, he stood out wherever he went. "Man of color, and by his figure looking like a centaur," wrote the chief medical officer during the invasion of Egypt. "When they saw him ride his horse over the trenches, going to ransom prisoners, all of them believed that he was the leader of the expedition."

Novelist Dumas adapted at least one episode from his father's life for *Les Trois mousquetaires*. According to Tom Reiss's *The Black Count*, "he fought three duels in one day, winning all three despite being gashed in the head—almost certainly the basis for one of the best-known and most comic scenes in which d'Artagnan challenges Porthos, Athos, and Aramis to duels on the same afternoon."

D'Artagnan is described on the first pages of the novel as "a handsome outsider from the south of France, his face long and brown." Dumas drew on his father's later ignominy, falsely accused of treason by an increasingly power-mad Napoleon, to write his revenge fantasy *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

American movies exploited d'Artagnan early on, with a version in 1903 about which little is known and a two-parter from 1911, directed by J. Searle Dawley for Thomas Edison and starring Sydney Barton Booth of the Booth theater family.

Produced at a Rome studio in 1909, *I tre moschettieri* was distributed internationally. It was directed by Mario Caserini later known for the epic spectacle *The Last Days of Pompeii* and for the diva film, *Love Everlasting*, both made in 1913. That same year, the French laid claim to the homegrown story with a Société Film d'Art production shown in two parts—*La haine de Richelieu* and *Le triomphe de d'Artagnan* – complete with an intermission as during an opera or play.

Thomas H. Ince produced the five-reel *D'Artagnan* in 1916. He reissued the film in 1921 under the title *The Three Musketeers* and sued the Douglas Fairbanks Pictures Corporation for copyright infringement. At his own production company in Hollywood, French comedy legend Max Linder starred as Dart-in-Again in 1922's *The Three Must-Get-Theres*.

Another French *Les Trois mousquetaires* was released the same year as the Fairbanks film and benefitted from home-court locations of centuries-old castles, cathedrals, and gardens. Directed by Henri Diamant-Berger, it was a hit in France, but not with everyone. "It's because the French version," wrote one critic, "concerned about *detail*, about historical minutiae, about the patient touching up of each and every individual and milieu, has almost completely sacrificed the rhythm of the novel. The American version is only rhythm."

Henri Diamant-Berger remade it in 1932 with the same actor as d'Artagnan (Aimé Simon-Gerard). *Variety* said the picture, which was sprinkled with songs, was "sumptuously made but too long" for American tastes. The leading man, the reviewer wrote, "plays the part with sufficient vim to please. He avoids the Fairbanks acrobatics despite the rapidity with which he jumps about from sword clash to sword clash."

Adaptations continued into the sound era with versions from Russia and Mexico (with Cantinflas as d'Artagnan) and even a 1971 pornographic one from West Germany. Twentieth Century Fox made a musical comedy version with Don Ameche as d'Artagnan in 1939 and Gene Kelly, who revered the Fairbanks film, starred as the fourth musketeer in MGM's Technicolor spectacle from 1948.

The latest American version came out in 2011, directed by Paul W.S. Anderson as an action-packed, CGI-stacked 3D adventure. There have been cartoon parodies, comic books, video games, a British musical, and, since the early 1930s, a candy bar. Porthos was played by an actor of African heritage in a recent BBC-TV version but, so far, no black fourth musketeer. It's also an open question if the musketeer ethos of "All for One and One for All" can find a place in the pop culture of the new century.

