

The Museum of Modern Art

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PARAMOUNT PICTURES: 75 YEARS

July 10, 1987 - January 4, 1988

Marlene Dietrich, William Holden, Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Mae West are among the stars featured in the exhibition PARAMOUNT PICTURES: 75 YEARS, which opens at The Museum of Modern Art on July 10. The series includes films by such directors as Cecil B. De Mille, Ernst Lubitsch, Francis Coppola, Josef von Sternberg, and Preston Sturges. More than 100 films and an accompanying display of film-still enlargements and original posters trace the seventy-five year history of Paramount through the silent and sound eras.

The exhibition begins on Friday, July 10, at 6:00 p.m. with Dorothy Arzner's The Wild Party (1929), madcap silent star Clara Bow's first sound feature, costarring Fredric March. At 2:30 p.m. on the same day, Ernst Lubitsch's ribald musical comedy The Smiling Lieutenant (1931) will be screened, featuring Paramount contract stars Maurice Chevalier, Claudette Colbert, and Miriam Hopkins. Comprised of both familiar classics and obscure features, the series continues in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters through January 4, 1988.

Paramount Pictures was founded in 1912 by Adolph Zukor, and its first release was the silent Queen Elizabeth, starring Sarah Bernhardt. Among the silent films included in PARAMOUNT PICTURES: 75 YEARS are De Mille's The Squaw Man (1913), The Cheat (1915), and The Ten Commandments (1923); von Sternberg's The Docks of New York (1928), and Erich von Stroheim's The Wedding March (1928).

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In the thirties the studio was known for its sophisticated comedies, represented in this series by such films as George Cukor's Girls about Town (1931), Frank Tuttle's This Is the Night (1932), William K. Howard's The Princess Comes Across (1936), and Mitchell Leisen's Easy Living (1937). Throughout this period the studio's films were recognizable by the elegance of their gleaming sets, which were often Art Deco.

In the following decade Paramount became associated with the brooding melodrama of film noir, exemplified by Billy Wilder's Double Indemnity (1944), George Marshall's The Blue Dahlia (1946), and John Farrow's The Big Clock (1948). Also in the forties, such writers-turned-directors as Sturges and Wilder emerged. They are represented here by Sturges's Sullivan's Travels (1941) and The Miracle of Morgan's Creek (1944), and Wilder's Double Indemnity, A Foreign Affair (1948), and Sunset Boulevard (1950).

The decade of the fifties was a time of great transition throughout Hollywood. Paramount's output was particularly diverse, including such films as George Stevens's ill-fated romance, A Place in the Sun (1951); De Mille's extravagant swan song, The Ten Commandments (1956); and Stanley Donen's elegant musical, Funny Face (1957).

In the last three decades Paramount has been responsible for many of the screen's most notable films. The exhibition features many of these, including John Ford's The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (1962), John Frankenheimer's Seconds (1966), Coppola's The Godfather (1972) and The Godfather Part II (1974), Roman Polanski's Chinatown (1974), Warren Beatty's Reds (1982), and Peter Weir's Witness (1985).

Throughout its history, Paramount has been home to many of film's most gifted comics, including W.C. Fields, the Marx Brothers, Bob Hope,

Danny Kaye, Jerry Lewis, and its current top star Eddie Murphy. Examples of their best work are being screened throughout this retrospective.

PARAMOUNT PICTURES: 75 YEARS has been organized by Adrienne Mancina, curator, and Stephen Harvey, assistant curator, Department of Film, in collaboration with Geoffrey Gilmore, head of programming, UCLA Film, Television and Radio Archives, and Ron Haver, head of the Film Department, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The accompanying installation of stills and posters has been organized by Mary Corliss, assistant curator in the Museum's Department of Film.

Film tickets are included in the price of Museum admission, which is \$5.00; \$3.50 students; and \$2.00 senior citizens. A complete schedule of films in the exhibition is available at the lobby information desk.

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For further press information and photographic materials related to the Museum's exhibition, contact Howard Feinstein, film press representative, The Museum of Modern Art, 212/708-9752; for information related to Paramount's 75th Anniversary, contact William Kenly, senior publicist, Paramount Pictures, 212/373-7185.