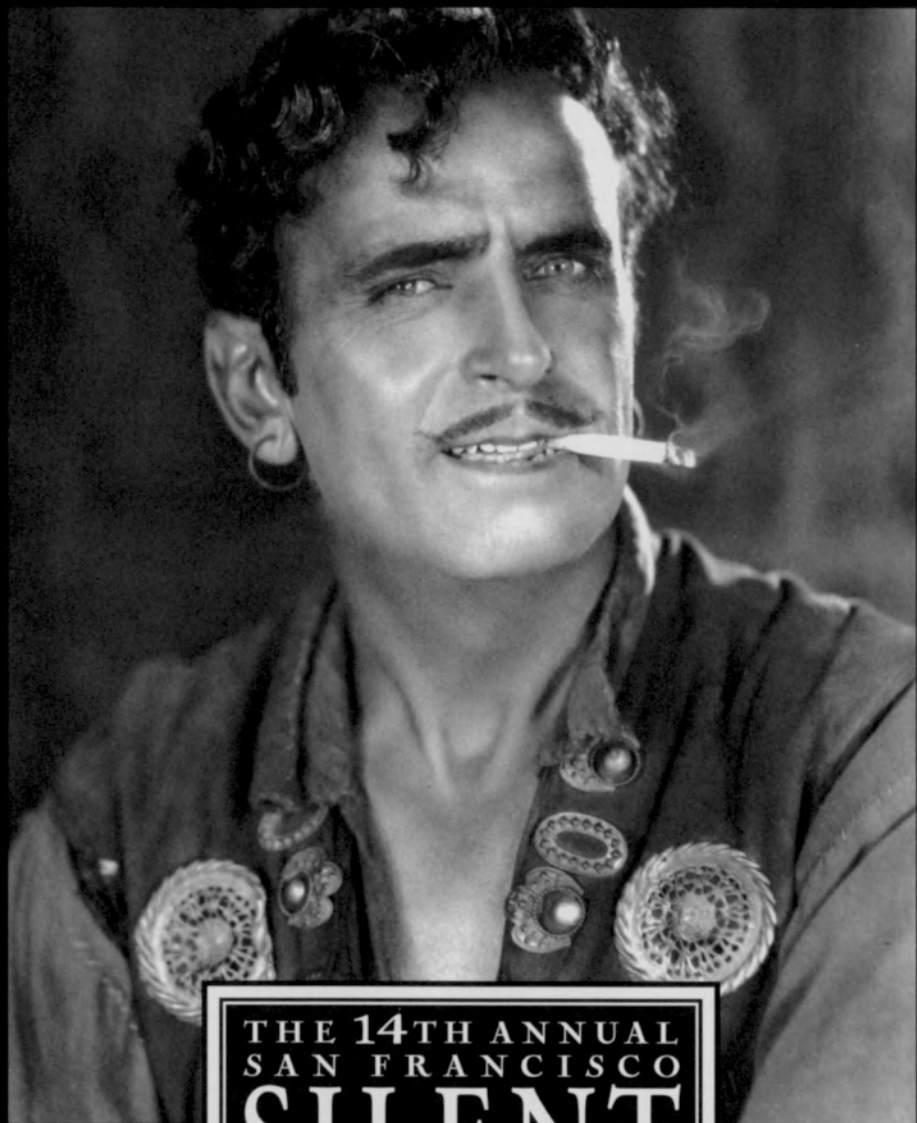


True art transcends time.



THE 14TH ANNUAL
SAN FRANCISCO
SILENT
FILM FESTIVAL

July 10-12, 2009

Castro Theatre

WELLS
FARGO

Wells Fargo is proud to salute The 14th Annual San Francisco Silent Film Festival

While we're proud of our long tradition of helping to bring arts and entertainment to our community—we're even prouder of every occasion when talented artists and performers outshine our contributions.

wellsfargo.com

© 2009 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
All rights reserved. Member FDIC.
(122716_13173)

Together we'll go far



KQED

A Service of Northern California Public Broadcasting

Showing more independent films than any
other public television station in the country.

Truly CA Independent Lens POV ImageMakers

www.kqed.org

ADMIT
ONE

Discover
PASSION

GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE



Films are disappearing before our eyes.

George Eastman House
has led the fight to save them.

Eastman House is home to:

- A Motion Picture Department that has preserved thousands of films
- The L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation
- The Louis B. Mayer Conservation Center housing 26 million feet of film
- 28,000 motion pictures and 3 million related objects
- The collections of Cecil B. De Mille, Martin Scorsese, Spike Lee, Ken Burns, and Norman Jewison
- The largest collection of nitrate Technicolor™ negatives in the U.S.



Contact us today to join in preserving
the objects of your passion.

savefilms@geh.org
www.eastmanhouse.org



The Queen Anne

HOTEL • SAN FRANCISCO

Relax and unwind at The Queen Anne Hotel, an award-winning luxury guest house located in the premier Pacific Heights district of San Francisco. Whether you choose to have sunlight pouring in from a bay window, the coziness of a wood-burning fireplace or any of our forty-eight deluxe guest rooms, you will find yourself in a spacious room that blends the romantic charm of the past

with present day comfort. Each room, individually furnished with Victorian heirloom antiques, features a private bathroom, telephone with fax/modem capabilities, blow dryer and luxury amenities. Your stay at The Queen Anne also includes a complimentary continental breakfast, daily newspaper, weekday courtesy car service to the downtown area,

24-hour concierge service and afternoon tea and sherry. Nearby fitness facilities complete with swimming pool, sauna and tennis courts, meeting facilities and off-street parking are also available. Walk to restaurants and cafes on Fillmore Street or Japantown or hop on the California Street Cable Car. Easily accessible to the downtown shopping district and Castro areas by taxi.

590 Sutter Street (at Octavia) 415-441-2828 toll free: 1-800-227-3970
email: stay@queenanne.com www.queenanne.com

COMEDIC, ROMANTIC, & DRAMATIC

reviews of local Bay Area hotspots starring real people.



www.yelp.com

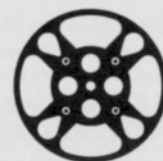
102.1 KDFC

streaming at www.kdfc.com



Violinist Sarah Chang

New Generation Classical



Video Transfer Center

395 South Van Ness Ave. San Francisco, CA 94103
Monday - Friday 9am - 6pm & Saturdays 10am - 4pm

Pass along your past!

- ⊗ Digital Film Transfer from 8mm, 9.5mm, and 16mm Formats
- ⊗ Transfer from Digital Betacam, Betacam, DVCam, MiniDV, etc.
- ⊗ DVD Recording + Custom DVD Authoring
- ⊗ DVD-R and CDR Duplication
- ⊗ Video Tape Duplication

395 South Van Ness Ave. between 14th & 15th • Phone: 415.558.8815 • Web: www.vtc-sf.com



Philip Carli

Philip Carli has toured extensively as a film accompanist throughout North America and Europe, performing at venues such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the National Gallery in Washington, DC, the Cinémathèque Québécoise in Montreal, the National Film Theatre in London, and the Berlin International Film Festival. He is the staff accompanist for the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, and performs annually at several film festivals in the United States as well as at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Italy.



Mark Goldstein

Mark Goldstein is a San Francisco-based percussionist. His work with the Buchla Lightning Wands began in 1991 and sparked a continuing interest in the relation between gesture and sound. Goldstein has composed and performed electronic accompaniments to silent films with Dennis James since 1996. Goldstein also helped create the Marimba Lumina and has worked on electronic instruments and musical interfaces for Gibson Guitar, Interval Research, and IRCAM/Centre Pompidou.



Stephen Horne

Stephen Horne has long been considered one of the UK's leading silent film accompanists. Based at London's BFI Southbank, he has recorded music for DVD, television, and museum installations. Although principally a pianist, he often incorporates flute and keyboards into his performances, sometimes simultaneously. He regularly performs internationally at film festivals in Pordenone, Telluride, and Berlin. As an adjunct to his work in silent film, he occasionally collaborates with a small group that recreates magic lantern shows.



Dennis James

For more than 40 years Dennis James has toured under the auspices of the Silent Film Concerts production company performing to silent films with solo organ, piano, and chamber ensemble accompaniments in addition to presentations with major symphony orchestras throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe providing historically authentic revival presentations.



Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra, a quintet based in Louisville, Colorado, has created scores for 75 silent films since 1994. Reviving not only the sound but also the scoring techniques of the original silent movie theater orchestras, Mont Alto selects music for each scene from their large library of "photoplay music." Each piece you hear in their scores comes from surviving collections of this now-forgotten musical genre. Clarinet: Brian Collins. Violin: Britt Swenson. Piano: Rodney Sauer. Trumpet: Dawn Kramer. Cello: David Short.



Joanna Seaton

Joanna Seaton floated into showbiz as an Ivory Soap Baby. She played principal roles in dozens of shows off Broadway, in regional and stock theaters, including the Kennedy Center. With her husband Donald Sosin, Seaton performs at film festivals nationwide and in Italy. The *New York Times* praised her "silvery soprano." She holds a degree in Theatre Arts from Cornell University.



Donald Sosin

An acclaimed silent film accompanist for more than 30 years, Donald Sosin regularly performs at major film festivals in America and Europe. He is the resident pianist for the Film Society of Lincoln Center, BAM, and the Museum of Moving Image and frequently accompanies silent films at other repertory houses and archives. Sosin has also premiered his orchestral scores on TCM and recorded numerous scores for DVD releases.

Schedule of Events and Table of Contents

Friday, July 10—Opening Night!

7:00 pm THE GAUCHO

Short: *Outtakes from The Gaucho*
Introduction by Jeffrey Vance and Tony Maietta
Book Signing: Jeffrey Vance, Tony Maietta
Live Musical Accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

9:15 pm Opening Night Party on the Mezzanine with Live Music by Parlor Tango

Saturday, July 11

10:00 am AMAZING TALES FROM THE ARCHIVES

Special Guests: Joe Lindner, Heather Olson, Anne Smatla, Jeffrey Stoiber
Book Signing: Christel Schmidt
Live Piano Accompaniment by Stephen Horne

NOON BARDELYS THE MAGNIFICENT

Short: *They Would Elope*
Introduction: David Shepard
Book Signing: David Shepard, Trina Robbins
Live Musical Accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

2:30 pm WILD ROSE

Short: *Girl for \$9.98*
Silent Film Festival Award: China Film Archive
Special Guest: Qin Yi
Book Signing: Richard Meyer, Qin Yi
Live Piano Accompaniment by Donald Sosin

5:00 pm UNDERWORLD

Short: *The Voice of the Violin*
Introduction by Eddie Muller
Book Signing: Eddie Muller, Mick LaSalle
Live Piano Accompaniment by Stephen Horne

7:30 pm THE WIND

Centerpiece Presentation!
Shorts: *The Trick That Failed, Getting Even*
Introduction by Leonard Maltin
Book Signing: Shawna Kelly
Live Musical Accompaniment by Dennis James on the Mighty Wurlitzer, plus added wind effect!

9:45 pm AELITA, QUEEN OF MARS

Late Night Presentation!
Live Musical Accompaniment by Dennis James on the Mighty Wurlitzer and Theremin, and Mark Goldstein on Buchla Lightning

Sunday, July 12

10:30 am OSWALD THE LUCKY RABBIT

Special Guests: Leonard Maltin, Leslie Iwerks
Book Signing: Leonard Maltin, Leslie Iwerks
Live Piano Accompaniment by Donald Sosin

1:30 pm EROTIKON

Short: *Fate's Turning*
Book Signing: Glenn David Gold
Live Musical Accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

4:00 pm SO'S YOUR OLD MAN

Director's Pick!
Short: *Their First Divorce Case*
Introduction by Terry Zwigoff and Frank Buxton
Book Signing: Terry Zwigoff, Dan Clowes
Live Piano Accompaniment by Philip Carli

6:15 pm THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Short: *The Barber's Queer Customer*
Live Piano Accompaniment by Stephen Horne

8:15 pm LADY OF THE PAVEMENTS

Closing Night Presentation!
Short: *The Lesser Evil*
Introduction by Russell Merritt
Live Piano Accompaniment by Donald Sosin and Vocals by Joanna Seaton

4 Musicians Page

6 The Gaucho

9 Bardelys the Magnificent

12 Wild Rose

15 Underworld

18 The Wind

21 Aelita, Queen of Mars

24 Oswald the Lucky Rabbit

26 Erotikon

29 So's Your Old Man

32 The Fall of the House of Usher

35 Lady of the Pavements

38 The Biograph Connection

44 About the Organization

47 Membership Information

48 Donors Page

50 Acknowledgements



THE GAUCHO

Live Accompaniment by MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA

CAST: Douglas Fairbanks (The Gaucho), Lupe Vélez (The Mountain Girl), Eve Southern (The Girl of the Shrine), Geraine Greear (The Girl of the Shrine, younger), Gustav von Seyffertitz (Ruiz, the Usurper), Michael Vavitch (The Usurper's First Lieutenant), Charles Stevens (The Gaucho's First Lieutenant), Nigel de Brulier (The Padre), Albert MacQuarrie (Victim of the Black Doom), Mary Pickford (Blessed Virgin Mary)
 PRODUCTION: Elton Corporation, 1927 PRODUCER: Douglas Fairbanks DIRECTOR: F. Richard Jones STORY: Elton Thomas
 PHOTOGRAPHY: Tony Gaudio SUPERVISING ART DIRECTOR: Carl Oscar Borg EDITOR: William Nolan PRINT SOURCE: Museum of Modern Art, courtesy of Douris UK Ltd.

In 1926 Douglas Fairbanks was beginning to sense his own mortality. His elder half-brother John had suffered a paralytic stroke and would be dead within the year. His storybook union to Mary Pickford was strained, her excessive drinking an affront to her husband's lifelong abstinence. Yet "Doug", as his fans called him, was at a career peak. The iconic performer and producer of his own films had established new standards for set building and special effects in *Robin Hood* (1922) and *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924). *The Black Pirate*

(1926) was the longest film yet to be photographed entirely in a two-strip Technicolor process and remained his biggest domestic box-office earner to date.

Rather than attempting to outdistance his previous technological strides, Fairbanks decided to explore theme and character in greater depth in *The Gaucho*. The star said he was moved to make a film about a healing shrine after visiting Lourdes, France, where, in 1858, St. Bernadette had reported visions of the Virgin Mary. He trans-

posed his story to Argentina, subverting his screen persona by making his title character a bandit and an overt atheist. (The story was credited to "Elton Thomas," Fairbanks's pseudonym but was likely a collaborative effort.) Fairbanks had often played men working outside the law, yet they were on the side of right, fighting against a corrupt authority. As scholars John C. Tibbets and James M. Welsh wrote of *The Gaucho*, "For the first time, the Fairbanksian hero answers to no belief or dogma—other than his own."

Fairbanks hired F. Richard Jones to direct *The Gaucho*. Jones, primarily known for his comedies, had directed "Madcap" Mabel Normand in features such as *The Extra Girl* (1924). Fairbanks's storyline was dark, and Jones was able to inject a joyfulness expected by Fairbanks fans. Much of the lightheartedness in the film derives from the female lead, a free-spirited "mountain girl" played by Lupe Vélez. A dancer from the outskirts of Mexico City, she had come to Hollywood and appeared, without credit, in a few Hal Roach comedies. Douglas Fairbanks Jr. shot Vélez's screen test for his father's picture, but according to legend she was cast before the footage was even developed. True or not, the story indicates the immediate impact Vélez made in *The Gaucho*, as perhaps the most prominent of any female character in a Fairbanks picture. The *Los Angeles Times* wrote, "One can prophecy very much success for her, because she is fiery and seemingly quite unselfconscious." On the heels of this success, Vélez was cast in the title role of



Douglas Fairbanks and Lupe Vélez enjoying each other's charms

D.W. Griffith's final silent film, *Lady of the Pavements* (1929). Soon the new star was working for top directors Victor Fleming, Tod Browning, Henry King, William Wyler, Monta Bell, and Cecil B. DeMille.

