

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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FOR RELEASE

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No. 12

FIRST FILMS, 1879 - 1901, AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

A program of the earliest motion pictures, First Films, 1879 - 1901, will be shown at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, January 23 - 25; daily screenings at 3 and 5:30. Films by Edison, Lumière and Skladanowsky are included.

First Films will inaugurate Part I of THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS, a retrospective history of the motion picture to be scheduled in interspersed sections between such Museum series as the prospective Zinnemann, Rotha and Dietrich cycles. The entire retrospect will comprise more than 200 programs during a two-year period. Part I, selected shorts and early features from 1879 to the First World War, will continue through March 12, 1958.

In the past few years the Museum Film Library has devoted most of its public screenings to special film cycles (Goldwyn, UPA, French, German, etc.), with limited emphasis on its general collection. Not since 1939, when a retrospective cycle of 300 films launched the auditorium programs, has the Film Library presented a chronological survey based on its collection. Now, with new acquisitions to the collection and with special films borrowed for the occasion, the student, connoisseur and fan will be able to review the whole range of film history during THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS of its growth as the most popular art of the Twentieth Century.

Part I of the survey will trace the development of the film from the earliest experimentation to the time it was accepted as an art form worthy of serious attention. Included will be the first story film (The Great Train Robbery, 1903); the beginnings of the newsreel (The Meeting of the King of Italy and the Kaiser, by Comerio, 1908); the first feature film starring a noted stage actress (Camille, with Bernhardt, 1911); the first European spectacle (Quo Vadis, 1912) the first portrayal of the vamp (A Fool There Was, with Theda Bara, 1914); and the documented rise of D. W. Griffith from an apprentice to the leading director of his day. Vachel Lindsay, whose 1915 book of film criticism is still considered one of the most penetrating, based his judgements on such early films. He wrote:

The invention of the photoplay is as great a step as was the beginning of picture-writing in the stone age....The photoplay of the future will be written from the foundations for the films. The soundest actors, photographers, and producers will be those who emphasize the points wherein the photoplay is unique. What is adapted to complete expression in one art generally secures but half expression in another. The supreme photoplay will give us things that have been but half expressed in all other mediums allied to it.

It is these foundations and this uniqueness which will be explored in THE

FIRST SIXTY YEARS.

Listing attached

For additional information please contact Herbert Bronstein, Assistant Publicity Director, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. CI 5-8900.

Film showings daily at 3 and 5:30 p.m.

THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS: A retrospective of the motion pictures

The Film Library here begins Part I of a long series covering the history and development of the movies from its beginnings. This retrospect will be scheduled in sections over the next two years, and will be interrupted from time to time by special exhibitions such as the forthcoming "The Films of Fred Zinnemann."

- Jan. 23-25: A PROGRAM OF FIRST FILMS (1879-1901), by Skladanowsky, Lumière and Edison.
- Jan. 26-29: THE CONJURER (c1898) by Méliès, LES SEPT CHATEAUX DU DIABLE (1902), by Zecca; A TRIP TO THE MOON by Méliès (1902), CINEMA PARLANT EN 1900 (1933)(excerpts); THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN, THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY, UNCLE TOM'S CABIN (1903) by Edwin S. Porter.
- Jan. 30 -
Feb. 1: VOYAGE AUTOUR D'UNE ETOILE (1905) by Velle; SCENES OF CONVICT LIFE, WHENCE DOES HE COME?, A FATHER'S HONOR (1905) by Zecca; THE DOCTOR'S SECRET (1908) by Melies; THE DREAM OF A RAREBIT FIEND and THREE AMERICAN BEAUTIES (1906) by Edwin S. Porter.
- Feb. 2-5: RESCUED BY ROVER (1906) by Hepworth; SLIPPERY JIM (1907) by Zecca; REBELLION: MUTINY IN ODESSA (1906) by Nonguet; MAX LEARNS TO SKATE (1907) with Linder; THE PUMPKIN RACE (1908) by Cohl; THE ASSASSINATION OF THE DUC DE GUISE (1908) by Calmettes and Le Bargy; RESCUED FROM AN EAGLE'S NEST (1907) by Porter.
- Feb. 6-8: DRAME CHEZ LES FANTOCHES (1908) by Cohl; LES EXERCISES DES FRERES BOUTS-DE-BOIS (1908) by Cohl; THE MEETING OF THE KING OF ITALY AND THE KAISER (1908) by Comerio; UNE DAME VRAIMENT BIEN (1908) by Cohl; GERTIE THE DINOSAUR (1909) by Winsor McCay; THE DETECTIVE (c1909) by Pathe; A CORNER IN WHEAT (1909) by D. W. Griffith.
- Feb. 9-12: NERO (1909) with Lydia De Roberti; MAX AND HIS DOG (1910) with Linder; POSSIBILITIES OF A WAR IN THE AIR (1910), Urban; THE LONELY VILLA (1909), WHAT DRINK DID (1909), and THE UNCHANGING SEA (1910) by D. W. Griffith.
- Feb. 13-15: LYDIA (1910), Milano Films; CAMILLE (1911)(excerpts) with Bernhardt STENOGRAPHER WANTED (1910) with John Bunny; THE LONEDALE OPERATOR (1911) by D. W. Griffith.
- Feb. 16-19: TATTERS (1911) by A. E. Coleby; LES VICTIMES DE L'ALCOOLISME (1911) by Bourgeois; THE MUSKETEERS OF PIG ALLEY (1912) by D. W. Griffith.
- Feb. 20-22: SHOOTIN' MAD (1912) with Broncho Billy; A GIRL AND HER TRUST, MAN'S GENESIS, and THE NEW YORK HAT (1912) by D. W. Griffith; THE REVENGE OF THE KINEMATOGRAF CAMERAMAN (1912) by Starevitch; ONESIME HORLOGER (1912) by Jean Durand.
- Feb. 23-26: CONQUEST OF THE POLE (1912) by Meliès; MOMENT MUSICALE (1913) danced by Yekatarina Geltzer and Vasily Tichomiroff; QUEEN ELIZABETH (1911) with Bernhardt.
- Feb. 27 -
Mar. 1: QUO VADIS?(1912)(excerpt) directed by Guazzoni; CABIRIA (1913) directed by Piero Fosco. One showing only at 3:00 p.m.
- Mar. 2-5: LOVE EVERLASTING and LA DONNA NUDA (1913) with Lyda Borelli.
- Mar. 6-8: JUVE CONTRE FANTOMAS (1913) by Louis Feuillade; AMOR PEDESTRE (1914) by Marcel Fabre.
- Mar. 9-12: THE EXPLOITS OF ELAINE (1914-1915)(excerpt from Chapter 6, "The Vampire") with Pearl White; THE WHIRL OF LIFE (1914)(excerpt) with Vernon and Irene Castle; A FOOL THERE WAS (1914) with Theda Para. One showing only at 3 p.m.
- Mar. 13: THE FILMS OF FRED ZINNEMANN. A monograph on the career of Fred Zinnemann written by Richard Griffith and containing a schedule of the films to be shown as well as a complete index to Zinnemann's work will be sold at the Front Desk.