

THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 01 • ISSUE 05 • DECEMBER 2007

FAY WRAY: A LIFE

New Doc Set for '08 Release

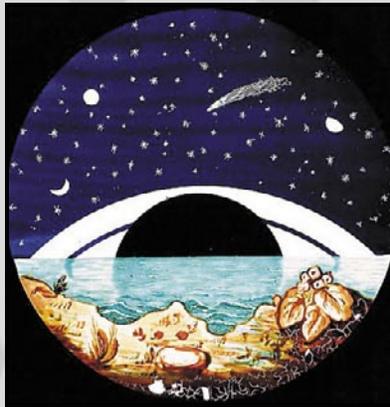
By Leslie Simmons

Fay Wray: A Life follows the life and travels of Wray and her friendship with filmmaker Rick McKay, whom she met in the early 1990's. Wray appeared in McKay's 2003 film, "Broadway: The Golden Age."



This new documentary will feature Wray sharing stories of early Hollywood, including purported affairs with Howard Hughes and Clifford Odets. Post production on "Fay Wray" is scheduled for March at director Peter Jackson's New Zealand Film studio, with a summer/fall 2008 release planned. Audiences at the NY Film Forum got a sneak peek of the doc back on September 18th, 2007, alongside a screening of 1928's *The Wedding March*, in celebration of Wray's 100th birthday.

(Excerpted from *Hollywood Reporter* - 9/12/07)



Magic Lantern Slide

DEVICES OF WONDER

Online Interactive Exhibit

From November 2001 to February 2002, the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, CA hosted an exhibit exploring the mechanical technologies and artful instruments placed between our eyes and the world cleverly titled *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen*. Mirrors, microscopes, magic lanterns, dioramas, perspective theaters and metamorphic toys were among the items on display. Several of those same items can be explored and discovered on the Getty Museum online interactive exhibit available at <http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/devices/flash/>.

Learn more about artifacts such as Magic Painter Games from the 1700s, Indonesian Shadow Puppets from the 1800s, and even view brief films made by **Thomas Edison** in 1902 and **George Méliès** from 1904. A non-flash version of the website is also available.

NORWAY'S "BRIDAL PROCESSION" RESTORED

One of Norway's silent film successes, *The Bridal Procession in Hardanger* from 1926, has been restored by the Norwegian Film Institute. Starring Åse Bye as the spurned Marit, the film tells a dramatic tale of deceit and forgiveness in a National Romantic setting, which naturally includes a bridal voyage down the Hardanger fjord.



The film was made at a time when Norway had just become an independent nation, and national symbols such as Norwegian costume, folk music, and natural settings were especially important to its citizens.

Director Rasmus Breistein's films were usually set in a Norwegian natural setting, telling a national tale. The actors in *The Bridal Procession* wear national costume for a large part of the film. (Info per NFI website: www.nfi.no/filmbutikken)



INCEVILLE: THE EPHEMERAL CITY

by Libby Motike

PACIFIC PALISADES. Once there was a city spread out idyllically on the slopes of Santa Ynez Canyon with sweeping views of the sea. The streets were lined with houses from humble cottages to mansions, and the buildings were fashioned after the architecture of many lands. But as ephemeral as Atlantis, this city appeared and then disappeared in 12 short years.

This was the creation of American silent film producer/director **Thomas Ince**, who in 1912 built a city of motion picture sets on several thousand acres of land in and around the hills and plateaus of the canyon, where he was able to shoot many of the outdoor locales needed for his films.

It was here at Inceville, now Sunset at Pacific Coast Highway, where in 1913 alone, Ince made over 150 two-reeler movies, mostly Westerns, thereby anchoring the popularity of the genre for decades.

Ince leased 18,000 acres of land extending from the seashore up Santa

Ynez Canyon and into the mountains for 7-1/2 miles. While he was building the frame, he hired Miller's 101 Ranch Wildwest Show, including many cowboys, animals and a Sioux Indian tribe, who set up their teepees on the property. By 1916, Ince was releasing one five-reel picture each week at an average cost of \$40,000. His film, *Civilization*, which employed over 25,000 extras, was by far his most ambitious endeavor.

Costs continued to rise as moviegoers enjoyed the more expensive feature films. Ince retained his optimism and through his alliance with Triangle (a production company founded with D. W. Griffith and Mack Sennett) built a new studio in Culver City to use for indoor movies, and retained Inceville for outdoor locations and Westerns.