Vélez's bilingualism put her briefly in demand acting in Spanish-language versions of Hollywood talkies—a practice that dubbing later made obsolete. Because of prejudices and audience expectations of "ethnic" performers, she faked a limited command of English, both on screen and in printed interviews. In *Motion Picture* magazine, she is reported to have said: "I have flirt with the whole

film colony. Why not? I am not serious. What harm is a little flirting? No, I do not kiss many mens. But when I kiss them, they stay kissed!" Her leading man on *The Gaucho* was rumored to have succumbed to her self-proclaimed charms. Observers reported that Fairbanks and Vélez enjoyed practicing their sultry tango moves and embraces in front of the crew, and away from it as well. Pickford was briefly on the set, playing a cameo role as the Virgin Mary,

and a dalliance between the costars may have been the beginning of the long, drawn-out end of Fairbanks and Pickford's marriage.

Despite its romance and introspection, *The Gaucho* is essentially a good old Fairbanks adventure, with ornately constructed Andean village sets and state-of-the-art special effects. The star was in top physical condition, as demonstrated by the horsemanship and acrobatics he performed. Fairbanks trained with Argentine experts in the

Underwritten by McROSKEY MATTRESS COMPANY

use of *bolas*, a Patagonian hunting weapon, just as he had learned archery for *Robin Hood* and whip-cracking for *Don Q, Son of Zorro* (1925). Press materials for *The Gaucho* trumpet the film's authentic portrayal of pampas culture, from the costuming and the tango to the nationality of the extras, most of whom were in fact Mexican-American. Fairbanks himself conceived of the film as a timeless fantasy. "Naturally, it will be colorful," he told the *Los Angeles Record*, "showing the South Americans as we think of them rather than as they are." The possibility that audiences might find make-believe interpretations of Latin American culture believable had created trouble for Hollywood before. The Mexican government, reacting to negative portrayals of its people in films such as Fairbanks's screen debut *The Lamb* (1915), had just a few years before threatened studios responsible for such images with a national boycott. Allen L. Woll argues in *The Latin American Image in American Film* that this

threat only shifted stereotypes southward, to places like Argentina that were not as crucial a film export market.

The Gaucho premiered at Mann's Chinese Theatre in November 1927. It became a hit and earned twice its \$700,000 production cost. Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks chose the popular film to parody for the second-ever Mickey Mouse cartoon. As *The Gallopin' Gaucho* (1928), Mickey smokes a cigarette in the Fairbanks manner, rides a rhea bird up and down the Andes, tangos with Minnie, and throws his tail around like *bolas*.

Disney repaid its debt to the star when the animated mouse appeared in the travelogue *Around the World with Douglas Fairbanks* (1932).

Fairbanks's enthusiasm for talking pictures was not as strong as it had been for silents. Indeed, his off-screen accomplishments proved more enduring than his sound-era movies. He co-founded the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and hosted the first two Academy Awards ceremonies. He helped launch the University of

Southern California's film school. He was instrumental in securing Los Angeles as the site of the 1932 Olympic Games. His film career, however, sputtered. Fairbanks retired from acting after *The Private Life of Don Juan* (1934), his fifth-straight box office disappointment.

Before his death of a heart attack in December 1939, Fairbanks shipped his entire film collection to the Museum of Modern Art Film Library. This donation and a similar one from D.W. Griffith became cornerstones of the museum's nascent film archive. Though

preservation practices were still primitive at the time—six early Fairbanks films were allowed to deteriorate to the point of no return—MoMA now houses the best extant prints of many of Fairbanks's surviving films, including *The Gaucho*. In 1940 the museum dedicated a season to his oeuvre. Possibly the first such star retrospective in the United States, it reportedly drew audiences of all ages and was so popular it had to be extended. While *The Gaucho* was not among those included in the program, MoMA has since struck a print for new audiences to enjoy. —BRIAN DARR



Lupe Vélez played not only Latinas, but also Asian, Native American, and Russian characters. Here, in a Swedish poster advertising *Where East Is East* (1929), she became Chinese.



BARDELYS THE MAGNIFICENT

Live Accompaniment by MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA

CAST: John Gilbert (Bardelys), Eleanor Boardman (Roxalanne de Lavedan), Roy D'Arcy (Chatellerault), Lionel Belmore (Viconte de Lavedan), Emily Fitzroy (Vicomtesse de Lavedan), George K. Arthur (Saint Eustache), Arthur Lubin (King Louis XIII), Theodore von Eltz (Lesperon), Karl Dane (Rodenard), Edward Connelly (Cardinal Richelieu), Fred Malatesta (Castelrous), John T. Murray (Lafosse), Joseph Marba (innkeeper), Daniel G. Tomlinson (Sergeant of Dragoons), Émile Chautard (Anatol), Max Barwyn (Cozelatt), Gino Corrado (duelist) PRODUCTION: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1926 DIRECTOR: King Vidor SCENARIO: Dorothy Farnum, from the novel by Rafael Sabatini PHOTOGRAPHY: William Daniels SETTINGS: Cedric Gibbons, James Basevi, Richard Day WARDROBE: Andre Ani, Lucia Coulter PRINT SOURCE: Lobster Films

Eighty years after *Bardelys the Magnificent's* 1926 premiere, a cellar in France yielded a nearly complete print of John Gilbert's final film with King Vidor. Considered lost, the film had come at the peak of the actor's popularity. Prior to *Bardelys the Magnificent*, Gilbert had been one of the motion picture industry's most adored stars. He had enjoyed top billing since his arrival at MGM two years prior and relished the rarefied life of Hollywood royalty. After completing *Bardelys the Magnificent*,

he accepted the lead in *Flesh and the Devil*, which began his fateful relationship with costar Greta Garbo. Twenty-one films and less than ten years later, John Gilbert was dead at the age of 36 and ever after cited as a self-destructive casualty of the talkies.

MGM's King Vidor directed Gilbert in five of his most successful films. Since starting his film career in 1915, Gilbert had worked alongside many pioneering directors, including Thomas Ince,

Underwritten by FRIENDS OF THE FESTIVAL

Maurice Tourneur, Clarence Brown, and John Ford, responsible for Gilbert's breakthrough film *Cameo Kirby* (1923). After making the move to MGM in 1924, Gilbert's list of directors grew to Victor Sjöström, Monta Bell, Erich von Stroheim, Edmund Goulding, Tod Browning, and Rouben Mamoulian.

His Hour (1924), Gilbert's first picture at MGM, was also his first with Vidor. Fans and critics alike responded enthusiastically to Gilbert as a romantic lead and to his few but crucial scenes in *He Who Gets Slapped* (1924), which starred Lon Chaney and Norma Shearer. When Vidor directed him again as a womanizing poet in *The Wife of the Centaur* (1924), stories of ego clashes between director and star arose from the set, but both men dismissed them as differences of opinion between two professional colleagues.

The Big Parade (1925) proved to be the most rewarding of their collaborations, although Vidor initially fought against Gilbert playing the nuanced role of a traumatized soldier. "Gilbert was playing a part he



Chatellerault (Roy D'Arcy) slips on King Louis XIII's rug.

never played before," Vidor said. "He never had dirty fingernails before, and he'd never done a part without makeup before. Then he found that he liked it." In an interview with the *New York Times* after the picture had opened, Gilbert discussed their working relationship: "We talk over a picture story like two gabby women, and now that I realize Vidor's greatness I feel that I had to go through disagreements to appreciate him."

The two colleagues went immediately into production on *La Bohème*, with Lillian Gish as Mimi. Neither was enthusiastic about the leading lady. In an interview with *Theatre* magazine, Gilbert said: "Mimi is supposed to be a creature whose very body and soul crave for Rudolph, a woman who loves with a passion that absorbs every fiber

of her being. And what is unbeautiful about such a grand, vital love? No, instead, we had to make her a pale, passive, prim phantom."

Bardelys the Magnificent was the fifth and final collaboration between Vidor and Gilbert. Production designer Cedric Gibbons and actor Karl Dane returned from two previous projects, as did the dependably lurid Roy D'Arcy. Vidor's soon-to-be- bride Eleanor Boardman was brought on to play opposite Gilbert. With nothing more to prove, the makers of *Bardelys the Magnificent* were able to concentrate on elements that make an out-sized, entertaining picture: the costumes are foppish, the love story equal parts sacred and

profane, and the action sequences thrilling and hilarious. Critics and audiences also seemed to be in on the fun. The *New York Times* said, "John Gilbert leaps into the active realms of Douglas Fairbanks, John Barrymore ... and that millionaire cowboy, Tom Mix." *Time* alluded to "John Gilbert doing Fairbanksian leaps in *Bardelys the Magnificent*"

and focused on William Daniels's striking compositions in exterior shots, including the love scene among the willows and the climactic action sequence. Gilbert, ever his own harshest critic, even played along, contributing an autobiographical sketch for *Photoplay*: "*Bardelys the Magnificent*. Applesauce. With one, John Gilbert, contributing most of the sauce."

Gilbert's next film, *Flesh and the Devil*, was a melodrama directed by Clarence Brown, in which Greta Garbo, Gilbert, and Lars Hanson exude a desperate heat in their depiction of a love triangle. The picture was actually fueled by the real-life passion between Garbo and Gilbert. Before the film was completed, the couple was cohabiting in an on-again-off-again arrangement complicated

by her fast-rising star and his fading one.

In late 1928, Gilbert renegotiated his MGM contract to stipulate \$250,000 per picture, with a limit of two pictures a year for three years. The year 1928 also saw John Gilbert's last appearance in a King Vidor movie. In *Show People*, a comedy about trying to break into movies, William Haines and Marion Davies duck into a theater where the willows love scene from *Bardelys the Magnificent* is up onscreen. It's played for laughs, but the kidding is affectionate. According to Vidor, the actor enjoyed the gag: "Pops, you son of a bitch. I'll get even with you!"

Unfortunately, Gilbert's first starring talkie was the inexplicably slipshod *His Glorious Night* (1929). It quickly acquired mythical status as the film that destroyed John Gilbert. Some suspected the autocratic Louis B. Mayer of sabotaging the actor's debut. Mayer had scorn for Gilbert's flashy lifestyle and the two had had a notorious fight over his affair with Garbo. But would Mayer have risked MGM's biggest

cash cow over a personal vendetta? MGM veteran King Vidor didn't think so, describing his version of Gilbert's downfall: "[He] was an impressionable fellow, not too well established in a role of his own in life. The paths he followed in his daily life were greatly influenced by the parts that some scriptwriter had written for him. ... Whatever role he was playing, he literally continued to live it off screen. ... It was a precarious existence."

Gilbert made nine more talking pictures. None

of them restored him to his former glory, and his health was in decline. By his own admission, he had played hard and abused alcohol for most of his adult life. A comeback seemed possible in 1933 when Garbo insisted on Gilbert as her costar in *Queen Christina*. To make the film he had to sign a new contract at a fraction of his previous



Bardelys the Magnificent's cast of thousands



Gilbert and D'Arcy cross swords.

salary, but it brought him no better roles. In the March 20, 1934, issue of *Variety*, Gilbert took out an ad: "Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer will neither offer me work nor release me from my contract. Jack Gilbert." Six months later, his final film, *The Captain Hates the Sea*, was released to general indifference. The end came in his hilltop home some time in the early hours of January 9, 1936, when his battered heart gave out. Later that same year, *Bardelys the Magnificent* was lost. The studio had licensed the rights to adapt the Rafael Sabatini novel for only ten years, and all known prints were destroyed in 1936 per the agreement.

Film historian Jeanine Basinger wrote that Gilbert is "triple-cursed: forgotten, misunderstood, and underappreciated." His precipitous decline seems tied to what King Vidor termed "the forced transition" to talking pictures. Gilbert agreed but refused to succumb to self-pity in a 1933 interview: "Oh, what the hell. They liked me once. A man is an ass to squawk about life. Especially me."

—ROBERTO LANDAZURI



WILD ROSE

Live Piano Accompaniment by DONALD SOSIN

CAST: Wang Renmei, Jin Yan, Ye Juanjuan, Zheng Junli, Han Langen PRODUCTION: Lianhua Film Company (United Photoplay Service), 1932 DIRECTOR: Sun Yu PHOTOGRAPHY: Yu Xingsan SCENARIO: Sun Yu PRINT SOURCE: China Film Archive

The city of Shanghai in the 1930s was a center of great social and political upheaval. The Kuomintang, or Chinese Nationalist Party, was busy trying to rout the then-underground Chinese Communist Party, while one thousand miles to the north, Japanese Imperial forces had occupied Manchuria. Chiang Kai-Shek, the leader of the Kuomintang (KMT), took an attitude of appeasement toward the Japanese, further infuriating the Communists (CCP), who in turn sought to overthrow the KMT government. The epicenter of these clashing forces, Shanghai was also the locus of Chinese cinema, which was in the midst

of its own transformation, away from its former theatrical style toward a socially conscious realism.

Released during this period of intense change, 1932's *Wild Rose* was an early film by Sun Yu, one of China's most celebrated directors. The story of a country girl who moves to Shanghai and falls in with a band of would-be revolutionaries, *Wild Rose* contains the humanist and patriotic themes that would characterize the director's later works. Despite Sun's reputation as a director who made films for the betterment of the common people, Communist leader Mao Zedong would denounce him in 1951, ending his filmmaking

career. Born March 21, 1900, in Chongqing, Sichuan province, Sun Yu earned prominence for his films of the 1930s and 1940s. Controversial in their time, many are now considered classics of early Chinese cinema. After graduating from Beijing's Qinghua University, Sun went to the United States, where he studied drama at the University of Wisconsin. He later took cinematography and film editing courses at the New York Institute of Photography and theater courses at Columbia University from Cecil B. DeMille's mentor David Belasco. In 1926 he returned to China where he directed his first film, *A Romantic Swordsman* (1929). Sun is credited with raising the artistic quality of Chinese cinema using the new filmmaking techniques he had learned abroad.

Sun Yu was one of the core directors at the prestigious Lianhua Film Company. Formed in 1930 from the merger of two production companies, Mingxin and Great China-Lily, the new studio employed a group of highly educated people noted for their progressive, westernized views. Lianhua's board of trustees consisted of prominent figures in politics and business and was closely allied with the Kuomintang government. However, the studio maintained its independence and was never subjected to government control. In its manifesto, Lianhua declared its ambitious goal to "elevate art, promote culture, enlighten the masses, and rescue China's film industry from degeneration and deterioration."

Despite its ties to the KMT, Lianhua seems to have tolerated Sun's leftist political views. His best

known films, such as *Big Road* (1934) and *Little Toys* (1933), contain patriotic, anti-Japanese themes, and a scene in *Wild Rose* shows the heroine leading village children in military training. Sun was part of a newly formed group of socially conscious actors and directors united in the common belief that cinema ought to promote social progress and improve people's lives. However, unlike the far-left radicals, Sun was not a member of the Communist Party, nor did he advocate the violent overthrow of the KMT government.

Instead, his films expressed outrage over social injustice and advocated sweeping social reform, including revolt against the Japanese. Even though Sun Yu shared many of the Communists' ideals, his films were not openly critical of the KMT government. When the CCP came into power in 1949, the director and his films (*Wild Rose* among them) fell out of favor.