— The Editor

with special thanks to Jeffrey Vance

Portrait of General Alexandre Thomas-Davy Dumas by Olivier Pichat, c.1883

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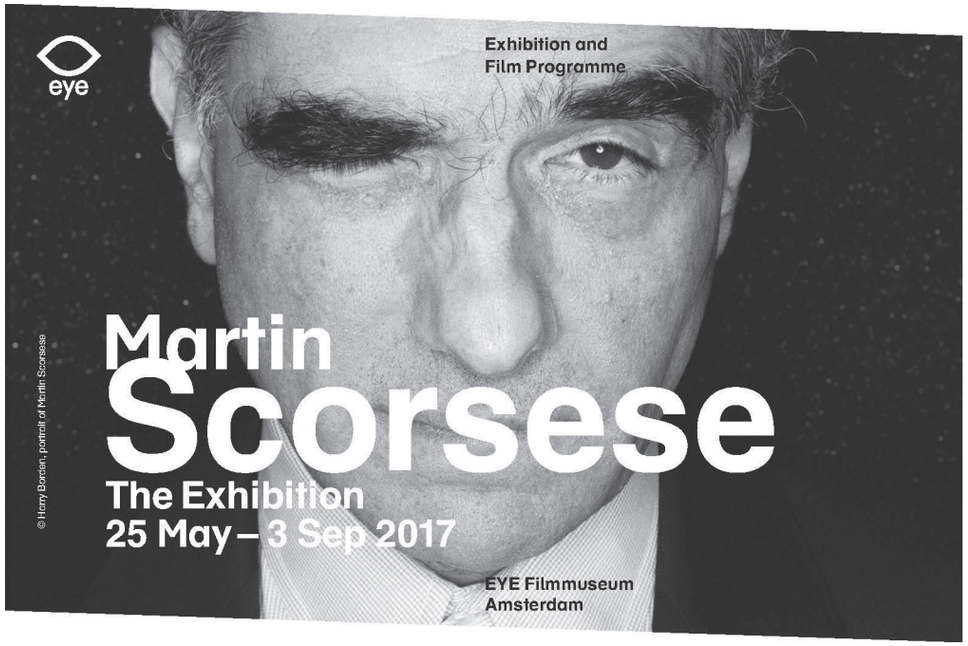
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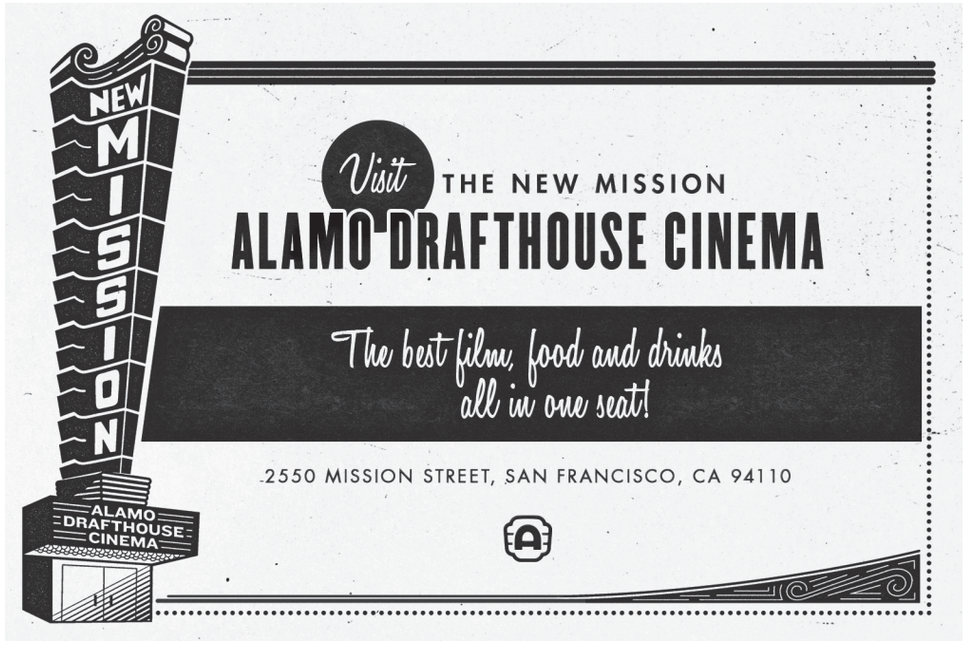
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