Ironically, on January 16, 1916, a few days after the opening of his Culver City studio, a fire broke out at Inceville, the first of many which would eventually destroy all of the dry frame buildings. That same year, Ince gave up on Inceville and sold it to William S. Hart, who renamed it Hartville. Ince's legacy lives on in the only two remaining studios in Culver City 'Sony and Culver Stu-

dios' which were once part of Ince Studios. Ince Boulevard identifies the street running along the east side of the Culver Studios.

(Full article: http://www.palisadespost.com/content/index.cfm?Story_ID=3139)

FINE VINTAGE: SILENTS AT THE IRONSTONE VINEYARDS

Sunday, December 9th

MURPHYS, CA. Soak in the festive atmosphere at Ironstone Vineyards as you watch Stan and Ollie sell Christmas trees in their classic silent short *Big Business*, which only seems to bring out the "bah humbug!" in everyone. Dave Moreno will be performing on the Alhambra Theatre Pipe Organ, and the matinee will be hosted by Matias Bombal of Capital Public Radio.



Two additional holiday shorts, *Jack Frost* and *Christmas Toy Shop*, will also be featured ahead of the main attraction. Tickets are \$20.00 per person and that includes admission, a buffet lunch, and free popcorn during the show. Lunch at 1:00 p.m. and the films begin at 2:00 p.m. (Info courtesy of Ironstone Vineyards, www.ironstonevineyards.com)

FESTIWAL FILMU NIEMEGO Krakow, Poland

Kino Pod Baranami will be marking the 10th anniversary of its Silent Film Festival on **December 6th – 9th**, with a screening of the comedy *Our Hospitality* featuring old stone face himself, Buster Keaton. This film was the inspiration of the institution a decade ago to spear head a regular series in acknowledgment of early cinema.

The film will be accompanied by a group of fantastic jazz musicians known as the Exploding Star Orchestra led by Rob Mazurek.



In addition, Kino Pod Baranami wants to recollect on themes presented over their past festival history by showcasing a selection of subjects ranging from fair comedies, to grim dramas, avant garde pieces, and a few milestones of the era.

All performances will feature live music from some of the country's finest performers including

Mitch & Mitch, Emitter, Male Instrumenty, and the trio of Masecki, Roginski, and Moretti.

A centerpiece in this jubilee celebration will be the sole screening of the recently rediscovered picture, *Beyond The Rocks*, the only feature to co-star film giants Gloria Swanson and Rudolph Valentino. To applaud the preservation and restoration efforts of the Nederlands Filmmuseum, the festival will present them with their annual **Golden Padlock** award in recognition of their contribution to the recovery and continued survival of this film.

(Full details in Polish, http://www.kinopodbaranami.pl/wydarzenie.php?evnt_id=343)

SILENT SPOTLIGHT

FLORENCE LAWRENCE: THE BIOGRAPH GIRL

By Mike Parker

A meteoric rise followed by a rapid decline: Without exaggeration, such aptly describes the rollercoaster fate of actress Florence Lawrence. Born January 2nd, 1886, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada to an inventor father and actress mother, young Florence also lived in New York where, upon graduation, had a stint with her mother's dramatic company. The next chapter opened the doors to Lawrence's climb to prominence as one of the fledgling motion picture industry's brightest stars.

Lawrence remained in New York to perform with the Vitagraph film company. Two years later, in 1908, Florence made the jump to Biograph Studios and commenced a powerful alliance with legendary director

D.W. Griffith. At this time, however, a classic business tactic was being exposed that would slowly, but eventually, be reversed.

With Florence known only as "The Biograph Girl," numerous approving fans wrote in to inquire about the actress's real identity. Studios were reticent to associate names with performers realizing they would then demand lavish raises. Quite slowly, the tide turned. Postcards, for example, bearing the names and faces of select stars on the reverse, were produced: Florence was one such featured player.



By 1910, the fabled movie producer and executive, Carl Laemmle, was looking to build his Independent Motion Picture Company (IMP). In trying to lure Florence to IMP, he staged a fabricated story of the actress's death by a streetcar but later blamed adversaries to his studio for the mock report. All the publicity for Lawrence essentially gave way to the "star system" whose birth, predictably, did nothing to assuage the executives' concerns about digging deeper into their wallets.