Wild Rose's starring actress, Wang Renmei, marked a departure from the delicate, mannered actresses who had previously dominated the Chinese screen. Nicknamed "Tiger Cat" for her natural, athletic acting style, Wang was perfectly



Actress Wang Renmei, nicknamed Tiger Cat

cast in *Wild Rose* as the barefoot country girl who inspires a band of Shanghai revolutionaries. Her first starring role, the part was written specifically with the 17-year old in mind. Born December 1914, in Changsha, Hunan province, Wang became one of the most popular film actresses of her day. Her refreshingly realistic portrayal of the carefree goose girl taken under the wing of a sophisticated Shanghai artist was perceived as

Underwritten by RICHARD J. MEYER and SUSAN HARMON

Wang simply playing herself. Chinese audiences at the time often did not distinguish between an actress and the roles she played and, in the 1930s, admired those who seemed to portray their "true selves" on screen. Praised for her athletic body as well as her attractive features, Wang embodied the spirit of the "modern beauty," who was far more active and robust than her delicate 1920s counterpart. When Wang married her *Wild Rose* costar Jin Yan, the confluence of Wang's professional and private life added to her popularity.

Jin Yan was born April 8, 1910, in Japanese-occupied Korea. In 1912, his family fled to China to avoid the arrest of Jin's father, a founder of the Korean national independence movement. Jin began his film career in 1929, appearing in several swordplay films. After joining the Lianhua Film Company in 1930, he starred in nearly every major production released by the studio. In a 1932 poll conducted by a Shanghai newspaper, Jin's fans voted him "King of the



Actor Jin Yan, China's answer to Valentino

Screen." Among his numerous films are *Wild Flower* (1930) and *Big Road* (1934), both directed by Sun Yu. Jin's athletic physique was a departure from the effeminate, carefully groomed types of the 1920s, and audiences responded favorably to the virility he projected in his roles. Although Jin and Wang appeared together in at least two additional films (*Two Galaxy Stars* in 1931, and Sun Yu's *The Vast Sky* in 1940), the couple divorced in 1944.

Set against the backdrop of Shanghai, *Wild Rose* reflects the political, social, and artistic upheaval of life in 1930s China. In the film, as in life, the city was the scene of clashes between

East and West, rich and poor, rural and urban, progressives and reactionaries. Despite his humanism, Sun Yu proved to be another casualty of this turbulent period and was branded a "poetic" filmmaker by the leftists, who criticized his films for idealizing life under the KMT. *Wild Rose*, *Big Road*, and *Little Toys* were condemned when the CCP came to power for romanticizing country life and for portraying the KMT troops as the leaders in the struggle against the Japanese.

Ever the idealist, Sun wrote and directed *The Life of Wu Xun* in 1950. The story of a late Qing

Dynasty figure who begs for alms in the street to raise money for schools advanced Sun's belief that the poor could only overcome their fate through education. In 1951, Communist leader Mao Zedong denounced the film as counterrevolutionary and for advocating feudalism. During the Cultural Revolution, Sun was arrested and subjected to public denunciation, which damaged his health.

During the next four decades, Sun directed or co-directed only three more titles, none of which matched the artistic quality of his pre-1949 work. He died in Shanghai on July 11, 1990, at the age of 90.

—VICTORIA JASCHOB

The China Film Archive, recipient of the 2009 Silent Film Festival Award, was founded in 1958. The Archive is responsible for saving the national treasures of Chinese cinema, including those of the golden era of Chinese films, produced in Shanghai before World War II.



UNDERWORLD

Live Piano Accompaniment by STEPHEN HORNE

CAST: George Bancroft (Bull Weed), Clive Brook (Rolls Royce), Evelyn Brent (Feathers), Larry Semon (Slippy Lewis), Fred Kohler (Buck Mulligan), Helen Lynch (Buck's girl), Jerry Mandy (Paloma) PRODUCTION: Paramount Pictures, 1927 PRODUCER: Hector Turnbull DIRECTOR: Josef von Sternberg SCENARIO: Robert N. Lee TITLES: George Marion Jr. STORY: Ben Hecht PHOTOGRAPHY: Bert Glennon EDITOR: Lloyd Sheldon PRINT SOURCE: Paramount Pictures

Josef von Sternberg was at the height of his fame in the 1930s, thanks largely to the seven lushly stylized films he directed starring Marlene Dietrich, among them the iconic *The Blue Angel* (1930). Eventually, critics on both sides of the Atlantic would debate the merits of Sternberg's loving attention to gesture and surface, but when he made 1927's *Underworld*, he was virtually unknown. An anxious von Sternberg was so worried about the movie's reception that he skipped the premiere, sending his wife to the theater in his stead while he took a walk in the park. Ben Hecht,

the Chicago newspaperman who had written the story for *Underworld*, believed the film would be a flop and even lobbied to have his name removed from the credits.

Fortunately for Hecht, his protests went unheeded; a few months later, his work on *Underworld* won him his first Academy Award for Best Original Screen Story. The film was a hit, and the Paramount Theater in New York had to arrange all-night screenings to accommodate the eager crowds. Paramount gave von Sternberg a \$10,000 bonus and a gold medal in appreciation.

Underwritten by ADAM RUBINSON

Von Sternberg had done more than make a name for himself; *Underworld* helped inaugurate the gangster film as a genre. As Ben Hecht wrote, "Crooks and hopheads toting machine guns became the national idols."

Like many émigré directors in early Hollywood, von Sternberg had humble origins. He was born in Vienna to a poor Jewish family named Sternberg.

They moved to New York City, where he changed his name from "Jonas" to the Christian "Josef." He dropped out of high school, worked in a millinery shop, and, according to some biographers, hoboed around the country, spending as much time as he could in libraries and art galleries. Before the age of 20, he had worked as a projectionist and patching film stock. Later, the World Film Corporation in New Jersey made him chief assistant to the director, a post he left during

World War I when he became a signal corps photographer. After the war, he apprenticed with seasoned directors Wallace Worsley and Hugo Ballin in America and Great Britain as well as with the lesser-known French director Émile Chautard, who taught von Sternberg about film as art. During the shooting of *The Mystery of the Yellow Room* in 1919, Chautard had his young assistant spend time at the viewfinder learning, von Sternberg later recalled, "to appraise the dimensional aspect of everything in front of the lens, including the value of light and shadow."

During his early years in the movie industry, Josef von Sternberg struggled to get by, cutting

corners wherever he could. Instead of wasting money on a bed for his rented room, he slept in a large dresser drawer. Eventually, Hollywood turned him into an aristocrat. At the suggestion of actor Elliott Dexter, the credits to *By Divine Right* (1924) listed Sternberg—then a scenarist and assistant director—as "von Sternberg." Von Sternberg never lobbied for this prefix, but he

never objected to it either. "Had I been consulted," he wrote, "I'm sure that I would have attached no importance to this implied baronetcy. It was 1923, the recent war had crumbled one empire after the other, and members of the nobility had become doormen in New York, and extra players in Hollywood."

In the years to come, von Sternberg cultivated his persona as an exotic, highbrow artiste more actively. Journalists anointed him Svengali to Marlene Dietrich's Trilby,

and the riding pants and turbans he would wear on the set added to his mystique. In 1936, London critic Charles Graves wrote, "Josef von Sternberg walks like a cat, looks like a fallen archangel, wears Mongolian moustachios and black Chinese pyjamas, is never seen out of doors without a walking stick, craves cornflowers, and always expects the head waiters to bring, unasked, seven iced black grapes when he enters a restaurant."

Von Sternberg wanted absolute control over the visuals of his movies and worked closely with costume designers and set designers to whom he provided sketches of his own before hearing their ideas. He preferred filming in a studio, where he

could arrange every element to his liking, and asserted that shooting on location was making documentary, not art. "I am a poet," he explained. "To reality, one should prefer the illusion of reality."

The deliberate lushness that would characterize von Sternberg's style is already on display in *Underworld*, especially in the Gangster's Ball scene, where streamers undulate over crowds of jittery dancers and, by the end of the night, pile into knee-deep drifts that impede the drunken heroes. Von Sternberg shunned flat and wasted space—he wanted images that were thick, teeming, layered, and emotionally significant. To create depth, he often filled his early sets with objects; later, he would use lights and gauze.

When von Sternberg made *Underworld*, his artistry was both less refined and less well known. Hollywood stars like Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and Mary Pickford had praised von Sternberg's 1925 directorial debut,

The Salvation Hunters, but the film was a financial failure. Von Sternberg then had a run of false starts. Pickford, who had announced her intentions of working with this latest European genius, cancelled when she disliked the film scenario about a blind girl in industrial Pittsburgh that he had proposed for her. Von Sternberg's work at MGM also ground to a halt: unhappy with his work on *The Exquisite Sinner* (1926), the studio replaced him with Phil Rosen. Unhappy with his coworkers in *The Masked Bride* (1925), von Sternberg walked off the set in a huff and sailed for Europe. He did complete one picture, A

Woman of the Sea, but producer Charlie Chaplin was dissatisfied and did not release it. Scottish critic (and future documentary filmmaker) John Grierson, one of the few people to have seen the now-lost film, called it "the most beautiful picture ever produced in Hollywood, and the least human."

Von Sternberg got another chance to prove his mettle in 1926, when he salvaged Frank Lloyd's *Children of Divorce* (1927)—a film that looked

certain to flop. In just three days, von Sternberg rewrote the script and, working mostly at night—when stars Clara Bow and Gary Cooper were available—re-shot more than half the film in a tent he had decorated himself. The results were astounding and convinced Paramount that von Sternberg might not be so difficult after all. The following year, he shot *Underworld* on a generous five-week schedule.

After seeing von Sternberg's *The Salvation Hunters* when it was released, Austrian-

born theater and film director Max Reinhardt wrote, "It is inconceivable that such cinematic greatness could have come from America." *Underworld*, by contrast, is a thoroughly American film. As today's film historians have noted, the gangster film solidifies the myth of American individualism. Outlaws like Bull Weed flout authority to become powerful and sympathetic heroes. Von Sternberg, too, had struggled through the harsh conditions of big city life and, with this first big hit, he was finally finding success.

—MEGAN PUGH



Josef von Sternberg and Marlene Dietrich, Svengali and Trilby



THE WIND

Live Accompaniment by DENNIS JAMES on the Mighty Wurlitzer

CAST: Lillian Gish (Letty), Lars Hanson (Lige), Montagu Love (Roddy), Dorothy Cumming (Cora), Edward Earle (Beverly), William Orlamond (Sourdough) PRODUCTION: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1928 DIRECTOR: Victor Sjöström STORY: Dorothy Scarborough SCENARIO: Frances Marion PHOTOGRAPHY: John Arnold ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Harold S. Bucquet EDITOR: Conrad Nervig PRINT SOURCE: Warner Bros.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's release in 1928 of *The Wind* marked the end of an era. It was the final silent major motion picture released by MGM, the final silent film by one of the era's great directors, Victor Sjöström, and the final silent film for one of its greatest stars, Lillian Gish. It was also a box office failure, simultaneously panned and hailed by critics, called an "American western" as well as a "European" film, loved by those who worked on it and hated by those who produced it. Beset by contradictions and controversies, *The Wind* was a fitting film to be caught in the tumultuous transformation to sound. For its beloved star Lillian Gish, long associated with the Victorian morality

tales of director D.W. Griffith, the daring film offered her one of the finest roles of her career yet it also ended her longtime association with MGM.

Often labeled a western because of its setting, *The Wind* also bears the marks of Hollywood's extraordinary international diversity. In addition to a Swedish director, the principal cast hailed from six countries spread across three continents, including the American Gish, the Swedish Sjöström and Lars Hanson, Australian Dorothy Cumming, Canadian Edward Earle, Danish William Orlamond, and the British Montagu Love. *The Wind* is based on the eponymous novel by Dorothy Scarborough, a popular contemporary

author known for writing about hardscrabble life on the plains. Adapted into a screenplay by MGM's top screenwriter, Frances Marion, the story is set deep in the Texas dustbowl and deals with the psychological turmoil of a young woman from the East Coast beleaguered by the advances of several lustful men and an incessant wind.

Sjöström made extensive use of on-location shooting and chose to film *The Wind* in the Mojave desert near Bakersfield, California. Temperatures soared higher than 100°F, and airplane engines were brought in to stir up the desert sands to create the title character. In a *Motion Picture* magazine article, Katherine Albert

wrote about her visit to the set: "Directly in front of the shack stood a little figure and in front of her were the cameras. There was the usual number of workers, all wearing high boots in case they encountered rattlesnakes, and most of them had white-looking stuff smeared over their faces to keep off sunburn. Goggles, making them look like men from Mars, were worn to protect their eyes from the sand." The little figure referred to by Albert was Lillian Gish. Recalling the working conditions, Gish said the film was "without any doubt, the most unpleasant picture I've

ever made." For Gish, *The Wind* represented a stark departure from the Victorian films of D.W. Griffith that had made her famous.

In 1912, D.W. Griffith's favorite leading lady, Mary Pickford, introduced him to Lillian and her younger sister Dorothy. He immediately cast both sisters in his current project, *An Unseen Enemy*. In the decade following her initial meeting with Griffith, Lillian would star in almost all his major



Unsophisticated cowpoke Lige (Lars Hanson) with his cultured eastern wife Letty (Lillian Gish) in their West Texas shack

films. Her lead role in the groundbreaking *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) continues to color her legacy to this day, as much for its racial subject matter as for its indelible link to the pioneering director, who always cast her as the imperiled young woman in need of a male rescuer. Many have speculated that her close association with Griffith was romantic, a connection Gish always denied

while famously referring to him in the proper Victorian form as "Mr. Griffith." Even as she achieved her great stardom in Griffith's films, her



The Wind's international cast includes American Lillian Gish, British Montagu Love, and Swede Lars Hanson.

most critically acclaimed performances came later, in particular under the direction of Victor Sjöström. Her roles in Griffith's films had contributed to a growing notion that performing in the movies was as respectable a profession as stage acting, however they had not offered much chance for Gish to display her range as an actor. After working with Sjöström on the highly acclaimed

The Scarlet Letter, Gish sought out another project with the Swedish director, personally pitching *The Wind* to MGM production chief Irving Thalberg.

Sjöström had arrived in Hollywood from Sweden in 1923 at the request of Louis B. Mayer. Already one of the most prominent directors in Europe, Sjöström had established his reputation in a series of films based on the rural novels of Swedish author Selma Lagerlöf (the first woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature). His penchant for using the setting and landscape of his films to psychological effect made him a natural

choice for the subject matter and setting of *The Wind*. For her part, Gish had an opportunity to throw herself into a more complex role than many of her earlier films. Irving Thalberg and other MGM executives considered the bleak ending of the novel and Sjöström's surrealistic narrative as commercially dubious. In her recollections, Gish always insisted that they had filmed an ending faithful to the novel but were pressed by the studio to shoot a happier one. No evidence exists to support Gish's claim. Despite full knowledge that MGM was skeptical of the film, Gish threw herself into the role and was brilliant as the tormented Letty. *National Board of Review Magazine* wrote, "anyone who knows how effectively Miss Gish with her fugitive hands and agitated mobility of bodily gesture, at times so strikingly effective and so peculiarly hers among screen actresses, can do this sort of character, will perceive that *The Wind* gives her an opportunity to act."

Only spectacular box office returns would have



For Lillian Gish, long associated with the Victorian morality tales of director D.W. Griffith, Victor Sjöström's *The Wind* offered her one of the finest roles of her career.

redeemed *The Wind* for MGM. Although it was completed by the summer of 1927, the film's release was delayed by the studio until November 1928, a full year after the release of *The Jazz Singer*, when audiences wanted sound films. Gish recalled: "Mr. Thalberg said we had a very artistic film, which I knew was a veiled punch," and Sjöström remembered that, following a preview showing for Thalberg and other executives,

the only comment he received was, "Good night, Victor." A review in the *New York Times* sarcastically claimed that "yesterday afternoon's rain was far more interesting." The film was a commercial flop. The critical and box office success it enjoyed in Europe meant little to MGM, which soon after terminated Lillian Gish's contract, effectively ending her reign as a movie star. Sjöström returned to Sweden, where he directed only a handful of subsequent films and, late in life, achieved worldwide acclaim for his award-winning role in Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* (1957). After they had both made important contributions toward establishing films as a respectable dramatic endeavor, both Gish and Sjöström returned to the stage for much of their careers. It would take another 65 years for *The Wind* to earn the same respectability, when it was chosen for preservation by the United States National Film Registry in 1993.

