

1961 - 62

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART FILM LIBRARY

To all of us at the Film Library, the outstanding event of the past year has been the extended visit of President Jerzy Toeplitz to the United States. His presence among us made it natural for us to center our yearly activities around him or matters of interest to him, to help him as far as we could in his study of the American motion picture, and to tap his vast knowledge of films for our own benefit. We were particularly grateful for the opportunity to learn through him more about the affairs of FIAF than has been possible for us in the past, and in part, to cure our ignorance of the activities of other member archives. We are happy to report that President Toeplitz was as much liked and admired by everyone here as we in FIAF have always liked and admired him, and his return is eagerly anticipated. - RG

FILM SHOWINGS

Regular Auditorium Series

October 15 - November 4: "RECENT FILMS FROM YUGOSLAVIA," nine feature films and additional experimental films and cartoons produced between the years 1956 and 1961, was presented with the cooperation of the Yugoslavian film industry and its American representatives. The series, one of the most remarked upon in recent years, included such films as DOLINA MIRU (NEVER LOOK BACK), NE OKRECI SE SINE (DON'T TURN AROUND, MY SON), H-8, PET MINUTA RAJA (FIVE MINUTES OF PARADISE).

November 5 - January 31: "SCREEN PERSONALITIES," based on the Film Library collection, reviewed the films of such personalities as Colleen Moore and Gary Cooper (LILAC TIME, 1928), Rudolph Valentino (MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE, 1924), Will Rogers (JUBILO, 1919), Gloria Swanson (QUEEN KELLY, 1928-30), Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers (TOP HAT, 1935, SWINGTIME, 1936) and others.

February 4 - April 7: "THE FILMS OF ROBERTO ROSSELLINI," twelve films including five never seen theatrically in this country, was presented with the cooperation of Mr. Rossellini, ANICA, and the Italian Information Center in New York. Earliest film shown was LA NAVE BIANCA (1941) and the series concluded with the 1961 production, VIVA L'ITALIA; among the other films screened were OPEN CITY (1945), PAISA' (1946), UNA VOCE UMANA (1947), EUROPA 51 (1952), JEANNE AU BUCHER (1954), INDIA MATRI BHUMI (1957).

April 8 - May 30: "WILLIAM WYLER: TWELVE FILMS," the American director whose versatility and style has enabled him to persist through all periods of film history, whatever the current fashion. DEAD END (1937), THE WESTERNER (1940), THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES (1946), and ROMAN HOLIDAY (1953) were among the films shown.

May 31 - September 1: "THE FILMS OF HOWARD HAWKS," the largest conspectus of a single film-maker ever presented at the Museum included 27 of the 35 films by this director who, though little appreciated in his own country, has been extolled by the French "Nouvelle Vague" as the leading exponent of le film noir Americain. Two of his earliest silent films, FIG LEAVES (1926) and A GIRL IN EVERY PORT (1928) were obtained, as well as others including THE DAWN PATROL (1930), TWENTIETH CENTURY (1934) TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT (1944), RED RIVER (1948), GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES (1953) and RIO BRAVO (1959).

Special Polish Film Week

Shown during the week of May 6 - 12 were nine short films made by students at the Polish State Film School which were imported from Poland by Mr. Toeplitz during his stay in this country. The program surveyed representative films from the first year silent work of the students at the Lodz school to a fifth year thesis film. The films shown were THE UMBRELLA, THE WALL OF THRILLS, THE SENTENCE, SCHOOL WITHOUT BLACKBOARDS, IMPROVIZATION, THE GAME, RONDO, PORTRAIT OF A MAN WITH A MEDAL and OCCURRENCE AT OWL CREEK BRIDGE. The films received critical acclaim, especially among the young film-makers and students, and went on to be shown at the Boston International Film Festival and other groups.

Saturday Morning Film Series

The series was brought to a close this year in March. In its six years of existence, the survey covered every projectable film in the Film Library collection, and the catalogue was brought up to date and corrected. It is expected that at some future date the project will be taken up again, for there is of course no end to the problems of cataloguing, and, in addition, the series' enthusiastic subscribers would like to see it continued.