Lawrence proved her dexterity in handling a number of character

types. Not only was she the desirable woman to multiple suitors, but she also fit in playing the wife, nurse, or governess.

A dramatic twist in portrayals was furnished for Florence in Griffith's *The Medicine Bottle* at Biograph in 1909. Realizing her little daughter innocently took a bottle containing poison instead of medicine to her grandmother's, Lawrence frantically telephones a warning. Her calls are thwarted by gossipy switchboard operators, while alternating shots between mother, operators, and daughter accelerate the tension. Finally, mother gets through to daughter.

Sadly, Lawrence would never again match her supremacy. A studio accident, ensuing work in bit parts, and a personal life that saw three marriages end in either death or divorce sparked a decline. Moreover, the stock market crash combined with The Great Depression lessened the actress's fortune.

Discouraged and ailing, Lawrence committed suicide in her Los Angeles home on December 1938, by reportedly ingesting ant paste.

Actress Florence Lawrence's amazing leap to high movie stardom and several hundred film credits painfully faded to black, and for all her work, undeservedly so.

TST BOOKCORNER

Images of America: Early Hollywood

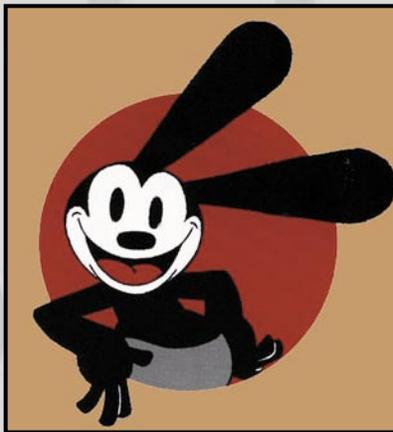
by M. Wannamaker & R. Nudelman

The image of Hollywood often translates as some otherworldly dreamscape filled with fantastic lives and fantasy fulfillment. The real deal was carved from the Southern California desert as an outpost northwest of Los Angeles. The movie industry arrived when tumbleweeds were not

simply props and actual horsepower pulled the loads. Everyday workers, civic management, and Main Street conventionalities nurtured Hollywood's growth, as did a balmy climate that facilitated outdoor photography and shooting schedules for filmmakers.

Splendid vintage photographs from the renowned collections of the Hollywood Heritage Museum and Bison Archives illustrate Hollywood's businesses, homes, and residents during the silent-film era and immediately after, as the Great Depression led up to World War II. These images celebrate Hollywood before and after its annexation into the city of Los Angeles in 1910 and its subsequent ascension as the world's greatest filmmaking center. (www.amazon.com)

ON DVD



DISNEY TREASURES: OSWALD THE LUCKY RABBIT

Before Mickey, there was Oswald, the floppy-eared star of Walt Disney's first cartoon series, Oswald the Lucky Rabbit. Fun and mischievous, the cheerful rabbit's popularity quickly multiplied, and so did his animated shorts. Between 1927 and 1928, Disney created a bounty of legendary and rarely seen Os-

wald cartoons. Now, for the first time ever on DVD, Disney is presenting the definitive collection of Disney's Oswald shorts, *The Adventures of Oswald the Lucky Rabbit*, all featuring new scores composed especially for the December 11, 2007 release. (<http://disneyshopping.com>)

LATHER WITH LAUGHTER

Buster's Bay Rum, Roscoe's Classic Windsor, Mabel's Milk and Honey...no, these are not recently uncovered short subjects, but a line of handcrafted herbal soap concocted by a small cottage company in the lakes region of New Hampshire.

Cats in the Cradle offers six different varieties of homemade all natural soap paying tribute to some of early cinema's finest comedians. All bars are neatly packaged with portraits of the featured player on the outside, and a brief biography about them is found wrapped inside. So scrub up with some silliness and pay a visit to www.catsinthecradlesoap.com to learn more about their **silent soap** products.

MOMENTS IN SILENCE

December 1, 1903 – Edwin S. Porter deposits *The Great Train Robbery* in Library of Congress.

December 16, 1916 – Goldwyn Pictures Corporation formed.

January 21, 1918 – Charles Chaplin Film Company opens studios at *La Brea* and *Sunset*

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