—BENJAMIN SCHROM



AELITA, QUEEN OF MARS

Live Accompaniment by DENNIS JAMES on the Mighty Wurlitzer & Theremin, and MARK GOLDSTEIN on Buchla Lightning

CAST: Nikolai Tsereteli (Los), Yuliya Sointseva (Aelita), Igor Ilyinsky (Kravtsov), Nikolai Batalov (Gusev), Vera Kuindzhi (Natasha), Vera Orlova (Masha), Konstantin Eggert (Tuskub), Pavel Pol (Ehrlich), Yuri Savadsky (Gor), Aleksandra Peregonets (Ihoshka) PRODUCTION: Mezhrabprom-Rus, 1924 DIRECTOR: Jakov Protazanov SCENARIO: Fyodor Otysep, Alexei Faiko PHOTOGRAPHY: Yuri Zhelyabuzhky, Emil Schünemann DESIGNERS: Alexandra Exter, Isaac Rabinovich, Sergei Kozlovsky PRINT SOURCE: Walker Art Center

Aelita abides. Rarely seen, it's known mostly from photos featuring oddly-garbed women posing amid disorienting geometric shapes. Foreign distributors saddled it with the embarrassing subtitles "Queen of Mars" or "Revolt of the Robots." In 1929, *Aelita* was described by the *New York Times* as "far more interesting to read about than to gaze upon." Later descriptions rarely delve

deeper than this, from *Future Tense* by John Brosnan in 1978: "[I]n Russia, science fiction was being used for a much more serious purpose—to spread the message of Marx to Mars."

Faint praise from later generations added to the film's burial mound that was first formed by Soviet critics like Anatoli Goldobin, who wrote in 1925: "The much-talked-about *Aelita* was received by

worker audiences in the provinces with considerable doubt as to its usefulness." By 1948, the film had taken on chimerical characteristics. British filmmaker and critic Thorold Dickinson wrote, "It would be interesting to meet someone who has actually seen *Aelita*." This neglect belies the film's popularity with Soviet filmgoers, its influence over the look of future science fiction films, and its psychological storyline, which resonates in films noir and in the work of filmmakers as diverse as Andrei Tarkovsky, Alfred Hitchcock, and David Lynch. Musician Dennis James, hoping to spark a revival for *Aelita* in 1992, told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that the film is "a picture window into Soviet society when Utopian goals were considered positive things." James then premiered a new score featuring the organ and the first electronic musical instrument, the theremin, created in 1920 by Russian inventor Lev Sergeivich Termen. Some 86 years after its initial release, *Aelita* still waits to be acknowledged for its importance in cinema history.

The film's script is based on a 1923 novella by Aleksey N. Tolstoy, a distant cousin of *War and Peace* author Leo Tolstoy. While both stories are set after the Bolshevik Revolution, the film, unlike the novel, is primarily concerned with the Russian Civil War (1917–1923), which caused famine and displacements. The collapsed economy led revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin in 1921 to establish the New Economic Policy (NEP), a capitalist mini-economy within the Communist state. Relaxed state control of some industries created a profit incentive, freeing hoarded capital and boosting living standards, but also encouraging graft and corruption.

Film studios were not under direct state control,

although movies were expected to conform to revolutionary ideals. Flush with cash from a German fund that hoped to support a global workers' revolution through cinema, the Moscow-based Mezhrabprom-Rus studio planned *Aelita* as a giant production, rivaling American and German epics. The noted Cubo-Futurist painter Alexandra Exter was hired to design the Martian costumes. To direct this futuristic epic, the studio looked to Russia's cinematic past.

Director Jakov Protazanov was one of pre-Revolutionary Russia's top film directors. Born in



Soviet *Aelita* poster

1881 to a Muscovite merchant family, Protazanov was introduced to the theater at an early age by his mother, an educated woman who affected Continental sophistication by speaking French rather than Russian. An idle bourgeois at the age of 20,

Protazanov toured Europe on a small inheritance. After visiting the Pathé film studio in Paris, he decided to make a career in movies. Returning to Moscow in 1907, he worked as an interpreter at movie studios, using his knowledge of French to communicate with camera operators from France and Germany. In 1911, he wrote and directed his first film, *A Convict's Song*. By 1919, he had directed 78 films, mostly for Moscow's leading producer, Iosif Ermol'ev. Fleeing the Civil War, Ermol'ev moved his studio first to the Ukraine, then to Paris in 1920. Protazanov followed him, directing two films in Yalta, five in Paris, and one in Berlin. With the Civil War winding down and the NEP in place, Protazanov accepted Mezhrabprom-Rus's invitation to make films in the Soviet Union.

Its producers intended that *Aelita* draw worldwide attention to Soviet cinema and make Mezhrabprom-Rus an international studio, like

Germany's Ufa and France's Pathé. As a Soviet film, *Aelita* was also meant to support the goals of the Bolshevik Revolution. These purposes proved incompatible. The politics of both Protazanov and Tolstoy were considered suspect—despite their embrace of Communist ideals upon their return to Russia—as both had fled the country following the revolution.

Tolstoy's novella is a romantic fantasy of space travel that features a decadent race of Martians descended from the survivors of ancient Atlantis. Protazanov's film abandons the Atlanteans, making the science fiction secondary to a melodramatic representation of the harsh conditions Soviet citizens faced during the Civil War, a subject hardly broached in the novella. To meet the needs of the state, Protazanov depicts the class struggle and stirring images of the new nation building a future through engineering, toil, and big machinery. To help ensure the film's success at home and abroad, Protazanov throws in a comic subplot, a romantic triangle, and a murder.

Thanks to the still images reprinted in textbooks and science fiction magazines, *Aelita* is remembered mostly for Exter's Martian designs. Born in 1882 in Kiev, Ukraine, Exter was a leader of the European avant-garde. A colleague of Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Fernand Léger, she created a unique "cubist style distinguished by a remarkable variety of color," according to art historian Georgii Kovalenko. She designed costumes and sets for Alexander Tairov's Kamerny Theater in Moscow, including his 1917 presentation of Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*. "Skillful lighting made the geometric forms vibrate, giving an impression of floating," wrote art historian Andrei Nakov. "The décor for *Salomé* produced a strange monumentalism of dramatic tonality. The new pathos of the 'machine age' was born." Exter



Marxism on Mars

"insisted on the need for the costumes to interact organically with the sets or backdrops," Kovalenko wrote. After her work with Tairov, she collaborated with choreographer Bronislava Nijinska and taught stage design at the Academie Modérne in Paris.

Although Exter's costumes appear stiff and awkward in still photographs, they come alive when seen in motion. Exter's designs for *Aelita* are remarkable for her adaptation to the monochrome palette of the black-and-white film stock. After bringing a riot of color to her cubist paintings

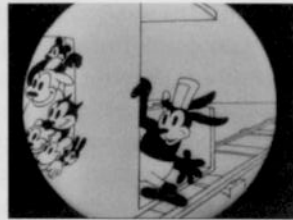
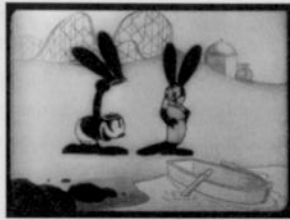
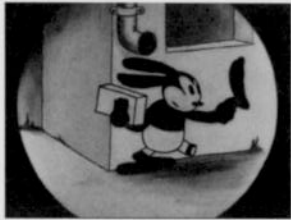
(a form noted for its muted tones), she used a variety of textured industrial materials—aluminum, glass, acrylics, steel, etc.—to create a high contrast Cubo-Futurist image.

Aelita was promoted like no Soviet film before it. Leaflets announcing its premiere were dropped from airplanes over Moscow. The

expense of the film was highlighted in publicity material, which boasted, for example, that 22,000 meters of film were exposed for the movie that ran 2,841 meters when complete—this at a time when other filmmakers were splicing together scraps of unexposed film to make their movies. Although popular at the box office, *Aelita* incurred the wrath of the formalists (director and film theorist Lev Kuleshov described it as "the blind alley of pre-revolutionary cinema") and the proletarians (the newspaper *Kinonedelya* called it "alien to the working class").

Protazanov survived the criticism and kept directing films until 1943, two years before his death. He astounded his critics by crafting three faithfully Soviet films following *Aelita: His Call* (1925), *The Forty-First* (1927), and *Don Diego and Pelageya* (1928). Film historian Denise J. Youngblood credits Protazanov with keeping "alive the tradition of the narrative entertainment film."

—RICHARD HILDRETH



OSWALD THE LUCKY RABBIT

Live Piano Accompaniment by DONALD SOSIN

CREATED AND PRODUCED BY: Walt Disney, Ub Iwerks, 1927-1928 PRINT SOURCE: Walt Disney Studios FILM TITLES: *Trolley Troubles; Oh, Teacher; Great Guns; Mechanical Cow; All Wet; The Ocean Hop; Bright Lights; Oh What a Knight*

Donald, Goofy, Pluto, and... Oswald the Lucky Rabbit. That's how the list of major Disney animated characters might read had certain events in the late 1920s unfolded differently, forever altering the history of animated film.

In 1923, Walt Disney headed for California with the hopes of getting into the movie business. He had had initial success in Kansas City, Missouri, making animated shorts for a local ad agency and later for his own "Laugh-O-Gram" studios. Fatefully, Disney accepted an \$11,000 contract with Pictorial Clubs Inc. to produce six shorts. The company went bankrupt before fully paying Disney, forcing him out of business.

At the time, New York City was still the capital of animation, home to the studios that produced popular animation like the Felix the Cat and Krazy Kat series. Undeterred, Disney opted for California, as his brother Roy was already there convalescing from a bout of tuberculosis. In mid-1923, with a reported \$40 in his pocket, Disney left for Hollywood.

Prior to leaving, Disney made one last short, *Alice's Wonderland* (1923). *Alice* was inspired by Max Fleischer's *Out of the Inkwell* series, featuring an animated Koko the Clown cavorting in a live-action world. Disney's *Alice* cleverly switched that premise, putting a live-action girl in an animated world.

Margaret Winkler, distributor of the Felix the Cat series, saw *Alice's Wonderland* and approached Disney to produce more. He had to scramble. He had no staff, and Winkler wanted the same child

actress, Virginia Davis, to play Alice. Always persuasive, Disney convinced Davis's family as well as animators Hugh Harman, Rudolph Ising, and Ub Iwerks to leave Kansas City for California.

The *Alice* series was popular with critics and audiences alike, but by 1927 the novelty of a live-action girl in a cartoon world had worn off. Smartly, Disney shifted focus from *Alice* to the cartoon characters, notably her sidekick Julius the Cat. Concurrently, Winkler's new husband Charles Mintz had taken over her business, and Universal Pictures tapped him to get them back in the animation business. Universal, feeling there were already enough cartoon cats, suggested a series starring a rabbit.

Disney and his best animator Ub Iwerks reworked *Alice's Julius* into a rabbit named Oswald for *Poor Papa* (1927). After Universal executives complained that Oswald looked "too old," Iwerks redesigned him to look younger for the second short, *Trolley Troubles* (1927). It became the first of 26 Oswald shorts created by Disney's studio for producer Mintz and distributor Universal.

Disney was an expert storyteller and instinctively knew the shorts would be more successful if Oswald was more than a bystander. Instead, the humor arose from situations created for Oswald's world and his reactions to them. The quality of the animation was also superior to the work of other studios, mostly because of Iwerks's technical expertise and his skill at drawing perspective.

Disney and Iwerks developed an assembly-line

system that met Disney's desire for top-quality animation, story, and character development as well as allowing them to churn out one film every two weeks, as mandated by their contract with Mintz and Universal. Through Oswald, Disney also realized the potential for character merchandising. From the outset, Universal had promoted Oswald "tie-in" products, the first being an Oswald the Lucky Rabbit chocolate bar that hit the shelves in 1927.

Merchandise tie-ins, of course, were lucrative only to copyright holders. By early 1928, with Oswald on a roll, Disney felt confident enough to travel to New York to request an increase from \$2,250 to \$2,500 per short. Before he left, Iwerks alerted him that Mintz was signing Disney's animators to new contracts, replacing Disney as their boss. Disney didn't believe it until he arrived in New York, where Mintz offered \$500 less per short, plus 50 percent of any profits. Mintz offered Disney, who thought of himself as Oswald's owner, a contract to join Mintz's firm as an employee. Disney learned that Universal controlled the copyright to Oswald and all profits from the character, regardless of who made the films.

Feeling betrayed, Disney turned down Mintz's offer and vowed never again to relinquish control of any of his studio's creations. Before leaving New York, Disney wired his brother Roy to sign Iwerks, his best animator—and one of the few who refused to sign with Mintz—to an exclusive contract.

Iwerks's contribution to Disney's success is immeasurable. Long before Oswald, Disney had stopped drawing to concentrate on running the studio. Iwerks created the images of Oswald and Mickey Mouse and drew most of the first Mickey cartoons. Years later a story circulated that Disney was asked at a party to draw Mickey, and he handed the paper to Iwerks. In the 1930s, Iwerks started his own studio, producing shorts for Columbia Pictures and Warner Bros.' Looney Tunes series. Iwerks returned to Disney in 1940.

Iwerks later concentrated mostly on visual effects, developing an improved process for combining

live action with animation first used in *The Three Caballeros* (1944) and the xerographic process pioneered in *101 Dalmatians* (1961). He won two Academy Awards for his technical work and received a nomination for the bird effects in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963). He also helped develop many of Disneyland's animatronic attractions.

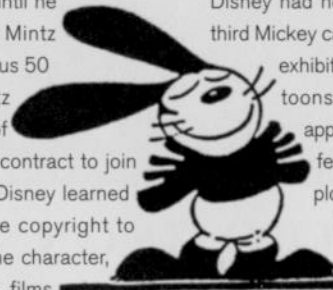
Back in Hollywood, while the rest of the staff finished Oswald shorts for the Universal contract, Disney and Iwerks secretly created the first Mickey Mouse cartoon, *Plane Crazy*, with the Disney and Iwerks families inking at home after hours. *Plane Crazy* was drawn entirely by Iwerks at an astonishing rate of approximately 700 drawings per day.

Initially, theater owners resisted running the new cartoons. Mickey Mouse was yet unknown and Disney had no official distributor, but when the third Mickey cartoon came out as an all-talkie, the exhibitors were sold. Adding sound to cartoons wasn't entirely new, but Disney's approach was. He realized that sound effects and music should be driven by plot, not added as an afterthought.

If Disney hadn't lost Oswald to Mintz and Universal, there might not have been a Mickey Mouse. From then on, Disney fiercely protected his copyrights, affecting copyright laws of the U.S. and the world to this day. Mickey and other Disney characters would have long since passed into the public domain if not for the intense lobbying for copyright extensions by the Walt Disney Company.

As for Oswald, he had a life after Disney. Eclipsed by Mickey's fame, he faded from films in 1938, appearing one last time in 1943. He lasted longer in print, gracing the comic pages through the 1960s in the U.S., and later in Mexico and Italy. In 2004 and 2005, the original Oswald became a pop culture hit in Japan, spawning a craze. Finally, in 2006, the Walt Disney Company reacquired Oswald as part of an assets exchange with Universal. After almost 70 years, Oswald was finally home at Disney, taking his place alongside Mickey and the rest of the iconic Disney characters.

