

RETROSPECTIVE TRIBUTE TO KING VIDOR AT MUSEUM

A two-and-a-half month tribute to King Vidor, pioneer American film director, will begin September 1, 1972, at The Museum of Modern Art. The retrospective includes 39 films from 1920 to 1964, spanning more than 40 years of the director's career. It includes such eminent films as "The Big Parade," "The Crowd," and "Our Daily Bread."

A new book by King Vidor will be published during the Museum retrospective. It is titled "King Vidor on Filmmaking," and will be published in October by David McKay Company, Inc.

The 78-year-old director, who will come from Hollywood to be present at the Museum retrospective, will be introduced to the public and address the Museum audience at the Thursday evening performance, September 7, at 8:00 P.M., when "Show People," starring Marion Davies, is shown. The director plays himself in the picture, along with Charles Chaplin, John Gilbert, and Douglas Fairbanks, who also portray themselves.

The Vidor retrospective was organized by Adrienne Mancina, Associate Curator of the Department of Film. The films come from many sources including the Museum's own archive and circulating library. Some films were contributed by the Cinémathèque of Toulouse, the Czechoslovak Film Archive in Prague, the George Eastman House, the American Film Institute, and several major film companies. One film, "Peg O' My Heart," starring Laurette Taylor, was considered lost until it was located in Spain at the Filmoteca Nacional de Espana (Madrid). In this film, adapted from a play by her husband J. Hartley Manners, Miss Taylor is said to give one of her best performances. It was one of Vidor's earliest successes.

King Vidor's film career began in his home state of Texas, where he worked as a self-employed newsreel cameraman, but in 1915 the lure of California led Vidor and his young wife, the actress Florence Vidor, to Hollywood. There he began as a company clerk with Universal, while surreptitiously selling original scripts to other studios

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under a pseudonym. Gradually, Vidor worked his way up in the industry and made his first feature film, "The Turn of the Road," in 1918. Film historian/scholar Lewis Jacobs has written that Vidor's early films (1918-1924) comprise "most of the few realistic films about the common man and his struggles during the post-war deluge of 'sex' and 'jazz' movies." Realism and a concern with common people continued to mark Vidor's most important early films.

It was in 1925, with "The Big Parade," that Vidor established himself as one of America's major film directors. The earliest large-scale antiwar film, "The Big Parade" starred John Gilbert as a young American going unenthusiastically but dutifully off to World War I, and Renée Adorée as a French farm girl he meets. Immensely popular, the film played for two years at the Astor Theater in New York.

"The Crowd" (1928), another of Vidor's most memorable pictures, was a realistic, documentary-like study of a young couple's struggle to survive in a large, indifferent metropolis. The screen portrayal of poverty was unusual in the period of pre-Depression prosperity, and "The Crowd" has been called a forerunner of neo-realism. In fact, the city was one of Vidor's favorite themes. He examined urban despair and poverty in "Street Scene" (1931), a grim study of the Lower East Side of Manhattan, just as he had studied the anonymity of the individual within the urban mass in "The Crowd."

While many films made in the Depression-wracked 30s offered audiences escape from their day-to-day problems, Vidor's classic "Our Daily Bread" (1934) was a realistic portrayal of a young couple (Karen Morley and Tom Keene) who leave the city to start a communal farm. While the Soviet Union labeled it capitalistic propaganda and the Los Angeles Examiner called the film "pinko," the League of Nations cited it for "its contribution to humanity."

Other well-known Vidor films on the program include "Hallelujah" (1929), the director's first sound film and one which broke new cinematic ground. This pastoral story of a Tennessee family, produced with an all-black cast, was called by Vidor "an examination of the Negro community in America." The film was distinguished by an inventive use of sound, with songs and dialogue frequently employed in counterpoint to

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the visual images, rather than synchronously. Filmed on location on the Mississippi River and in the Arkansas swamps, "Hallelujah" had a mixed reception. As Herbert G. Luft has written in *The Film Journal* : "While the pastoral received world-wide acclaim and had a long run in New York and Paris, it got few bookings below the Mason-Dixon Line and was rejected in Vidor's home state of Texas. Some northern cities like Chicago boycotted the film altogether. Yet today film festivals in Venice, Brussels and Paris are unable to fulfill requests from fans of 'Hallelujah' because there are not enough prints available."

