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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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John E. Abbott, Director of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, sails for Paris tomorrow, Wednesday, April 27, on the S.S. Ile de France to supervise the installation of the motion-picture section of the Exhibition of American Art, 1609-1938, which the Museum of Modern Art has assembled at the invitation of the French Government, to be shown in the Musee du Jeu de Paume from May 24 to July 17. It will be the first exhibition of its kind ever given to include the motion-picture. Mr. Abbott will take with him three fifty-minute film programs which will be run at the Jeu de Paume twice daily, and which will illustrate in the actual films themselves the development of the American motion picture from 1895 to the present day.

The motion-picture section will also include a display of two hundred and fifty still photographs, and an Exhibition of The Making of a Contemporary Film, based on the recently released Adventures of Tom Sawyer, produced by Selznick International Pictures, Inc. This was given at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in the winter of the present season. It is a documentation of American film production methods from the original scenario to the release of the finished film. All the explanatory matter, text and other material which it includes has been translated into French. From it the spectator is able to form an accurate idea of the different processes that go into the complex work of film production.

The still photographs, all captioned in French, are divided into four sections:

1. From the invention of films
to The Great Train Robbery, 1895-1903;
2. The Development of Narrative, 1903-1916;
3. The Progress and Close of the Silent Era, 1916-1928;
4. The Sound Film, 1927-1938.

It will be from the daily showing of the film programs, however, that Paris will probably derive its most comprehensive impression of the American motion-picture's forty odd years of history.

Concise, illuminating forewords in French will precede each film on the screen. All sub-titles will be in French. The short early films, some of them only sixty seconds in length, will be given in entirety. The longer and later pictures will be represented by excerpts. The programs are as follows:

Program I - From the Invention of Films to The Birth of a Nation

- 1894 Execution of Mary Queen of Scots (Edison Kinetoscope)
- 1896 The May Irwin-John C. Rice Kiss (Edison)
- 1903 The Great Train Robbery (Edison)
- 1907 Rescued from an Eagle's Nest (Edison)
- 1912 The New York Hat (Biograph)
- 1914 The Fugitive (W. H. Productions)
- 1914 Mabel's Dramatic Debut (Keystone)
- 1914 A Fool There Was (Twentieth Century-Fox Films)
- 1915 The Birth of a Nation (Epoch)

Program II - Progress and Close of the Silent Era

- 1917 The Immigrant (Mutual Film Corp.-The Van Buren Corp.)
- 1921 The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (Loews, Inc.)
- 1923 The Covered Wagon (Paramount Pictures)
- 1924 Greed (Loews, Inc.)
- 1927 The General (United Artists)
- 1928 Plane Crazy (Disney)

Program III - The Sound Film

- 1927 The Jazz Singer (Warner Bros. Pictures)
- 1929 The Skeleton Dance (Disney)
- 1929 Anna Christie (Loews, Inc.)
- 1930 Little Caesar (Warner Bros. Pictures)
- 1933 She Done Him Wrong (Paramount Pictures)
- 1937 A Day at the Races (Loews, Inc.)
- 1936 Swing Time (RKO Radio Pictures, Inc.)
- 1937 The River (Farm Security Administration)

In her essay on the American film, included in the catalog of the exhibition, Iris Barry names and briefly describes the contributions made by individuals - producers, directors, stars, cameramen and technicians - by which the American motion picture advanced. She concludes:

... "The film has proved itself a positively vital medium, blend of the most radically popular and traditional ingredients but able readily to absorb all kinds of elements, even impure ones, and bend all kinds of technical innovations to its uses. It cannot be without significance, for instance, that the animated cartoons of Walt Disney, most universally enjoyed of any films today, owe their existence to the use of sound and were the first to reintroduce color. It cannot for that matter be a wholly unhappy world which enjoys such visions nor a negligible art which creates them."