

The Museum of Modern Art

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HOMAGE PAID TO LUIS BUÑUEL SPANISH DIRECTOR WILL MARK 76th BIRTHDAY

In celebration of Luis Buñuel's 76th birthday next month, The Museum of Modern Art will pay homage to the Spanish director who is considered even today one of the world's most daring and controversial filmmakers. A master of symbolism, unafraid to indulge in the hieroglyphics of his own fantasy, Buñuel will be represented by a six-week program devoted exclusively to those films he made in Mexico or Mexican financed films, produced in the years from 1947 to 1965. During this period, he was largely ignored, though he developed the style that culminated in his later work. Now all 21 films of the Mexican years can be seen in the current program. With the exception of five, all have English subtitles. Over half have never been released theatrically in America.

The Buñuel program begins January 8th and will continue through February 16th. One year in preparation, it was organized by Adrienne Mancina, Associate Curator in the Department of Film, who selected and assembled all the films, including Buñuel's Mexican version of "Wuthering Heights" ("Abismos de Pasión"), made in 1954; "Death in the Garden" (1956) with Simone Signoret, Michel Piccoli and Charles Vanel; and "Fever Mounts at El Pao" (1960), the last film, starring Gerard Philipe, which will be shown in a version dubbed in English.

More familiar films in the series are "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned," 1950); "El" ("This Strange Passion," 1953); "The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz" (1955); "Nazarin" (1959); "Viridiana" (1961); "The Exterminating Angel" (1962) and "Simon of the Desert" made in 1965.

The Buñuel years in Mexico were crucial in his artistic development. Following the director's sensational films made in Paris, "Un Chien Andalou"

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(1928) and "L'Age d'Or" (1930), Buñuel was ostracized for being anti-clerical and too esoteric. For the next 19 years -- except for one other film "Las Hurdes" ("Land Without Bread") made in Spain in 1932 -- he was unable to obtain backing for another film.

Meanwhile, during the war, Buñuel had come to America and curiously enough, found work in the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art, where, for several years, he was engaged in supervising and editing documentaries for Latin American countries, commissioned by the Committee on Inter-American Affairs headed by Nelson Rockefeller. He also worked on the acquisition of German documentaries for the Museum's collection.

When Buñuel went to Mexico, he was put to work by producer Oscar Dancigers. He was almost 47 years old, and, as Mrs. Mancía points out, he had survived the trauma of the Spanish Civil War and years of frustrated creativity with minor producing and assistant directorial jobs. Now he began his career anew and proved that his imagination had in no way withered; on the contrary, it had become further enriched and he pursued his own obsessions with renewed passion that defied any and all cinematic tradition. He was determined to explore the mythic depths of his own personality with unabashed confidence.

Without the Mexican period the later masterworks of Buñuel may never have been realized. Consequently, Mrs. Mancía feels that an understanding of Buñuel has to cover his entire filmography and include the long-neglected melodramas as well as the low budget comedies he made in Mexico. "Each of the films reveals something of his private obsessions, his incisive observations, his penetrating wit and black humor, his exasperation with human folly and pettiness and his ever-rebellious attitude toward bourgeois morality. Here is an artist attracted and repelled by contradictions and by the reality of

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the human condition. His outrage, ironic laughter or sympathetic shrug rise from the spirit of a man struggling to transcend himself."

In Mexico Buñuel rediscovered his direction, declares Francisco Aranda, the Mexican writer and critic, quoted by Mrs. Mancía in her program note: "Not only the idiom and the race, but the physical types, the dry and dusty landscape, the impassioned speech, the attitudes to life and death, the religious problem, the social structure which he attacked, all combined to restore him to conditions in which he could be himself."

The Buñuel program, which will travel to the Pacific Film Archive in San Francisco, was made possible with the cooperation of several individuals and institutions, among them, Jeanette Bello, William K. Everson, Azteca Films, Banco Nacional Cinematográfico de Mexico, La Cineteca Nacional de Mexico, Columbia Pictures, Macmillan/Audio Brandon Films. The schedule follows:

Films will have English titles unless otherwise indicated

TAMPICO (GRAN CASINO). 1947. Courtesy La Cineteca Nacional de Mexico. In Spanish. 85 min.

Friday, January 9 2:00
Thursday, January 15 5:30

THE GREAT MADCAP (EL GRAN CALAVERA). 1949. With Fernando Soler. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 90 min.