Also included in the Vidor cycle are "The Champ" (1931), the most popular boxing story of its time, starring Wallace Beery as an ex-champ on the skids; "Northwest Passage" (1940), starring Spencer Tracy and Robert Young, exploring in pre-Revolutionary War days; "Duel in the Sun" (1946), an epic Western eventually finished by William Dieterle after disagreement between Vidor and producer David O. Selznick; and "War and Peace," the 1956 spectacle starring Henry Fonda and Audrey Hepburn, which was another attempt by Vidor to embrace themes popular at the box office.

In addition to 38 feature films, the Museum will present a rare showing of Vidor's personal 1964 short film "Truth and Illusion." This largely autobiographical story of man's search for truth and self-fulfillment was shot in 16mm with the then 69-year-old director acting as his own cameraman and lighting director. It expresses Vidor's personal philosophy and dilemma as a film creator and it preceded Federico Fellini's similarly autobiographical film "8 1/2." In fact, early Vidor is considered an influence on the neo-realism of post-war Italian film. A scene from "The Big Parade" in which the anguished French girl, Renée Adorée, rushes after the truck carrying her American lover to war was compared by Herbert G. Luft to a scene in Rossellini's "Open City" where Anna Magnani runs across a courtyard after a van carrying her man off to a Nazi prison. "Open City" was made two decades later.

The complete schedule of the King Vidor retrospective follows on Page 4.

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KING VIDOR SCHEDULE (* denotes silent film)