—SCOTT BROGAN





EROTIKON

Live Accompaniment by MONT ALTO MOTION PICTURE ORCHESTRA

CAST: Karel Schleichert (Ita's Father), Ita Rina (Ita), Olaf Fjord (Georg Sydney), Theodor Pištěk (Hilbert), Charlotte Susa (Gilda), Luigi Serventi (Jean), Ladislav H. Struna (Teamster), Milka Balek-Brodská (Midwife) PRODUCTION: Gem-Film, 1929 DIRECTOR: Gustav Machatý SCENARIO: Gustav Machatý and Vítězslav Nezval (uncredited) PHOTOGRAPHY: Václav Vich EDITOR: E.B. White ART DIRECTOR: Alexander Hackenschmied PRINT SOURCE: Národní filmový archiv

Czech cinema is nearly as old as cinema itself. Yet with one dramatic exception, it did not gain international attention until the Czech New Wave dazzled the world in the 1960s. The exception, 1933's *Ecstasy* (*Ecstasy*), was part of an earlier modernist movement encompassing art, literature, and film that emerged in Czechoslovakia between the two world wars. *Ecstasy* earned worldwide notoriety for its erotic content, and the attention obscured the real achievements by one of the seminal figures of that first new wave, director Gustav Machatý. His filmography is small, only 12 feature films as a director. Outside Eastern Europe, *Ecstasy* was known as Machatý's one

important film. But *Erotikon*, made four years before *Ecstasy*, explored the same theme of a woman's sexuality. The full flowering of his talent came between 1926 and 1933, before war and circumstances interrupted it.

Film had flourished in the region even before there was a Czech Republic. The first films were shown in Prague and Karlovy Vary in 1896, just months after the Lumières' first screening in France. That same year, amateur photographer Jan Kříženecký took a movie camera from Paris to Prague, and two years later made the first Czech feature and documentary films, which were also the first in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Prague's

first permanent movie theater opened in 1907, and the city's first production companies began the following decade. After the establishment of the independent Czech Republic in 1918, cinema took off. But according to film historian Pavel Taussig, most of the producers and directors were "crafts and trade persons" and had few artistic ambitions. Intellectuals rejected film as an art form, preferring American films. Writer and painter Josef Capek even warned, "garbage is garbaging garbage." But by the end of the silent era, intellectuals and artists had begun to embrace film's possibilities.

Machatý was born in Prague in 1901. As a teenager, he played piano in movie houses, worked as an actor, and directed his first film, *Teddy Wants to Smoke* (1919). He went to Hollywood around 1920, and information on what he did there is sketchy. Most sources say he apprenticed with D.W. Griffith, Erich von Stroheim, or both, but only one source mentions a specific film on which he may have worked, listing him as assistant to Stroheim on *Foolish Wives* (1921). Machatý's own embellishments further obscured facts. In a newspaper interview during the 1944 production of *Jealousy* (1945), Machatý claimed that he first came to the U.S. "when he was fourteen," running away from home and making his way to New York, where he worked as a dishwasher and a gravedigger to earn the train fare to California. The article adds that Machatý got a job sweeping

stages at Universal then later worked as "an attendant at the zoo that the studio maintained at that time." After learning "the fundamentals of filmmaking," he went back to Czechoslovakia where, "at the age of 18, he produced and directed his first picture, *The Kreuzer Sonata*" (1926). (In fact, it was his second film as director, and he was 25.) It was followed by *Schweick in Civilian Life* (1927), then *Erotikon*, his final silent.

Machatý's return to Prague coincided with the heyday of the avant-garde Devětsil movement, influenced by German Expressionism and French

Dadaism and Surrealism. Vítězslav Nezval, the leading Czech Surrealist poet, collaborated with Machatý (without credit) on the story for *Erotikon*. The two also wrote a script for a silent film called *Lust*. Although it was never made, that script became the basis for Machatý's first sound film, *From Saturday to Sunday* (1931). It also had a sexual theme, the story of a one-night stand and its consequences. According to Taussig, "[t]he films Nezval made in collaboration with Machatý are the pinnacle of his film work. Machatý ... managed to make films with a simple plot



Avant-garde artist Alexander Hackenschmied as art director, along with Machatý and cinematographer Václav Vich, created *Erotikon*'s look.

but an exciting external expression that reflected the internationalism of film, especially during the silent era." In *Erotikon*, the simple plot of a country girl seduced by a city slicker is a framework for a poetically observed study of a woman's sensual awakening.

The art director on *Erotikon* and *From Saturday to Sunday* was another avant-garde artist, Alexander Hackenschmied. Along with cinematographer Václav Vích, Hackenschmied and Machatý created *Erotikon's* arresting visual style, with its extreme close-ups of faces and objects, its symbolic imagery and camera movement. The scene of a sexual encounter is particularly effective, with its deliriously spinning camera and close-ups on the face of a young woman during orgasm. Hackenschmied later moved to United States, changed his name to Alexander Hammid, and became a well-regarded documentary and experimental filmmaker. In the 1940s, he worked with another avant-garde filmmaker, his then-wife Maya Deren.

Hackenschmied also worked as scenic designer on Machatý's *Ecstasy*, a bucolic idyll about an unhappily married young woman who finds sexual fulfillment with a handsome engineer. The leading role was played by 19-year-old Austrian actress Hedy Kiesler. In one scene, she is seen swimming nude; in another, in an



An element of *Erotikon's* arresting visual style: the extreme close-up

echo of *Erotikon*, the camera is on her face as she simulates orgasm. The worldwide uproar over the film got Hedy a contract with MGM and a new name, Hedy Lamarr. It got Machatý a lot of trouble. *Ecstasy* caused a sensation at the second Venice Film Festival in 1934 but was denied a prize when the Vatican objected. When an American distributor tried to import the film, U.S. Customs refused to allow it. As Frank Miller writes in *Censored Hollywood*, "It was the first time customs laws had been used to keep a film out of the country." Eventually, a bowdlerized version was allowed into the U.S., but the Motion Picture Production Code, Hollywood's self-censorship

organization, refused to give it a seal of approval, effectively making widespread exhibition impossible. It did screen at a few American "art theaters" over the years, but only in 1950 did a drastically changed *Ecstasy* get approved for adult viewing in the United States. Novelist Henry Miller compared *Ecstasy* to the work of D.H. Lawrence.

Meanwhile, as the political situation in Europe deteriorated, Machatý made films in Austria and Italy and, in 1936, emigrated to the U.S. as a refugee. He settled in Hollywood but had a hard time getting work. At MGM, he directed sections of *The Good Earth* (1937), *Madame X* (1937), and *Conquest* (1938), all without credit, and also directed a short, *The Wrong Way Out* (1938).

His one feature at MGM was the B-picture *Within the Law* (1939). Machatý's final and best American film was *Jealousy* (1945) at Poverty Row's Republic Studios. He returned to Europe in 1951, working in Germany as a co-writer on a Pabst film as well as writing and directing his final film, *Missing Child 312* (1956). According to critic Elliott Stein,

Machatý's "attempts to arrange further projects in his native Czechoslovakia led nowhere." He ended his career teaching at the Munich Film School and died in 1963.

For decades, Machatý was primarily remembered as the director of a scandalous "dirty movie," and his work was rarely seen outside Czechoslovakia. But as his early work has become better known, he is being recognized as an innovative artist and a pioneer in exploring women's sensuality. As film historian Thomas J. Slater writes, "He had more to offer than just a scene of a naked woman running through the woods."

—MARGARITA LANDAZURI



SO'S YOUR OLD MAN

Live Piano Accompaniment by PHILIP CARLI

CAST: W.C. Fields (Samuel Bisbee), Alice Joyce (Princess Lescaboura), Charles Rogers (Kenneth Murchison), Kittens Reichert (Alice Bisbee), Marcia Harris (Mrs. Bisbee), Julia Ralph (Mrs. Murchison), Frank Montgomery (Jeff), Jerry Sinclair (Al) PRODUCTION: Famous Players-Lasky, 1926 ASSOCIATE PRODUCER: William LeBaron DIRECTOR: Gregory La Cava SCENARIO: J. Clarkson Miller ADAPTATION: Howard Emmett Rogers and Tom J. Geraghty, based on the story "Mr. Bisbee's Princess" by Julian Street TITLES: Julian Johnson PHOTOGRAPHY: George Webber EDITOR: Julian Johnson PRINT SOURCE: Library of Congress

In 1941 W.C. Fields made his final feature film, *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break*. Critic James Agee, in his review for *Time* magazine, called him "one of the funniest men on earth" and went on to proclaim, "the great comedian can play straight better and more firmly than anyone in the business." When Fields died five years later, he was memorialized not for any of his talents—vaudevillian, master juggler, pool shark, star of radio and film—but rather as the world's favorite drunkard.

Born in 1880 to a Cockney immigrant father

and a Philadelphia-born mother, William Claude Dukenfield was the eldest of five children. Fields was known for describing his childhood as difficult, flavoring it with Dickensian details. Fights with his father turned into battles. Running away became a commonplace theme. Later, he would even tell people that terrible beatings from neighborhood kids were the reason for his large, deformed nose.

Fields admitted to exaggerations in the story of his childhood, but they contained elements

Underwritten by WELLS FARGO

of truth. He taught himself to juggle, using fruit from the family fruit stand. He picked up pool tricks hustling in pool halls. School was boring, and he did run away from home but more to avoid teachers than abusive parents.

In 1897, with little money, he put together a juggling act, "The Tramp Juggler." Soon after, he found work in Atlantic City's burlesque and vaudeville halls. To earn extra money, he became a "drowner." Creating a distraction by pretending to drown in the nearby ocean, he caused a crowd to form on the boardwalk. Rescued, he was carried into the theater and the crowd followed in concern. The theater then offered discount tickets in celebration, while Fields slipped out of the lobby, later emerging on stage in disguise.

By 1900, he found some success with his tramp act in San Francisco and married fellow performer Harriet Hughes. After playing on the Orpheum Circuit, the couple was offered a European tour. Touring the world for the next five years, they become a well-known vaudeville team. Hattie became pregnant and found she preferred domestic life. They quickly separated, and Fields returned to performing solo. While he supported his wife and child financially, he would not be part of their lives.

Fields found it lonely on the road without Hattie. He installed a bar in his wardrobe trunk and invited guests up to his dressing room after a show. Feeling that alcohol would impede his ability to perform, he never drank. Eventually, however, he developed a taste for alcohol and was told he performed better after drinking. In 1923, D.W. Griffith saw Fields in *Poppy* and thought the Broadway musical an excellent vehicle for actress Carole Dempster. Fields was brought on at the last moment, after the role of McGargle was trimmed down, giving Dempster, a Griffith favorite, more

room to shine. The plan backfired when Fields showed up and stormed Dempster's dressing room, infuriated that many of his good scenes had been cut. The production came to a standstill. Rather than scrap the project, Paramount executives reluctantly restored Fields's part.

William LeBaron, a producer at Paramount, thought Fields hilarious and quickly signed him. Pairing him with director Gregory La Cava for *So's Your Old Man*, LeBaron hoped that Fields would appreciate La Cava's dark sense of humor and be more malleable on set. On the first day of shooting, LeBaron asked La Cava's opinion of Fields. "He's a terribly mean man," replied the director. Fields's opinion of La Cava? "He's a Dago son of a bitch."

Two weeks later, their opinions were tempered by respect for each other's talents. "I hate his guts," La Cava reported to LeBaron, "but he's the greatest comedian that ever lived."

Fields responded, "I can't stand the bastard, but he's the best director in the business." A strong friendship was formed. The combination worked so well that La Cava would later direct Fields's scenes in films by other directors.

During this time, Fields began to use his public persona to create publicity, blurring the line between his public and private self. To the world, he was that cantankerous man with a penchant for drinking who distrusted doctors and bankers and was repulsed by children. He created a publicity "feud" between himself and Baby LeRoy, a child actor who played Fields's nemesis in numerous films. It was rumored that Fields once spiked LeRoy's orange juice to shut him up on set. In truth, Fields understood the importance of LeRoy as his foil and campaigned to have his scenes extended. He later assisted LeRoy's family with money during hard times.



Fields cultivated his reputation for detesting children, but he always gave them a chance to strike first. Here, Baby Leroy does!



Fields became a pop culture icon in the late 1960s and early '70s. Above, the great man as drawn by Al Hirschfeld, 1975



Never give the dog an even trim...

In 1937 Fields found his greatest success in radio. What began as a stint on a popular show with comedian Edgar Bergen and his wooden dummy Charlie McCarthy became a full-time routine. McCarthy would make fun of Fields's drinking and call him a "mean old drunk." Insults between Fields and McCarthy became legendary, and Fields's drawl was imitated across the country. During these shows, Fields's inebriated character was given full play. The name W.C. Fields became synonymous with "Drunk" and, for the sake of his career, Fields embraced it.

Trying to live up to his character was taking a terrible toll on Fields. He gained weight, and his skin betrayed the signs of liver failure. After a close call with pneumonia, he attempted to quit drinking but this was short lived. Professionally, he managed to sign a new contract and now had full writing control on his films.

In *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break*, his final starring role, Fields played a character called "The Great Man." He had intended the film to be an introspective, esoteric tale with nightmarish elements that would show the struggle of the performer with his public image. However, illness and delirium tremens had set in, and he could no longer fight the producers the way he had before. He was unable to achieve his vision of the film. It was re-cut to match the

public's expectations for a Fields picture.

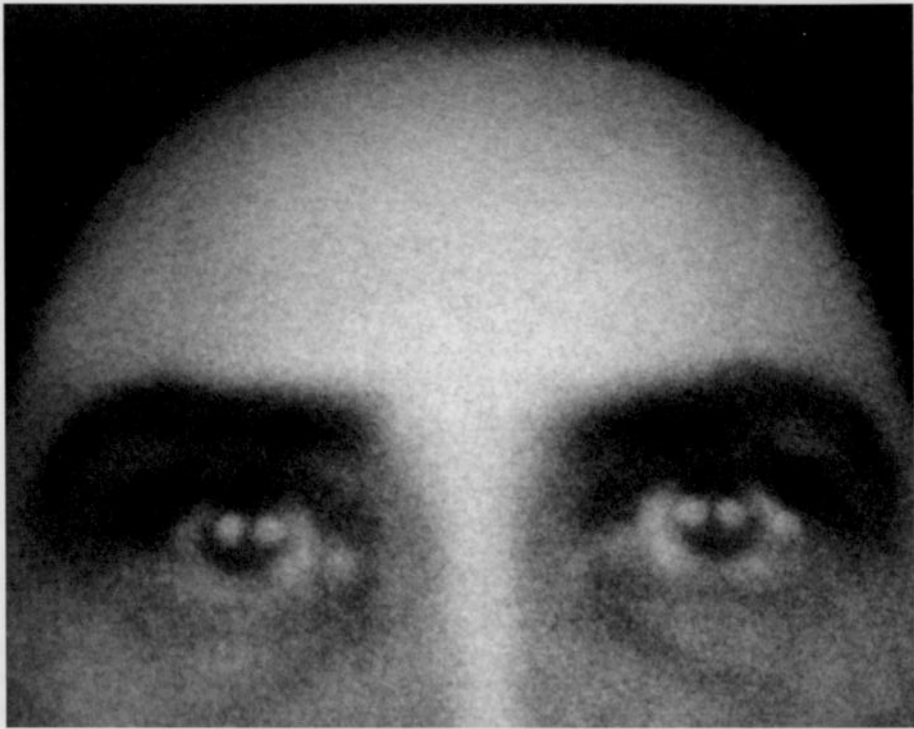
Three decades after his death, Louise Brooks wrote an essay for *Sight and Sound* magazine, recalling the Fields she had met back when she danced in the Ziegfeld Follies. In "The Other Face of W.C. Fields," she said Fields's talent could only be fully appreciated on the stage,

where his character was rooted in a make-believe world and the audience could see all of him, uncut by setups and camera angles. "Bill performed as if he were standing whole before an audience that could appreciate every detail of his costume and follow the dainty disposition of his hands and feet. Every time the camera drew closer, it cut off another piece of him and deprived him of some comic effect."

