

The Museum of Modern Art

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NEW RELEASES FROM THE CIRCULATING FILM AND VIDEO LIBRARY

*A Forty-Program Film Series
Featuring Rare Early and Independent Work
Including Sixteen New Titles from The Library of Congress*

**May 10 - June 10
Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2**

For more than sixty years, the Circulating Film and Video Library of The Museum of Modern Art has provided access to rare early and important independent work -- works that would otherwise be available only to scholars. Beginning May 10, the Department of Film and Video presents **NEW RELEASES FROM THE CIRCULATING FILM AND VIDEO LIBRARY**, an eclectic forty-program series that showcases the library's recently released work and its ongoing commitment to American and international film heritage.

The series, which runs through June 10, features seminal silent films from The Library of Congress, including work by Alice Guy-Blaché and Lois Weber, America's first women filmmakers; key films from the Museum's own archive by D. W. Griffith; intimate portraits of directors Roberto Rossellini, Satyajit Ray, and Shirley Clarke; new "Films on Art" programs; three films by maverick American independent Jon Jost; and numerous others. The series closes with Fred Keleman's stunning experimental work *Fate* (1994).

In recent years, the Museum has entered into a collaboration with The Library of Congress to circulate more than two dozen early films on 35mm. Sixteen of these superb

silent works -- chosen by The Library of Congress as unique first examples of their genres -- are organized into five omnibus programs titled "The Origins of American Film."

"America's First Women Filmmakers" features four charming short films by Alice Guy-Blaché and Lois Weber; "Origins of the Gangster Film" pairs Griffith's *The Narrow Road* (1912) with Maurice Tourneur's *Alias Jimmy Valentine* (1915); "The African-American Cinema" showcases Oscar Micheaux's *Within Our Gates* (1920); "Origins of the Fantasy Feature" includes the revelatory *The Patchwork Girl of Oz* (1914); and "Origins of American Animation, 1900-1921" finds the Katzenjammer Kids cheek-by-jowl with Krazy Kat, Ignatz Mouse, Gertie the Dinosaur, and other pesky characters.

Some of the Museum's best-preserved negatives of Biograph films directed by D. W. Griffith from 1910 to 1913 have recently been transferred to Beta SP masters and are being assembled into programs for distribution on VHS cassettes. There are two Griffith programs in **NEW RELEASES**, "Wife v. Temptress" and "Western Visions," which include magical performances by Lillian and Dorothy Gish, Robert Harron, Blanche Sweet, and Mabel Normand.

The lives and careers of three influential film directors are gracefully rendered in the documentaries *Rossellini on Rossellini* (1994), *Shirley Clarke in Our Time* (1993), and *Satyajit Ray--Introspections* (1990).

In addition to its own films on art and artists, the library now distributes many of the fine art films originally distributed by The American Federation of Arts. Three "Films on Art" programs are planned for this series, including *George Grosz in America* (1993).

NEW RELEASES also includes the classic American independent films *Pull My Daisy* (1959) by Alfred Leslie and Robert Frank, Leslie's *The Last Clean Shirt* (1964), and

three feature films by Jon Jost: *Speaking Directly: Some American Notes* (1972-74), *Angel City* (1976-77), and *Slow Moves* (1983). The Jost films, dating from the early seventies and eighties, examine in a non-narrative fashion the director's complex response to the Vietnam war (he was expelled from college and later jailed for refusing to cooperate with the Selective Service Act).

The Circulating Film and Video Library was created in 1935 to provide a circulating collection at reasonable rates to colleges, museums, and other educational institutions. Since then, its role has been widened to include service to festivals as well as collectors and other film enthusiasts worldwide. The library has a broadbased collection that includes early silent films, important documentaries, avant-garde and independent works, animation, and video art. Information about the library and its collection can be found in a two-volume catalog, available at the library, and in upcoming months on the Museum's World Wide Web site (<http://www.moma.org>). All titles in the series are available for rental or sale from the Circulating Film and Video Library. For more information, please call 212/708-9530.

NEW RELEASES FROM THE CIRCULATING FILM AND VIDEO

LIBRARY was organized by Kitty Cleary and Marilyn Mancino, Assistants, and William Sloan, Librarian, of the Circulating Film and Video Library.

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Tickets for film screenings are free with Museum admission. General admission is \$8.00; student and senior citizen admission is \$5.00; children under 16 accompanied by an adult are admitted free. Thursday and Friday 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., pay what you wish. For general information, please call 212/708-9480.

For more information on the Museum's film and video programs, please contact Graham Leggat, Film and Video Press Representative, Department of Communications, at 212/708-9752.