- Fri, Sep 1 (2:00) HAPPINESS.* 1924. With Laurette Taylor, Hedda Hopper. ca. 95 min.
- Sat, Sep 2 (3:00) WILD ORANGES.* 1924. ca. 85 min.
(5:30) PROUD FLESH.* 1925. With Eleanor Boardman. ca. 75 min.
- Sun, Sep 3 (5:30) WILD ORANGES (see Sat, Sep 2, 3:00)
- Mon, Sep 4 (2:00) WILD ORANGES (see Sat, Sep 2, 3:00)
(5:30) THE SKY PILOT.* 1921. With Colleen Moore. 75 min.
- Tues, Sep 5 (5:30) CONQUERING THE WOMAN.* 1922. With Florence Vidor. French titles. 65 min.
- Wed, Sep 6 (2:00) CONQUERING THE WOMAN (see Tues, Sep 5, 5:30)
- Thur, Sep 7 (5:30) THE PATSY.* 1928. With Marion Davies, Marie Dressler. 80 min.
(8:00) SHOW PEOPLE.* 1928. With Marion Davies, John Gilbert, Mae Murray, Charles Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks. 82 min. KING VIDOR WILL BE PRESENT TO INTRODUCE THIS PROGRAM.
- Fri, Sep 8 (2:00) THE PATSY (see Thur, Sep 7, 5:30)
- Sat, Sep 9 (3:00) SHOW PEOPLE (see Thur, Sep 7, 8:00)
(5:30) THE PATSY (see Thur, Sep 7, 5:30)
- Sun, Sep 10 (5:30) HAPPINESS (see Fri, Sep 1, 2:00)
- Mon, Sep 11 (2:00) THE SKY PILOT (see Mon, Sep 4, 5:30)
(5:30) HAPPINESS (see Fri, Sep 1, 2:00)
- Tues, Sep 12 (5:30) THE JACKKNIFE MAN.* 1920. With Fred Turner, Florence Vidor. ca. 60 min.
- Wed, Sep 13 (2:00) LOVE NEVER DIES.* 1921. With Madge Bellamy, Lloyd Hughes. ca. 80 min.
- Fri, Sep 15 (2:00) HIS HOUR.* 1924. With John Gilbert. Czech titles. ca. 75 min.
- Sat, Sep 16 (3:00) WINE OF YOUTH.* 1924. With Eleanor Boardman. ca. 80 min.
(5:30) THREE WISE FOOLS.* 1923. With Eleanor Boardman. French titles. ca. 85 min.
- Sun, Sep 17 (5:30) LOVE NEVER DIES (see Wed, Sep 13, 2:00)
- Mon, Sep 18 (2:00) THE CROWD.* 1928. With Eleanor Boardman, James Murray. 95 min.
(5:30) WINE OF YOUTH (see Sat, Sep 16, 3:00)
- Tues, Sep 19 (5:30) HIS HOUR (see Fri, Sep 15, 2:00)
- Wed, Sep 20 (2:00) THE BIG PARADE.* 1925. With John Gilbert, Renee Adoree. 125 min.
- Thur, Sep 21 (5:30) THE BIG PARADE (see Wed, Sep 20, 2:00)
(8:00) PROUD FLESH (see Sat, Sep 2, 5:30)
- Fri, Sep 22 (2:00) PROUD FLESH (see Sat, Sep 2, 5:30)
- Sat, Sep 23 (3:00) THE CROWD (see Mon, Sep 18, 2:00)
(5:30) LA BOHEME.* 1926. With Lillian Gish, John Gilbert. 110 min.
- Sun, Sep 24 (5:30) THE CROWD (see Mon, Sep 18, 2:00)
- Mon, Sep 25 (2:00) THREE WISE FOOLS (see Sat, Sep 16, 5:30)
(5:30) LA BOHEME (see Sat, Sep 23, 5:30)
- Tues, Sep 26 (5:30) NOT SO DUMB. 1930. With Marion Davies. 75 min.
- Wed, Sep 27 (2:00) NOT SO DUMB (see Tues, Sep 26, 5:30)
- Thur, Sep 28 (5:30) WINE OF YOUTH (see Sat, Sep 16, 3:00)
(8:00) BILLY THE KID. 1930. With John Mack Brown, Wallace Beery. 97 min.
- Fri, Sep 29 (2:00) BILLY THE KID (see Thur, Sep 28, 8:00)
- Sat, Sep 30 (3:00) HALLELUJAH. 1929. Negro spirituals and songs by Irving Berlin.
With Nina Mae McKinney. 107 min.
(5:30) BILLY THE KID (see Thur, Sep 28, 8:00)
- Sun, Oct 1 (5:30) THE CHAMP. 1931. With Wallace Beery, Jackie Cooper. 86 min.
- Mon, Oct 2 (2:00) HALLELUJAH (see Sat, Sep 30, 3:00)
(5:30) THE CHAMP (see Sun, Oct 1, 5:30)
- Tues, Oct 3 (5:30) STREET SCENE. 1931. From the Elmer Rice Play. With Sylvia Sidney.
80 min.
- Thur, Oct 5 (5:30) CYNARA. 1933. With Ronald Colman, Kay Francis. 78 min.
(8:00) BIRD OF PARADISE. 1932. With Dolores Del Rio, Joel McCrea. 80 min.
- Fri, Oct 6 (2:00) STREET SCENE (see Tues, Oct 3, 5:30)
- Sat, Oct 7 (3:00) BIRD OF PARADISE (see Thur, Oct 5, 8:00)
(5:30) CYNARA (see Thur, Oct 5, 5:30)
- Sun, Oct 8 (5:30) BIRD OF PARADISE (see Thur, Oct 5, 8:00)