Carlotta Monti, his mistress of 13 years, wrote about Fields in 1971: "They have said he was crotchety, castigating, had a jaundiced eye, was larcenous, suspicious, shifty, erratic, frugal, and mercenary. I can only confirm these accusations. But he was also loveable, kind, sweet, generous, thoughtful, and gentlemanly." The man who had a reputation for

detesting children included a provision in his will, Monti noted, "leaving the bulk of his estate to orphanages."

—DAVID JOHANSSON



THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Live Piano Accompaniment by STEPHEN HORNE

CAST: Marguerite Gance (Madeline), Jean Debucourt (Roderick), Charles Lamy (Allan, the Guest), Fournes-Goffard (The Doctor), Luc Dartagnan (The Valet) PRODUCTION: Les Films Jean Epstein, 1928 DIRECTOR: Jean Epstein ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Maurice Morlat SCENARIO: Jean Epstein, based on the original stories by Edgar Allan Poe PHOTOGRAPHY: Lucas SLOW-MOTION OPERATOR: Hébert ART DIRECTION: Pierre Kefer COSTUMES: Fernand Oclise, made by Murelle PRINT SOURCE: Cinémathèque Française

One evening in the mid-1930s Henri Langlois took Georges Franju to Montmartre's Studio 28, where a few years earlier the first Surrealist films had played to riotous crowds. The program included screenings of Jean Epstein's *La Chute de la maison Usher* (*The Fall of the House of Usher*) and Buñuel and Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou* (1929). After the screening, Franju was hooked and the two later opened their own *ciné-club* on the Champs Élysée. But the movie-mad duo wanted more than to screen interesting work, they wanted

to collect it too—to build a library, or cinémathèque. In 1935, Franju and Langlois purchased the first title in a collection that would become known as the Cinémathèque Française: Jean Epstein's *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

Langlois and Franju's *ciné-club* was part of an art-house cinema circuit that began in France after World War I. The Great War had devastated much of Europe, and with it the French film industry, until then a fierce competitor to American-made fare. Big studio productions were no longer

feasible, so filmmakers worked independently, using small crews and casts of friends, shooting from their own scripts, and distributing their films as artworks or on the growing *ciné-club* circuit. Artists eager to experiment, including photographer Man Ray, Dada provocateur Marcel Duchamp, and abstract painter Fernand Léger, flocked to the medium, reinvigorating it.

At the beginning of WWI, the Warsaw-born Jean Epstein entered medical school at the University of Lyon. Already a budding cinephile, he saw the films of Charlie Chaplin and Max Linder with his sister Marie. Watching the westerns of William S. Hart, he found a new direction: "a view suddenly given of another world, more lively and more nourishing than the real world, than the world read or heard about." He abandoned medicine and opted for a life in the arts. He began writing critical essays, founding the short-lived cinema journal *Le promenoir* in 1920 while working for Auguste Lumière as a lab assistant.

In 1921, the Editions de la Sirène publishing house printed Epstein's *Bonjours Cinema!* A parody of a contemporary film program, it included photos of film stars and poems by adoring film fans, with Epstein's essays the feature presentation. His writings praised the American close-up and the capacity of a split second of film to convey drama, tragedy, or comedy. He lamented the current state of French films, calling them "albums of poses and catalogues of décor." His sister Marie had meanwhile written to filmmaker Germaine Dulac, asking her advice on becoming an actress. Soon, the Epstein siblings were in Paris.

Down the hall from La Sirène, where Jean Epstein had taken a job as secretary, filmmaker

Jean Benoît-Lévy housed his production office. He hired Epstein to direct the fictionalized biography *Pasteur* (1922), commissioned for the scientist's centennial. Soon after, Epstein landed a contract with Pathé-Consortium, and his sister Marie took his place with Benoît-Lévy, making socially conscious, poetic films in a collaboration that lasted well into the sound era. While working as a director, Jean also kept up his writing and became one of the first French critics to introduce Freudian concepts of the unconscious mind into discussions about cinema—concepts that intrigued the French avant-garde.



Madeline in burial garb—mourning or celebration?

His breakthrough film came in 1923. *Coeur fidèle* (*Faithful Heart*), about an unhappily married woman whose true love is unfairly imprisoned, was shot on the streets and waterfront of Marseilles. One sequence filmed by a camera strapped to a merry-go-round enthralled the group of French filmmakers called the Impressionists, who were exploring the possibilities of the subjective camera and the elasticity of cine-

matic time in films such as Germaine Dulac's *The Smiling Madame Beudet* (1923) and Abel Gance's *La Roue* (1923).

Hardly doctrinaire about his cinematic approach, Epstein became an eclectic director. After *Coeur fidèle* he made *La Belle Nivernaise* (1924), which historian Alan Williams describes as "lyrical" and "pictorialist." In 1924, Epstein gave a lecture lambasting the French avant-garde for repeating the same techniques in their new films. "Nineteen twenty-four has already begun and in a month four films using breakneck editing have already been shown. It's too late. It's no longer interesting. It's a little ridiculous."

Epstein directed narratives for the Russian out-

Generous Assistance by the CONSULATE GENERAL of FRANCE, S.F.

fit Films Albatros and was able to start his own company, where he made an adaptation of Georges Sand's *Mauprat* (1926), which was also Luis Buñuel's first film credit. Among his commissioned works, Epstein also further explored cinematic impressionism in his films, *6½ by 11* (1927), *The Three-Paneled Mirror* (1927), and *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

Made from an amalgam of Edgar Allan Poe stories, including "The Oval Portrait" and "The Fall

of the House of Usher," Epstein's film suspends time in the atmospheric tale of a painter whose actual wife fades as his portrait of her nears completion. It stars Marguerite Gance, wife of Abel Gance, whose *La Roue* Epstein revered. His most well-known film outside France, *Usher* was Epstein's last to court the avant-garde and his penultimate silent. Widely praised, the film was considered by many critics to be, in the words of Henri Langlois, "not only the ultimate expression of



Sir Roderick paints his wife while she fades away in real life. Jean Epstein based his script on several Edgar Allan Poe stories: "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Oval Portrait," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "Ligeia," "Berenice," "Silence," and "The Man of the Crowd."

ten years of experimentation but their justification." Still, the film had its detractors. Surrealist poet Robert Desnos decried *Usher* as evidence of Epstein's "lack, or rather paralysis, of imagination." But the period of avant-garde experimentation in France was about to end, marked by the release of Buñuel's Surrealist *L'Âge d'or* in 1930. Sound equipment was too expensive for these independent artists and American-style story films became the accepted standard for producers and audiences alike.

Epstein had already begun to explore new territory, calling the craft of acting primarily "a school

for lies" and advocating for realism in films. "No décor and no costume will have the look, the hang of the real thing," he wrote. In 1929, he traveled to the islands off the coast of Brittany and returned with *Finis terrae* (*Land's End*), a drama set among kelp gatherers on Ouessant. He collaborated with the islanders on writing the script and featured them in all the roles. Upon returning to Paris, he told an art-house audience, "I felt I was taking with me not a film, but a fact." He would make several

subsequent films in the sound era about the Bretons.

Both Epsteins laid low during World War II. Jewish and a leftist, Jean was arrested by the Gestapo in 1944. His release secured through personal connections, he joined his sister who was working for the Red Cross in Vichy. After the war, he directed three more films and attempted a sound remake of *The Fall of the House of Usher*. His last film was a 1953 government-

sponsored industrial short, *Efforts de productivité dans la fonderie*. He died of a stroke in early April, 1953, having just turned 56 years old. That same year Henri Langlois arranged a tribute to him at the Cannes Film Festival.

After her brother's death, Marie Epstein began work at Langlois's now 18-year-old cinémathèque. As technical director, she helped to restore many of the films from the French avant-garde period, including those of her brother, which had been carefully hidden from the Nazis by both Germaine Dulac and Langlois.

—SHARI KIZIRIAN



LADY OF THE PAVEMENTS

Live Piano Accompaniment by DONALD SOSIN & Vocals by JOANNA SEATON

CAST: Lupe Vélez (Nanon del Rayon), William Boyd (Count Karl von Arnim), Jetta Goudal (Countess Diane des Granges), Albert Conti (Baron Finot), George Fawcett (Baron Haussmann), Henry Armetta (Papa Pierre), William Bakewell (Pianist), Franklin Pangborn (M'sieu Dubrey, dance master) PRODUCTION: Art Cinema Corporation, 1929 PRODUCER: Joseph M. Schenck DIRECTOR: D.W. Griffith PHOTOGRAPHY: Karl Struss ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER: G.W. Bitzer COMPOSER: Irving Berlin ARRANGEMENT: Hugo Riesenfeld SOUND: Edward L. Bernds SCENARIO: Sam Taylor, based on the story "La Paiva" by Karl Vollmoeller PRINT SOURCE: Museum of Modern Art, courtesy of Milestone Film & Video and the Mary Pickford Foundation

Lady of the Pavements opened in 1929 to rave reviews. Although directed by the distinguished D.W. Griffith, recognized as a master even then, it was Lupe Vélez's performance both on and off screen that got all the attention. While Griffith was reinventing his style with the emergence of sound, Vélez was just beginning to make her mark on Hollywood. She did not receive top billing, but as one *Variety* review noted, "...Vélez gets everything in the picture; nine-tenths of the close-ups are hers...." Although *Lady of the Pavements* is all but forgotten today, the film is an intriguing look at Griffith's attempts to build a career into the sound

era and Vélez's brief burst of fame.

David Llewelyn Wark Griffith had directed landmark films such as *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), *Intolerance* (1916), *Broken Blossoms* (1919), and *Way Down East* (1920), pioneering a seamless language for narrative film. By the mid-1920s, however, his popularity with audiences had waned considerably. In 1924, he traveled to Germany to make *Isn't Life Wonderful*, his last film at United Artists, a production company he had co-founded with Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and Douglas Fairbanks. Shot on location with several non-professional actors, the film was a semi-documentary

account of economic depression in Germany. The film failed at the box office, and Griffith found it financially impossible to produce independently at United Artists. Instead, he joined Paramount Pictures as a director-for-hire, with the studio agreeing to pay off his most pressing debts. Griffith helped vaudevillian W.C. Fields launch his film career with *Sally of the Sawdust* (1925), but, after several box office failures with Paramount, the studio did not renew Griffith's contract.

In early 1927, Griffith returned to United Artists, but not as an independent producer. Joseph Schenck, who had taken over as UA president, offered Griffith a job directing films for his independently owned Art Cinema Corporation, which distributed films through Griffith's former company. Griffith had no choice but to accept and worked under Schenck's supervision.

He directed three films for Art Cinema, including *Drums of Love* (1928), *The Battle of the Sexes* (1929), and *Lady of the Pavements* (1929).

Schenck had full control of *Pavements*. Writer Sam Taylor had planned to direct the film but was preoccupied with Mary Pickford's *Coquette* (1929). Schenck assigned Griffith, giving him a completed shooting script, which was based on German author Karl Vollmoeller's story "La Paiva." Schenck selected Lupe Vélez as the leading lady after the success of her performance opposite Douglas Fairbanks Sr. in *The Gaucho* (1927). He also chose William Boyd (a DeMille discovery) and French actress Jetta Goudal as principal cast members.

Lady of the Pavements reunited Griffith with cinematographer G.W. "Billy" Bitzer, well known for his work on *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*. The two had worked closely together until the late teens, when Bitzer's battles with depression and drinking negatively affected his career. On *Lady of the Pavements*, Bitzer was billed as "assistant" to lead photographer Karl Struss. The film referenced



Nanon del Rayon (Lupe Vélez) performing Irving Berlin's "Where Is the Song of Songs for Me?", re-shot for sound in *Lady of the Pavements*

German Weimar cinema, shooting with the "entfesselte Kamera," a moving camera first used by Karl Freund in F.W. Murnau's 1924 *Der letzte Mann* (*The Last Laugh*). Although praised by contemporary critics for its handsome photography and sets, *Pavements* did not draw big audiences. Historian Richard Schickel believes the lack of interest derives from the absence of Griffith's customary handwork—suspenseful scenarios, elaborate costumes, battle scenes, and historical figures.

As an active heroine in *Pavements*, Lupe Vélez defies the typical Griffith female protagonist, steeped in Victorian mores. A charismatic and manipulative cabaret singer and prostitute, she dresses in glamorous gowns and passes as a noblewoman to fool Prussian Count Karl von Arnim. The rags-to-riches element of a Lillian Gish-type heroine are on display, but Vélez's potent character does not need any rescuing. Vélez embraced her role in promoting the film, attending the premieres and living up to reviews, which focused on her rowdy nature rather than on the story or technical issues.

Born Maria Guadalupe Vélez de Villalobos in San Luis Potosí, Mexico, on July 18, 1909, Lupe

Vélez started as a dancer in a musical show in Mexico City. After her success in *The Gaucho* and *Lady of the Pavements*, she starred in *Wolf Song* with Gary Cooper, *Where East Is East*, costarring Lon Chaney, and *Tiger Rose*, all from 1929. She had a few well-publicized relationships with Hollywood stars, including with Cooper. In 1934, she married *Tarzan* star Johnny Weissmuller, divorcing him after five years. In the 1930s, Vélez was primarily a B-movie actress, with her biggest starring role in a series of seven "Mexican Spitfire" films between 1939 and 1943.

When she wasn't flaunting her sexuality onscreen, Vélez earned a reputation off-screen as infantile, irrational, and occasionally violent. *Photoplay* gossip columnist Cal York wrote in 1930, "When you enter the house [Vélez] screams 'I hate you. Get out of my house.' But when you want to leave she locks the door and throws the key away. You can't get out until she lets you out." In one interview, "Whoopie Lupe" herself said, "In a church, I am a saint. In a public place, I am a lady. In my own home, I am a devil. ... My house is where I can do as I please, scream and yell and dance and fall on the floor if I like."

In 1944, at the age of 35, Vélez returned to Mexico and appeared in Roberto Gavaldón's *Nana*, based on the novel by Émile Zola. It was her first dramatic role in seven years and many critics saw it as a comeback opportunity. The resurgence was short lived. *Nana* was her last film. A yearlong affair with bit player Harald Maresch left

Vélez pregnant. Knowing an illegitimate child would end her career, Vélez took an overdose of sleeping pills and died at her Beverly Hills home on December 13, 1944.

Director Griffith shot *Pavements* as a silent film and then re-shot several sequences for the transition to sound. He had already experimented with sound in 1921's *Dream Street*, which featured music and effects recorded on discs. For *Pavements*, Griffith added a few scenes of dialogue and songs by Irving Berlin for Vélez (including "Where Is the Song of Songs for Me?," which



Lupe Vélez points the finger at Jetta Goudal while William Boyd looks on.

would become a hit). He tried making the sound more realistic by increasing and decreasing the volume of Vélez's singing voice as she approached and retreated from the camera. Unfortunately, the new technology couldn't yet accommodate Griffith's vision.

Griffith was unhappy about the addition of sound to cinema. He believed filmmakers needed to use the "technique, which

has made motion pictures what they are today, and add the dialogue... [filmmakers] must preserve the speed, action, swirl, life, and tempo of the modern picture today." After the premiere of *Pavements*, Griffith predicted "sound film would force the drama from the stage and spell the end of the silent film." While stars like Lupe Vélez blossomed with the coming of sound, some directors, including Griffith, found that the end of silent film was also the death knell of their careers.