Thursday, January 8 5:30
Saturday, January 10 3:00

THE YOUNG AND THE DAMNED (LOS OLVIDADOS). 1950. With Estella Inda. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 81 min.

Thursday, January 8 8:00
Monday, January 12 2:00

SUSANA. 1951. With Rosita Quintana, Fernando Soler. Courtesy La Cineteca Nacional de Mexico. In Spanish. 82 min.

Saturday, January 10 5:30
Friday, January 16 2:00

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DAUGHTER OF DECEIT (LA HIJA DEL ENGAÑO). 1951. With Fernando Soler. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 80 min.

Sunday, January 11 3:00
Thursday, January 15 8:00

A WOMAN WITHOUT LOVE (UNA MUJER SIN AMOR). 1952. With Rosario 'Charito' Granados. Courtesy La Cineteca Nacional de Mexico. In Spanish. 90 min.

Saturday, January 17 5:30
Monday, January 19 2:00

MEXICAN BUS RIDE (SUBIDA AL CIELO). 1952. With Lilia Prado. Courtesy Azteca Films. 85 min.

Tuesday, January 13 2:00
Saturday, January 17 3:00

THE BRUTE (EL BRUTO). 1953. With Pedro Armendariz. Courtesy La Cineteca Nacional de Mexico. In Spanish. 83 min.

Sunday, January 18 3:00
Tuesday, January 20 2:00

ADVENTURES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE (LAS AVENTURAS DE ROBINSON CRUSOE). 1952. With Dan O'Herlihy, Jaime Fernandez. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 89 min.

Sunday, January 25 3:00
Tuesday, January 27 2:00

THIS STRANGE PASSION (EL). 1953. With Arturo de Cordova. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 82 min.

Thursday, January 22 5:30
Saturday, January 24 3:00

WUTHERING HEIGHTS (ABISMOS DE PASIÓN). 1954. With Jorge Mistral, Irasema Dilian, Lilia Prado. Courtesy Columbia Pictures. In Spanish. 90 min.

Monday, January 19 5:30
Thursday, January 22 8:00

ILLUSION TRAVELS BY STEETCAR (LA ILUSIÓN VIAJA EN TRANVÍA). 1954. With Lilia Prado. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 90 min.

Friday, January 23 2:00
Saturday, January 24 5:30

THE RIVER AND DEATH (EL RIO Y LA MUERTE). 1955. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 90 min.

Monday, January 26 2:00
Saturday, January 29 5:30

THE CRIMINAL LIFE OF ARCHIBALDO DE LA CRUZ (ENSAYO DE UN CRIMEN). 1955. With Ernesto Alonso, Miroslava. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 90 min.

Thursday, January 29 8:00
Saturday, January 31 3:00

DEATH IN THIS GARDEN (LA MUERTE EN ESTE JARDIN/LA MORT EN CE JARDIN). 1956. With Simone Signoret, Georges Marchal, Michel Piccoli, Charles Vanel. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 97 min.

Saturday, February 7 5:30
Monday, February 9 2:00

NAZARIN. 1959. With Francisco Rabal. Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 94 min.

Sunday, February 1 3:00
Saturday, February 7 3:00

FEVER MOUNTS AT EL PAO (LOS AMBICIOSOS/LA FIEVRE MONTE A EL PAO). 1960. With Gerard Philipe, Maria Felix, Jean Servais. Courtesy William K. Everson. Dubbed English version. 97 min.

Friday, January 30 2:00
Saturday, January 31 5:30

THE YOUNG ONE (LA JOVEN). 1960. With Zachary Scott, Key Meersman, Bernie Hamilton. Courtesy Jeanette Bello. Original English version. 95 min.

Sunday, February 8 3:00
Tuesday, February 10 2:00

VIRIDIANA. 1961. With Silvia Pinal, Francisco Rabal, Fernando Rey. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 90 min.

Friday, February 13 2:00
Saturday, February 14 3:00

THE EXTERMINATING ANGEL (EL ANGEL EXTERMINADOR). 1962. With Silvia Pinal. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 95 min.

Sunday, February 15 3:00
Monday, February 16 5:30

SIMON OF THE DESERT (SIMON DEL DESIERTO). 1965. With Claudio Brook, Silvia Pinal. Courtesy Macmillan/Audio Brandon. 42 min.

Saturday, February 14 5:30
Monday, February 16 2:00

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