

The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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#24 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A CELEBRATED FILM ON PICASSO RETURNS TO PUBLIC VIEW AT MOMA

Le Mystère Picasso, Henri-Georges Clouzot's award-winning film on the artist at work, will be shown at a special screening at The Museum of Modern Art on Thursday, April 7, at 6:00 p.m. The film, which won the Special Jury Prize at the 1956 Cannes Festival, has not been shown commercially in New York since its first release in 1957. MK 2 Productions in Paris has acquired the world rights to the film and now is returning it to circulation after many years.

At the time of the film's first release, Clouzot wrote, "I love Picasso. To me, he is one of the greatest artists and innovators of form the world has ever known. I am proud of having made a contribution, however modest, to his art." The New Yorker found Clouzot's contribution to be more than modest: "One can state without being impertinent that, of the two picturemakers, Clouzot, in technique, is the winner." Rather than use the camera to peek over the artist's shoulder, Clouzot filmed Picasso face-to-face through the paper on which the artist worked. The special, translucent paper hid the artist himself but revealed, in reverse, his painting. Stop-action photography compressed the actual time of composition--as long as five hours--into minutes. The movie thus lets the audience see 16 drawings and paintings by Picasso take form directly on the screen, as if by magic. Each of the works is accompanied by an extraordinary musical score by Georges Auric.

In addition to the public screening, the Museum will hold a special screening for members on Tuesday, April 5, at 8:00 p.m.

Le Mystère Picasso is being shown with the cooperation of MK 2 Productions and the French Film Office/Unifrance Film USA.

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