—MOLLIE CASELLI



THE BIOGRAPH CONNECTION

Showcasing Rare Treasures from the Vault

FILMS: *They Would Elope* (1909), directed by D.W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Mary Pickford; *Girl \$9.98* (1907); *The Voice of the Violin* (1909), directed by D.W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Arthur Johnson and Marion Leonard; *The Trick That Failed* (1909), directed by D.W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Mary Pickford; *Getting Even* (1909), directed by D.W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Mary Pickford; *Fate's Turning* (1911), directed by D.W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Dorothy Bernard and Charles West; *Their First Divorce Case* (1911), directed by Mack Sennett, with Mack Sennett and Fred Mace; *The Barber's Queer Customer* (1911), camera by Arthur Marvin; *The Lesser Evil* (1912), directed by D. W. Griffith and camera by G.W. Bitzer, with Blanche Sweet. PRINTS

COURTESY OF: Library of Congress, George Eastman House

The Edison Company exhibited the first motion pictures in the United States at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences on May 9, 1893. Others tried to profit from his breakthrough in the next few years, but it was the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, popularly known as Biograph, that became Edison's most formidable rival. Although Thomas Edison owned several key motion picture patents that prevented most competitors from developing their own systems, he was powerless to stop Biograph

because its hardware simply did not use his technology. The two systems did share one significant connection. They were both invented by the same man, William Kennedy Laurie Dickson.

Dickson began by developing Edison's Kinetograph camera in 1889 and completed the Kinetoscope viewing device in 1894. He became dissatisfied with his position at Edison's lab and designed the non-infringing Mutoscope camera and viewer, co-founding the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company with Harry Marvin, Elias

Koopman, and Herman Casler. When Edison premiered the Vitascope film projector at Koster & Bial's Music Hall on April 23, 1896, American Mutoscope countered with its own projector, the Biograph. The projector's 70mm image, superior to Edison's 35mm system, became standard for first-class vaudeville houses, the principal outlet for films. After the novelty of film exhibition died down in 1900, the industry didn't begin to revive until after the success of Edison's *The Great Train Robbery* (1903). When Biograph also found success with story films such as *The Suburbanite* and *The Moonshiner* (both from 1904), Edison raided their technical staff, causing serious damage to Biograph's creativity and output. As theaters began springing up across the country, spurring the demand for new films, Biograph was unable to find experienced people to help profit from the booming market.

By 1907, Biograph was so seriously troubled its board of directors recommended liquidation. Instead, the new president, Jeremiah Kennedy, began to reorganize, firing several employees and hiring Wallace McCutcheon, an old hand at Biograph who had recently been working for Edison. McCutcheon became Biograph's only film director, until he was taken ill. In a desperate move, anyone at Biograph who seemed remotely capable of directing was given a chance. They were all dismal failures, until actor David Wark Griffith was asked to try out.

D. W. Griffith had been making a marginal living for eleven years as a stage actor, but for the last five months he had a regular income at Biograph and was reluctant to direct films for fear of getting fired. Assured he could retain his job, Griffith took the script he was given for *The*

Adventures of Dollie (1908) and began casting it. He was disappointed by his choices for a leading man from within the company and went in search of someone outside to fill the part. He found Arthur Johnson, a stage actor "at liberty," and launched the career of this movie matinee idol, the first of many men and women who would find success under Griffith's direction.

Griffith's first effort was highly praised, and he soon became Biograph's sole director, marking an upswing in the company's fortunes. Biograph



Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks

became recognized for their outstanding films and exhibitor demand boosted print orders from 40 copies for each film when Griffith started to an average of 90 prints by the next year.

After ten months, Griffith was directing his 114th film, *Her First Biscuits* (1909), when a young actress, Mary Pickford, joined the cast. Although only

16, Pickford was already a veteran, having begun her stage career at five years old. She used her real name, Gladys Smith, in a series of plays on the road with her widowed mother Charlotte Smith and siblings Lottie and Jack. The turning point for Pickford came at age 13, when she managed to arrange an audition with the famous Broadway producer David Belasco. He was impressed by her spunk and ability, but not her name. He renamed her Mary Pickford and cast her in his next play *The Warrens of Virginia*. After two years on Broadway and on tour, she came back to New York in the spring of 1909 and was reunited with her family. As the theatrical season was over and they were all unemployed, her mother suggested she try for a job at Biograph.

Pickford entered the Biograph studio alone, determined to get hired and keep her family to-

gether. When Griffith saw her he was unimpressed, saying: "You are too little and too fat, but I may give you a chance." Pickford was not impressed with him either, thinking him "pompous and insufferable," but their immediate dislike of each other didn't prevent them from seeing something of value in collaborating. She played a ten-year-old girl that first day. The next day she played the leading lady in *The Violin Maker of Cremona* (1909).

Although the strong-willed Griffith and unashamedly blunt Pickford fought from the start,

they also had respect for each other's abilities. Griffith later wrote about her: "One thing set Mary apart from all the other girls I was engaging at Biograph at the same time. Work. I soon began to notice that instead of running off as soon as her set was over, she'd stay to watch the others on theirs. She never stopped listening and looking. She was determined to learn everything she could about the business." Cameraman Billy Bitzer agreed, recalling in his autobiography: "It has been said



Mary Pickford, America's Sweetheart

that all she had were two dimples, curls, and a lot of luck. Don't you believe it, for there were many girls who had all that, but they were drab personalities beside Mary. Mary would have succeeded in any career she wished to follow."

Unlike theater performers, movie actors were not yet publicized by film studios, which were fearful of salary demands. So the public identified their favorites in other ways. Florence Lawrence was known as "The Biograph Girl" until she was

hired away by the Independent Motion Picture (IMP) Company for more money and name recognition. The star system was born, but Biograph still refused to identify their players. Nevertheless, its actors remained loyal because Griffith's talent as a filmmaker helped to hone their skills.

Pickford handled some difficult parts for a 17-year old in the 80 films she made in 1909 and 1910. The public responded and she became the new "Biograph Girl." By the time *Wilful Peggy* [sic] was released in August 1910, with Pickford in the title role, 250 prints were required for distribution.

Pickford left Biograph in December 1910 for the IMP Company but came to realize their films were inferior to those made by Griffith. She eventually broke her contract, returning to Griffith at a reduction in her IMP salary, which was still higher than her old rate at Biograph. Just a few months later she introduced her two friends Lillian and Dorothy Gish to Griffith, launching their movie careers. She also did some of her best work to date, but the battles between

her and Griffith became untenable. Griffith convinced Pickford to work in one last film, *The New York Hat* (1912), which brought out the best in their stormy relationship. He then wished her well in future endeavors, just as he would the many others who went on to worldwide acclaim. He, too, achieved greater success after he left Biograph in September 1913, and the company went into decline.

—DAVID KIEHN



Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité

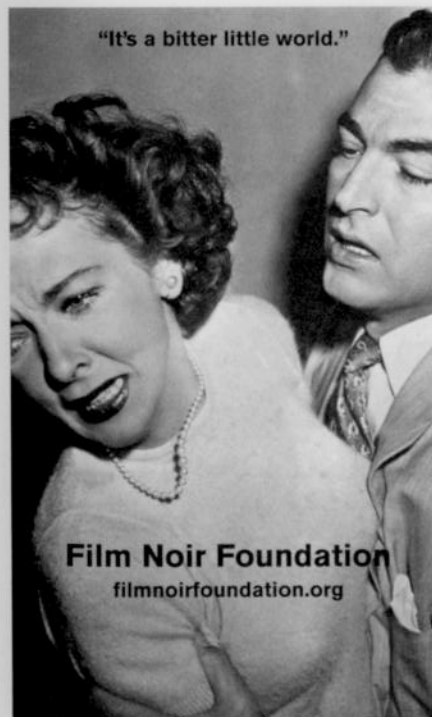
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

CULTURAL SERVICES
CONSULATE GENERAL OF FRANCE
IN SAN FRANCISCO

The San Francisco

Silent Film Festival expresses its profound gratitude to the Consulate General of France for its generous assistance with the presentation of Jean Epstein's *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

"It's a bitter little world."



Film Noir Foundation
filmnoirfoundation.org

Milestone
film & video



www.milestonefilms.com

BOOKS INC.

The West's Oldest Independent Bookseller



From Achebe to Zyzzyva,
Mainstream to Masochism,
The Castro's only full-service,
General interest bookseller

also located in -
The Marina
Laurel Village
Opera Plaza



Books Inc. in the Castro
2275 Market St. @ Noe (415) 864-6777
www.booksinc.net



Poesia

Osteria Italiana

*Around the corner from the Castro Theater
at 4072 18th Street*

*Open daily for dinner: 5:30 to 11:00
For reservations: 415.252.9325
4072 18th Street San Francisco, California 94114
www.poesiasf.com*

Italian Restaurant, Full Bar & Poetry Lounge



EPIC WINES

importer - distributor
of unique & interesting wines

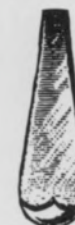
epic-wines.com
800.568.8851

BREAKFAST & LUNCH
DINNER & DESSERT



CAFÉ DIVINE

HEAVENLY CUISINE



*It's the...
shhh!*

GUARDIAN

PROUD SPONSOR OF
The 14th Annual San Francisco
Silent Film Festival

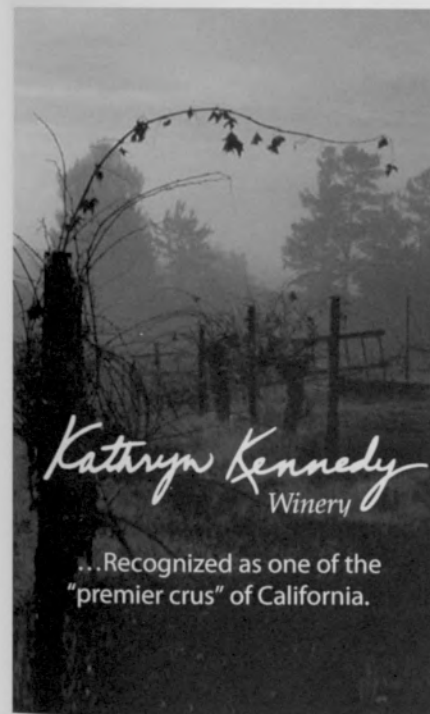


miette

ORGANIC PÂTISSERIE

HAND-CRAFTED CAKES,
PASTRIES AND CANDIES

WWW.MIETTE.COM



Kathryn Kennedy

Winery

...Recognized as one of the
"premier crus" of California.

1600 STOCKTON STREET
ON WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94133
TEL 415.986.3414
FAX 415.986.4633

About The San Francisco Silent Film Festival

The San Francisco Silent Film Festival is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating the public about silent film as an art form and as a culturally valuable historical record.

Silent-era filmmakers produced masterpieces and crowd-thrilling entertainments. Remarkable for their artistry and their inestimable value as historical documents, silent films show us how our ancestors thought, spoke, dressed, and lived. It is through these films that the world first came to love movies and learned how to appreciate them as art. They have influenced every generation of filmmakers and continue to inspire audiences nearly a century after they were made.

In 2006, we began our annual Amazing Tales from the Archives program to raise our audience's awareness of the importance of film preservation and to provide insight into the remarkable work done by film archives.

The Silent Film Preservation Fellowship was inaugurated in 2008 as an outgrowth of our commitment to film preservation. In collaboration with George Eastman House's L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation, a recent graduate is invited to San Francisco to restore a rare short film or selected film footage at Monaco Digital Film Labs. The fellow then returns to the Festival the following year to attend the world premiere of the preserved film.

Donations made to the Silent Film Preservation Fellowship Fund help a recently trained preservationist gain essential hands-on experience restoring rare footage in a professional film lab.

Board of Directors President Judy Wyler Sheldon **Vice President** Robert Byrne **Treasurer** William B. Bond **Secretary** Robin McRoskey Azevedo **Directors** Frank Buxton, Timothy J. Doke, Tracey Doyle, Michael Frew, Cyndi Mortenson **Advisory Committee** Kevin Brownlow, Mario P. Diaz, Peter N. Fowler, Bruce Goldstein, Sydney Goldstein, Stephen Gong, Randy Haberkamp, Dennis James, Edith Kramer, Leonard Maltin, Lee Mendelson, Russell Merritt, Grace Eaves Prien, David Shepard, Scott Simmon, Paolo Cherchi Usai, Charles Wolfe, Terry Zwigoff **Executive Director** Stacey Wisnia **Acting Artistic Director** Anita Monga **Marketing and Development Director** Jeremy O'Neal **Operations Director** Jesse Hawthorne Ficks **Founders** Melissa Chittick and Stephen Salmons



SAN FRANCISCO SILENT FILM FESTIVAL MERCHANDISE

Visit our merchandise table on the mezzanine!

FESTIVAL POSTERS

All years available— from 1996–2009

PIANO THEMES FROM THE SILENT SCREEN

Composed and performed by Kevin Purrone

PIANO PORTRAITS OF THE GODDESS

The complete original score by Kevin Purrone

T-SHIRTS

Black— Clara Bow or Louise Brooks or SFSFF Logo
White— Garbo & Gilbert in *Flesh and the Devil*
S, M, L, and XL

RUAN LING-YU: THE GODDESS OF SHANGHAI

DVD / Book by Richard J. Meyer

THE PEACH GIRL

DVD

COFFEE MUG

Black ceramic mug
with SFSFF Logo



silentfilm.org

AMIA

the association of moving image archivists

AMIA is a professional association dedicated to advancing the preservation, collection, and use of moving images through public and professional education.

We invite you to become a part of the community of archivists, scholars and concerned supporters of moving image preservation and access.

Members receive the AMIA Newsletter, the semi-annual AMIA journal

The Moving Image, the annual AMIA Membership Directory, other special mailings, invitations to all AMIA meetings and events, discounted registration fees for AMIA annual conferences, workshops and symposia, and the benefits of affiliation with the foremost international professional association for moving image archivists.

1313 North Vine Street, Hollywood CA 90028
323-563-1500 fax 323-463-1506 www.amianet.org



Cathedral Hill Hotel

1101 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco CA 94109

Centrally located, the hotel is nestled between Union Square and Japantown, featuring spacious rooms that reflect the original design of the historic hotel with a classic early '60s California vibe.

800-622-0855



www.anchorbrewing.com

Become a Member Today!

Please join us in bringing the classic films of the silent era to contemporary audiences by supporting The San Francisco Silent Film Festival. Your donation is tax deductible and gifts of every kind are welcome, including stock contributions, matching gifts from your employer, and donations billed in monthly installments to your Visa or MasterCard. For more details, please contact us at 415-777-4908 or by email at development@silentfilm.org. Thank you!