SCHOLARLY PROJECTS

The Society of Cinematologists. The national organization of film teachers, founded in 1959 to advance the cause of film scholarship, held their annual meeting this year on April 16 and 17 at the Museum. Professor Gerald F. Noxon of Boston University was re-elected President; Richard Griffith was elected Councilman. Elected to the Society was Eileen Bowser, Curatorial Assistant of the Film Library. Papers read by members at the meeting included "Surrealist Films" by George Amberg, University of Minnesota; "Analysis of LIFE OF AN AMERICAN FIREMAN" by Robert Gessner, New York University; "Communication in the Avant-Garde Cinema" by Arthur Knight, University of Southern California; "Figurative Cinema" by John B. Kuiper, State University of Iowa; "Cinema and Cubism" by Gerald Noxon, Boston University; "The Film-maker's Approach to Aboriginal Peoples" by Robert Steele, Boston University. The Society plans to publish these papers, and when this is done, the Film Library hopes to send copies to FIAF members. Highlight of the meeting this year was the inauguration and presentation of the first of annual awards established by the Richard and Hinda Rosenthal Foundation of \$1,000 each for the best film made by an American under 25 years of age, and for the best shooting script intended for production. The awards were accepted by Vernon Zimmerman for his film, LEMON HEARTS and Tom Pathe for his script, THE CANDY ROOM, from among the 50 scripts and 25 films submitted to the awards committee, consisting of members of the Society.

D. W. Griffith Collection. The project of cataloguing the business and personal papers of D. W. Griffith was begun by Eileen Bowser, Curatorial Assistant, at the beginning of 1962, under a grant of funds from the Rockefeller Foundation to the Museum for scholarly activities, and now is nearing completion. It is hoped that the Film Library will soon be able to make these papers available for scholars and researchers. It appears unlikely that the completed catalogue will be published because its great bulk would make it impossibly expensive, but perhaps an abridged

or selected version of it can be put in printed form. The Film Library does intend to publish D. W. Griffith's letters (there are over 300) and other writings, and if any member archive can contribute documents to this project, they would be gratefully received. The collection of papers covers the period c1895 to 1935, although the early documents are very sparse, and it is only during the period in which Griffith had his own studio at Mamaroneck, Long Island, from October 1919 through 1924, that the records are anywhere near to complete. The papers have been put in an exact chronological order, a main descriptive listing of them made, and a cross-referencing of the more important topics covered. Much of it is trivial, but for the assiduous searcher there is material with which to re-create not only the life and work of one of our greatest film-makers, but also a vital period of movie history.

Other notable scholarly projects included the following:

Larry J. Logan, working on his Master's thesis at Stanford University, used our reference library materials and screened some of our documentary films of the Thirties.

Richard B. Byrne, doing research on German expressionistic films under a University Fellowship at the State University of Iowa, screened films from our collection.

Kalton C. Lahue, writing a book on the history of the American silent serial, was given access to all our reference library materials and spent several intensive weeks at the Museum researching old trade periodicals in the collection.

Edward L. Galligan, Assistant Professor at Western Michigan University, acting on a grant from that institution, researched the farcical strategies and techniques developed in comedies of the Twenties and Thirties and screened films from the collection.

Henry L. Mueller, acting on a grant from the University of Illinois, screened many American primitives in the collection for a book on the American film.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Festival Dei Popoli, Florence, January, 1962.

Contributing to the annual international review of ethnographic and sociological films, the Film Library sent the following films through the Cineteca Italiana in Milan for the festival, which was devoted to American documentaries of this genre: THE PLOW THAT BROKE THE PLAINS, NOANA, THE LAND.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Film Library held more special events this past season than in any other single season in its history. They were, in order of presentation:

Ancestors of the New American Cinema, four evenings of films, a survey of the realist tradition in films as it had developed prior to the last decade, included: November 9, HALLELUJAH (1929); December 28, LOUISIANA STORY (1948); January 18, HOUSING PROBLEMS (1935) and WESTERN APPROACHES (1945); February 1, LA BATAILLE DU RAIL (1945) and IN THE STREET (1952).

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR, February 2, an invitational premiere of the latest film version of the Lillian Hellman play, presented in collaboration with the distributor, United Artists, at which Miss Hellman and the director, William Wyler, were the guests of honor.

LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD, directed by Alain Resnais, seven evening premieres for the benefit of the Museum of Modern Art's 30th Anniversary Drive, were held at the Carnegie Hall Cinema in New York through the courtesy of its American distributor, Astor Pictures. Screenings were held on consecutive evenings from March 1 through March 7, prior to the film's release in this country.

An Evening of George K. Arthur Films, March 8, the silent film comedian, returned to public notice in the Fifties and Sixties as distributor of distinguished short films, some produced by himself. Films shown were GLASS, THE GENTLEMAN IN ROOM SIX, THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS, HOUSE, THE STRANGER LEFT NO CARD, and an excerpt from one of his own early starring vehicles, SHOVE OFF (1931).

The National Film Board of Canada, April 4, a special screening of recent films produced by this organization was held in collaboration with the Consul-General of Canada in New York. Among the films shown were UNIVERSE, LINES - HORIZONTAL and VERY NICE, VERY NICE.