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR CONTINUATION OF SCHEDULE

Mon, Oct 9 (2:00) STREET SCENE (see Tues, Oct 3, 5:30)
 (5:30) OUR DAILY BREAD. 1934. With Tom Keene, Karen Morley. 74 min.
Thur, Oct 12 (5:30) THE TEXAS RANGERS. 1936. With Fred MacMurray, Jack Oakie. 98 min.
 (8:00) OUR DAILY BREAD (see Mon, Oct 9, 5:30)
Fri, Oct 13 (2:00) THE TEXAS RANGERS (see Thur, Oct 12, 5:30)
Sat, Oct 14 (3:00) STELLA DALLAS. 1937. With Barbara Stanwyck. 104 min.
 (5:30) THE CITADEL. 1958. With Robert Donat, Rosalind Russell, Rex Harrison, Ralph Richardson. 113 min.
Sun, Oct 15 (5:30) THE CITADEL (see Sat, Oct 14, 5:30)
Mon, Oct 16 (2:00) THE CITADEL (see Sat, Oct 14, 5:30)
 (5:30) STELLA DALLAS (see Sat, Oct 14, 3:00)
Tues, Oct 17 (5:30) NORTHWEST PASSAGE. 1940. With Spencer Tracy, Robert Young. 126 min.
Thur, Oct 19 (5:30) COMRADE X. 1940. With Hedy Lamarr, Clark Gable. 89 min.
 (8:00) NORTHWEST PASSAGE (see Tues, Oct 17, 5:30)
Fri, Oct 20 (2:00) NORTHWEST PASSAGE (see Tues, Oct 17, 5:30)
Sat, Oct 21 (3:00) COMRADE X (see Thur, Oct 19, 5:30)
 (5:30) AN AMERICAN ROMANCE. 1944. With Brian Donlevy. 121 min.
Sun, Oct 22 (5:30) AN AMERICAN ROMANCE (see Sat, Oct 21, 5:30)
Mon, Oct 23 (2:00) AN AMERICAN ROMANCE (see Sat, Oct 21, 5:30)
 (5:30) COMRADE X (see Thur, Oct 19, 5:30)
Thur, Oct 26 (5:30) H.M. PULHAM, ESQ. 1941. With Robert Young, Hedy Lamarr. 119 min.
 (8:00) THE FOUNTAINHEAD. 1949. With Gary Cooper, Patricia Neal. 114 min.
Fri, Oct 27 (2:00) H.M. PULHAM, ESQ. (see Thur, Oct 26, 5:30)
Sat, Oct 28 (3:00) TRUTH AND ILLUSION. 1964. 25 min. BEYOND THE FOREST. 1949. With Bette Davis, Joseph Cotten. 96 min.
 (5:30) THE FOUNTAINHEAD (see Thur, Oct 26, 8:00)
Sun, Oct 29 (5:30) TRUTH AND ILLUSION and BEYOND THE FOREST (see Sat, Oct 28, 3:00)
Mon, Oct 30 (2:00) THE FOUNTAINHEAD (see Thur, Oct 26, 8:00)
 (5:30) DUEL IN THE SUN. 1947. With Jennifer Jones, Gregory Peck. 135 min.
Tues, Oct 31 (5:30) RUBY GENTRY. 1952. With Jennifer Jones, Charlton Heston. 82 min.
Thur, Nov 2 (5:30) TRUTH AND ILLUSION and BEYOND THE FOREST (see Sat, Oct 28, 3:00)
 (8:00) RUBY GENTRY (see Tues, Oct 31, 5:30)
Fri, Nov 3 (2:00) DUEL IN THE SUN (see Mon, Oct 30, 5:30)
Sat, Nov 4 (3:00) WAR AND PEACE. 1956. With Audrey Hepburn, Henry Fonda. 210 min.
Sun, Nov 5 (5:30) H.M. PULHAM, ESQ. (see Thur, Oct 26, 5:30)
Mon, Nov 6 (2:00) WAR AND PEACE (see Sat, Nov 4, 3:00)
 (5:30) SOLOMON AND SHEBA. 1959. With Yul Brynner, Gina Lollobrigida. 139 min.
Tues, Nov 7 (5:30) DUEL IN THE SUN (see Mon, Oct 30, 5:30)
Thur, Nov 9 (6:00) WAR AND PEACE (see Sat, Nov 4, 3:00)
Fri, Nov 10 (2:00) SOLOMON AND SHEBA (see Mon, Nov 6, 5:30)
Sat, Nov 11 (3:00) DUEL IN THE SUN (see Mon, Oct 30, 5:30)
 (5:30) SOLOMON AND SHEBA (see Mon, Nov 6, 5:30)
Sun, Nov 12 (5:30) THE JACKKNIFE MAN (see Tues, Sep 12, 5:30)
Mon, Nov 13 (2:00 AND 5:30) PEG O' MY HEART.* 1922. With Loretta Taylor. Spanish titles. ca. 100 min.

Additional information available from Lillian Gerard, Special Projects Coordinator, and Mark Segal, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7296.