MEMBER \$50-99 (\$45 students)

Members-only ticket discounts
eNews subscription
Recognition in Program Book

FRIEND \$100-249

Member benefits plus:
2 Festival tickets of your choice
(excludes Opening Night)
Recognition in Program Book

ASSOCIATE \$250-499

Member benefits plus:
4 Festival tickets of your choice
(excludes Opening Night)
2 Winter Event tickets of your choice
Recognition in Program Book

SUPPORTER \$500-999

Member benefits plus:
2 Opening Night Film tickets plus
4 other Festival tickets of your choice
2 Spotlight Lounge passes
2 Winter Event tickets of your choice
Recognition in Program Book

PATRON \$1,000-2,499

Member benefits plus:
2 Festival Gold Passes
• 2 Opening Night Film & Party tickets
• 2 Spotlight Lounge passes
• 2 invitations to Festival Welcome Reception
Additional benefits:
2 Winter Event tickets of your choice
Recognition in Program Book

GRAND PATRON \$2,500-4,999

Member benefits plus:
2 Festival Platinum Passes
• 2 Opening Night Film & Party tickets
• 2 Spotlight Lounge passes
• 2 invitations to Festival Welcome Reception
Additional benefits:
2 Winter Event tickets of your choice
2 Winter Event Party tickets
Recognition in Program Book

BENEFACTOR \$5,000-9,999

Member benefits plus:
4 Festival Platinum Passes
• 4 Opening Night Film & Party tickets
• 4 Spotlight Lounge passes
• 2 invitations to Festival Welcome Reception
4 Winter Event tickets of your choice
2 Winter Event Party tickets
Recognition in Program Book

VISIONARY \$10,000+

Member benefits plus:
6 Festival Platinum Passes, which include:
• 6 Opening Night Film & Party tickets
• 6 Spotlight Lounge passes (good all weekend)
• 2 invitations to Festival Welcome Reception
Additional benefits:
6 Winter Event tickets of your choice
4 Winter Event Party tickets
Recognition in Program Book
Invitations to private rehearsals

Donors

Visionaries

An Anonymous Advisor, Frank Buxton and Cynthia Sears, Michael Frew and Alison Cant,
Jon and Lillian Lovelace, Richard Meyer and Susan Harmon,
Judy and Wylie Sheldon

Benefactors

Bill and Sandy Bond, Tracey and James Doyle

Grand Patrons

Robin McRoskey Azevedo, Rob and Chris Byrne, Randall Laroche and
David Loudon, Dean Lewis, Jack and Betsy Rix, John Ellis

Patrons

Lawrence Cronander, Diane Disney Miller and Ron Miller, Anne Fisher,
David and Vicki Fleishhacker, Bruce Fodiman, Pat McBaine, Jim Newman & Jane Ivory,
Susan Prather, Mark Pruett, Barbara and Robert Scavullo,
David and Susan Smith, Robert and Betsy Stafford

Supporters

Anonymous, Sandra Gore and Ronald Sires, Paul and Phyllis Miller, Don and Gale Nasser,
Tuesday Ray, Chris Safford, Chuck and Missy Sheldon, Stacey Wisnia and Micah Brenner

Associates

Christopher Abbott, Candace Bowers, Lisa Boyce and Kevin O'Neill, Michael Colombo,
Michael Dauterman, Daniel Dickinson, Robert and Chandra Friese, Janet and
William Goodson, Jennie Gerard and Steven Steinhour, Stephen Gong and Susan Avila,
Michelle and Dale Hadley, Hollis Lenderking, Russell and Karen Merritt, Gary and
Cathy Meyer, Daniel O'Connell, JoAnn Rees, Richard Reutlinger, Elise Rosenbaum,
Allen Frances Santos (In honor of FRXX MOVIX), James and Casey Sater,
Mark Schaeffer, Bruce and Jacqueline Simon, Craig and Maureen Sullivan,
Dr. Helen Walker, Leonard Whitney, Gerald and Nancy Wisnia

Friends

Helen Mae Almas, Melanie Archer, Bill and Pat Barton, Frank and Ruth Beering,
Sue Busby, Al and Kathy Ciabattoni, Sarah Clark, Alex Clemenzi, Bernard Corace,
James Cummings, Harry Demas, Gennaro DeVito, Netta and Michael Fedor, Barbara
Fumea, Kirk Gardner, Ronald and Barbara George, Riley Gordinier, Brad Graber,

Donors

Friends, continued...

Brad Graber, Pauline Grenbeaux, Tom and Beth Hamel, Hilary Hart and
Martine Habib, David Hartley, Kimberly Hayden, Liz Keim, Erwin Kelly,
Michael Krasik, Bradley Lane, Emily and William Leider, Chip Lim,
Robert and Frances Low, Jeffery Masino, Robert and Kirsten McGlynn,
Jeffrey Mendelowitz and Mark Lindberg, Richard and Barbara Mendelsohn,
Bruce Odze, Mel and Gig Owen, Frances Petrocelli, David Shepard, Les Shinozawa,
William Smith, Dan Stofle, Neil and Mia Straghalis, Judy Strebel, Jean Sweeney,
Martin Taras, Bruce Thompson, Patricia Unterman and Tim Savinar, Grant Ute,
Sue Valentine and Robert Spjut, Tim and Sally White, Linda Williams,
Art and Janet Wong, Kathleen Woo, Elaine Mae Woo, Dave and Sherri Wood,
Selwyn Woodworth, Bonnie Woodworth, Catherine Wylar

Members

Yanira Acedo, Gwendolynne Barr, Elliot Beckelman, Barbara Bernstein,
Stephen Braitman, Paula Brown, Eric Bull, Byron Hot Springs, Curtis Canaday,
Mary Caroline, Marion and Edward Elliott, Bronya Feldmann, Howard Freedman and
Sue Lyon, Philip Fukuda, Kirk Gardner, Kelvin Godshall, Matthew and Cheri Hahn,
Dana Kane, Rebecca Kane, Andrew Korniej and Chuck Yenson, Teresa McDaniel,
James McKeown, Annette Melville and Scott Simmon, Steve and Judy Moran,
Gretchen Nicholson, Terry Nixon, James Patterson, Jon Rankin, Jack Rengstorff,
Gregory Robinson, Elaine Rossignol, Carole Rutherford, Ronald Spayde,
Margaret and James Timony, Anita Velazquez, Dalton Ward, Karen Ward,
Curtis Whiting, May Yee, Marian Yee and William Wong, David Zielonka

Grantors

The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund
Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund
Lucasfilm Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
Packard Humanities Foundation
The Ira Resnick Foundation
Thomas and Shelagh Rolan Fund
San Francisco Arts Commission
Thendara Foundation
The Harold Wyman Foundation

Acknowledgements

Our sincere gratitude to everyone who generously gave so much of their time and talent!

Bookkeepers: Pam Garcia, Mari Ordonez, Doug Regalia

Computer: Andrew Bacon, Prometheus Hawthorne-Jones

Development Intern: William Theodore King

Program Book Editors: Shari Kizirian, Margarita Landazuri

Educational Slide Show Editor: Richard Hildreth

Film Writers Group: Richard Hildreth (Chair), Scott Brogan, Rob Byrne, Mollie Caselli, Brian Darr, Victoria Jaschob, David Johansson, David Kiehn, Shari Kizirian, Margarita Landazuri, Roberto Landazuri, Megan Pugh, Aimee Pavy, Benjamin Schrom

Operations Interns: Evan Sweeney

Website: David Harding

Festival Event Staff

Box Office: Alex Klimek, Keith Arnold

Will Call: Ben Armington, Daniel Tam

House Manager: Mariana Lopez

Slideshow/PowerPoint Projection: Thad Austin

Sound Engineer: Gary Hobish

Sound Assistants: Chelsea Walton, Ron Lynch

Sound Intern: Julia Napier

Spotlight: Philip Bonner

Stage Manager: Tod Booth

Transportation: Andrew Korniej

Videography: Jonathan Knapp

Voice of the Festival: Ron Lynch

Volunteer Coordinator: Danyka Kosturak

And many thanks to all our wonderful event volunteers!

Special Thanks

Castro Theatre and Projection Staff

Castro Wurlitzer: Ray Taylor, Dick Taylor, Edward Millington Stout III

Co-Presenters:

Center for Asian American Media: Stephen Gong, Chi-hui Yang

Film Noir Foundation: Eddie Muller

Mexican Museum: Luis Pinedo

MIDNITES FOR MANIACS: Jesse Hawthorne Ficks

San Francisco Film Society: Anna-Mae Chin, Jen Cox

Festival Authors: Dan Clowes, Glenn David Gold, Leslie Iwerks, Mick LaSalle, Tony Maietta, Leonard Maltin, Richard J. Meyer, Eddie Muller, Trina Robbins, David Shepard, Christel Schmidt, Jeffrey Vance, Qin Yi, Terry Zwigoff

Festival Guests: Frank Buxton, Leslie Iwerks, Joe Lindner, Tony Maietta, Russell Merritt, Leonard Maltin, Eddie Muller, Heather Olson, Christel Schmidt, David Shepard, Anne Smatla, Jeffrey Stoiber, Kyle Westphal, Jeffrey Vance, Qin Yi, Terry Zwigoff

Festival Musicians: Philip Carli, Mark Goldstein, Stephen Horne, Dennis James, Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra (Brian Collins, clarinet; Dawn Kramer, trumpet; Rodney Sauer, piano; Britt Swenson, violin; David Short, cello), Joanna Seaton, Donald Sosin

Festival Photographer: Rory McNamara

Acknowledgements

Opening Night Party Musicians: Parlor Tango

Readers: Steven Jenkins, Mahlon Meyer

Sign Language Interpretation: Bay Area Communication Access

Prints:

China Film Archive

Cinémathèque Française: Samantha Leroy

Disney Studios: Mary Tallungan

Douris Corporation: Tim Lanza

George Eastman House: Pat Doyen

Library of Congress: Mike Mashon, Rob Stone

Lobster Films: Serge Bromberg, David Shepard

Milestone Films: Dennis Doros, Amy Heller

MoMA: Mary Keene, Anne Morra

National Film Archive, Czech Republic: Karel Zima

Paramount Pictures: Emily Horn

Warner Bros.: Marilee Womack, Sean Domachowski

Walker Art Center, Film & Video: Joe Beres, Dean Otto

Sponsors:

Anchor Brewing Company: Laura Kwiatek, Dan Mitchell

Books Inc: Ken Irish

Café Divine: David Wright

Cathedral Hill Hotel: Fred Schroeffer

Classical 102.1 KDFC: Jude Heller, Robin Zahner

Consulate General of France in San Francisco: Cecile Hokes, Christophe Musitelli

Epic Wines: Jane Prough, Brian Springer

Highway 12 Winery: Paul Giusto

Joie de Vivre, SOMA Hotels: Craig Martell

Joie de Vivre, Galleria Park Hotel: Paul Frentzos

Kathryn Kennedy Winery: Eric Fountain, Marty Mathis

KQED: Meredith Gandy

McRoskey Mattress Company: Robin McRoskey Azevedo, Larry Cronander

Miette Organic Bakery: Brianne De John

Poesia: Francesco d'Ippolito

The Queen Anne Hotel: Michael Wade

San Francisco Bay Guardian: Dulcinea Gonzalez

Video Transfer Center: Buck Bito, Jennifer Miko

Wells Fargo: Mario P. Diaz, Leonora Pulanco

Yelp: Nicole Grant, Sam Sheldon

Special, Special Thanks

Bill Banning, Anika Brenner, Kevin Brownlow, Lynn Caffrey, California Historical Society (Darlene Plumtree Nolte), Melissa Chittick, Vanessa Contreras, Dennis Doros, Tracey Goessel Doyle, George Eastman House (Pat Doyen, Jeff Stoiber, Ed Stratmann), David Gerstein, Thomas Gladysz, Michael Guillén, Randy Habercamp, Mimi Heft, Amy Heller, Richard Hildreth, Stephen Horne, Dennis James, Tim Lanza, Karen Larsen, Tom Luddy, Leonard Maltin, Mike Mashon, Russell Merritt, Gary Meyer, Richard J. Meyer, Monaco Labs (John Carlson, Jim Moye, Rob Monaco), Peter Moore, Niles Essanay, Silent Film Museum, Christy Pascoe, Stephen Salmons, Rodney Sauer, Christel Schmidt, David Shepard, Milos Stehlik, Mary Tallungan, Jeffrey Vance, Terry Zwigoff



AMERICANIA HOTEL

MIDI RESTAURANT
GALLERIA PARK HOTEL

CARRIAGE INN

JOIE DE VIVRE IS PROUD TO SPONSOR THE
**SAN FRANCISCO
SILENT FILM FESTIVAL**

joie de vivre®

HOTELS • RESTAURANTS • SPAS

jdvhotels.com



AMERICANIA HOTEL



CARRIAGE INN

GALLERIA PARK HOTEL

goodpizza
GOOD HOTEL



GOOD HOTEL

CALIFORNIA'S
LARGEST BOUTIQUE
HOTEL COLLECTION

GALLERIA PARK HOTEL

Congratulations All Participants
14th Annual San Francisco Silent Film Festival



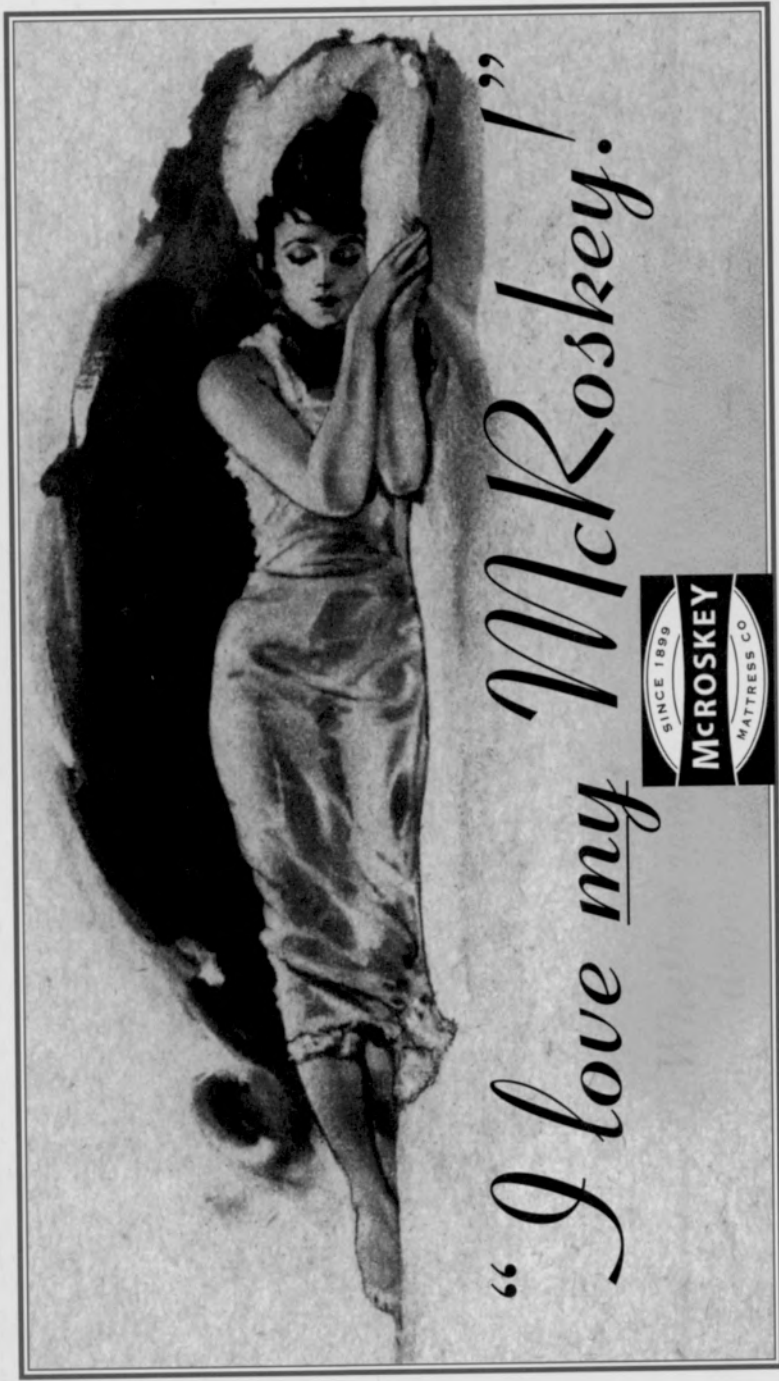
monaco

Digital Film Labs

San Francisco

(415) 864-5350

www.monacosf.com



*“I love my **McRoskey!**”*



Mattresses and box springs lovingly handcrafted in San Francisco since 1899
Visit our showrooms in San Francisco and Palo Alto. www.McRoskey.com