Dr. John Grierson, April 12, founder of the British documentary film movement, the National Film Board of Canada and, most recently, producer of "This Wonderful World" for Scottish Television which has been hailed as the most exciting program available on television, delivered an illustrated lecture on "The Poetic Element: Documentary Film in the Television Age" to an enthusiastic Museum audience. Dr. Grierson, making his first trip to this country in nearly 15 years, was brought here jointly by the Museum and the University of North Carolina where he addressed a symposium devoted to "Today's Revolutions in the Arts." He also spoke at Columbia University during his stay in New York. It was a rare privilege for the patrons of the Film Library to hear him, especially the television and film people, to most of whom John Grierson is a legend and an idol.

BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ, April 23, an invitational preview in collaboration with the distributor of the film, United Artists.

The New American Cinema, May 3, a symposium in which young, independent film-makers discussed and showed excerpts from their films. Participants and their films included: Shirley Clarke (THE CONNECTION), Edward Bland (THE CRY OF JAZZ), Jonas Mekas (GUNS OF THE TREES), Stan Vanderbeek (MANKINDA, SCIENCE FRICTION). Richard Griffith acted as moderator.

THE CABINET OF CALIGARI, May 9, an invitational preview of this modern version of the 1919 German classic, shown at the Museum in collaboration with its distributor Twentieth Century-Fox.

Madame Madeleine Malthe-Melies, May 21, co-sponsored with the New York Public Library, an illustrated lecture on George Melies given by his grand-daughter as part of her lecture tour of the United States on behalf of the centenary of her grandfather's birth. Madame Malthe-Melies, who was introduced by Richard Griffith, delighted the audience with personal recollections of life with George Melies and introduced them to some of his films never before seen in this country. Brought here under the auspices of the French Cultural Service, she spoke also in New York at the Charles Theatre and Columbia University, as well as many other places around the country and even in Canada.

FILM MATERIAL ACQUIRED

The following is a list of film material which the Film Library has added to its collection during the 1961-62 season. Titles with an * represent films already in the collection, but which new or more permanent material on them has been acquired through donation.

- * AMERICA, 1924, directed by D. W. Griffith
- * BATAILLE DU RAIL, 1945, directed by Rene Clement
- BERLINER BALLADE, 1949, directed by R. H. Stemmle
- A BOWL OF CHERRIES, 1960, directed by William Kronick
- COLORADO LEGENDS, 1961, by Stan Brackage
- * HYMN OF THE NATIONS, 1944, directed by Alexander Hackenschmied
- * CRISIS, 1939, directed by Herbert Kline
- GIRL FROM THE MARSHES, 1950, directed by Augusto Genina
- GLASS, 1961, by Olle Kinch
- LAUGHTER THROUGH TEARS, 1933, directed by G. Gricher
- * LIGHTS OUT IN EUROPE, 1940, directed by Herbert Kline
- * MAJOR BARBARA, 1941, directed by Gabriel Pascal
- A MOVIE, 1960, by Bruce Connor
- * PAISA', 1946, directed by Roberto Rossellini
- * PYGMALION, 1938, directed by Anthony Asquith
- SABOTAGE, 1936, directed by Alfred Hitchcock
- SHOVE OFF, 1931, directed by Edward Cline
- TEATTERI, 1957, by Sol Worth and Jack Witikka

FILM PRESERVATION

Preservation material has been made on the following subjects during the 1961-62 season. These few films represent what has been done with the last remaining money in our Film Preservation Fund.

SHOVE OFF, 35mm dupe. neg.
LAND WITHOUT BREAD, 35mm dupe. neg.
EVOLUTION OF A SKYSCRAPER, 16mm dupe. neg.
INGMARSARVET, 35mm dupe. neg.
ENTR'ACTE, 35mm dupe. neg.
LINDBERGH'S FLIGHT, 16mm dupe. neg.

At the start of 1962, with the depletion of the Film Preservation Fund, the Film Library entered into a program of close cooperation with the new Hollywood Film and Television Museum in the cause of preservation. In order for the Hollywood Museum to expand their embryo collection, the Film Library has agreed to make certain film on nitrate stock from its collection available to Hollywood for the making of preservation material. These preservation prints and negatives, which will be jointly owned by the two archives, will be stored with the Hollywood Museum. They are not for projection, but are strictly preservation copies. The Hollywood Museum is most fortunate in having an arrangement with Consolidated Film Laboratories and the Eastman Kodak Company wherein all their film processing will be done without charge as a donation to the Hollywood Museum. So far this year, the following subjects have been preserved: MICKEY, DAVID HARUM, THE MAN FROM PAINTED POST. In the coming months preservation material will be made for: HIS MAJESTY THE AMERICAN, THE THREE MUSKETEERS, THE NUT, and other important films in the Film Library collection which are in danger of deterioration. As the program is still in the incipient stages, it is difficult to access at this time how rapid and comprehensive will be the results. FIAF members will be kept informed on aspects of this preservation program as it progresses.