

THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 03 • NUMBER 02 • MAR/APR 2009

Hitchcock Resurrected in "Number 13"

Tony Winner Dan Fogler has signed on to play the heavyweight film genius Alfred Hitchcock in *Number 13* - alongside British stars Ewan McGregor and Emily Mortimer. The film is based on the set of Hitchcock's lost and unfinished 1922 movie of the same name, and centers on the death of a lead actor and a love triangle featuring the director and two crew members.

The real-life story of Hitchcock's *Number 13* (or *Mrs. Peabody*) is a mystery worthy of the acclaimed director himself - the movie was only partially completed before it was pulled from production in 1922. Despite decades of searching, neither the footage nor the script has ever been found, making it more than likely that everything associated with the film has been lost to history. For his part, Hitchcock rarely ever spoke about his first directorial project.



Shooting will begin later in 2009 & the movie is slated for release in 2011. (Excerpted: www.broadwayworld.com)



Her Crowning Glory

UCLA SHOWCASES SILENTS

14th Festival of Preservation - March 13th through April 26th

LOS ANGELES. The UCLA Film & Television Archive's 14th Festival of Preservation (at the Billy Wilder Theatre) will feature a collection of their exciting and unique preservation efforts, many of which are silent films that have not been shown on the silver screen in decades. Silent movie highlights include:

Saturday, March 14th: *The Salvation Hunters* (1925). Joseph von Sternberg's directorial debut, shot on location in various Los Angeles locations, was possibly Hollywood's first "independent" production. The gritty realism of its locations, the lack of artifice in its story, and the lower depths of its characters shocked audiences and the industry alike. *Oil: A Symphony in Motion* (1933). *Oil* was produced by a Los Angeles collective of amateur filmmakers, called "Artkino," who here attempted a lyric documentary from the point of view of the oil itself.

Wednesday, March 18th: Vitagraph Treasures. *Her Crowning Glory* (1911), an early entry in the series of John Bunny/Flora Finch comedy vehicles (affectionally nicknamed *Bunnyfinches*), this film derives its plot from a facetious twist of the Sampson & Delilah story. *A Tale of Two Cities* (1911) was one of several pioneering efforts by Vitagraph to break away from the industry-standard one-reeler to produce feature length films with increasingly complex narrative structures.

Sunday, March 22nd: A Hal Roach Silent Sampler. For every success Hal Roach had with comedians like Charley Chase and Harold Lloyd (featured this evening in *Charley My Boy*, 1926, and *Among Those Present*, 1921), there were often peripheral players that contributed to the comedic mayhem as well: Chase's brother James Parrot, known primarily as a director, stars

in *Jailed and Bailed* (1923), while the better known supporting player Max Davidson plays the lead as the crotchety father in *The Boy Friend* (1928). The lesser-known Glenn Tyrone stars in *Long Pants* (1926); but in the end it is the barely remembered Arthur Stone who turns in the most quintessential Roach portrayal in *Just a Good Guy* (1924).



Sunday, April 5th: *He Fell in Love with His Wife* (1916). The earliest of the few surviving works of famed director William Desmond Taylor, this melodrama revolves around the loveless marriage of convenience between an unlikely pair of souls. Sadly, Taylor is primarily remembered today as the victim of a 1922 homicide that scandalized Hollywood. ***Lena Rivers*** (1914) This surviving version of the classic drama *Lena Rivers* is unique in that it mixes comedy (such as the portrayals of the Sloven-dyke siblings by actors Charles De Forest and Carolyn Rankin) within the heavy atmosphere of the storyline.

Sunday, April 26nd: *In the Land the Head Hunters* (1914). Almost a decade before Robert Flaherty immortalized the Inuit people in *Nanook of the North* (1922), Edward Curtis filmed *In the Land of the Head Hunters* with an all native North American cast, a fiction that combined melodramatic elements with tribal customs. (For additional information: <http://www.cinema.ucla.edu/calendar/calendar.aspx>)

THE KILLRUDDERY SILENT FILM FESTIVAL

**March 13th – 15th
Bray, Co. Wicklow, IRELAND**

Home to the Brabazon Family (the Earls of Meath) since 1618, the Killruddery House is the most successful Elizabethan-Revival mansion in Ireland and also one of the earliest. In the 1820s the 10th Earl engaged the fashionable architects of the day --Richard Morrison and his son William -- to remodel Killruddery. In the 1950s the house was greatly reduced to its present day proportions, but much of the Morrisons' design and architecture still remain.

The Killruddery Arts was established in 2006 to promote cultural activity as a tool for exchange between the public and the historic house and gardens, and after a series of successful silent film shows that have taken place over the years at the House, the **Killruddery Silent Film Festival**, is the first of its kind in Ireland. This year's festival is a broad and eclectic mix of silent treasures ranging from the rarely seen *Visages d'Enfants* (1925) to the more universally admired *Sunrise* (1927). Also on the schedule is the incredible early documentary *Grass* (1925), the witty ad-

venture film *A Modern Musketeer* (1917), and a double bill of under recognized classics *The Unknown* (1927) and *The Unholy Three* (1925).

The festival breaks open on Friday with a special program titled *Down Wicklow Way* hosted by the curator of the Irish Film Institute, Sunniva O'Flynn. Ms. O'Flynn has uncovered some beautiful early amateur and professional footage of Bray and Co. Wicklow to share with the audience. As the festival winds down on Sunday, the scheduled finale is the impressive western picture *Redskin* (1929) that depicts corruption and racial prejudice facing its Navajo hero Wing Foot, portrayed by Richard Dix.

Several of the screenings taking place at the festival are from rare 16 mm prints, and all pictures will feature live accompaniment with two of the most accomplished musicians working within the field of silent film today. Stephen Horne and Joss Johnston have proved enormously popular during previous visits to Killruddery and will make return appearances here alongside a number of other new musicians. The quality and variety of films offered this season in an appropriately stunning location should make for an unmissable weekend. (Full program & Ticket Information: <http://killrudderyarts.wordpress.com>)



ANNA Q. NILSSON RETROSPECTIVE



STOCKHOLM. Greta Garbo was not the only Swede that had a steady and flourishing career in pictures after immigrating to America in the early part of the 20th century. Anna Quirentia Nilsson embarked on her journey to the states more than a decade before “the great Garbo” made her debut, and during the height of her career in the 1920’s received nearly 30,000 fan letters a month. It was in 1925, however, that her career skidded to halt after being thrown from a horse into a stone wall, suffering a near paralyzing injury. After two years of physical therapy and treatments in Sweden and Austria, she made her return to motion pictures with the 1927 film *The Babe Comes Home Again*. Even though Anna’s career went into a decline with the advent of the talking picture, she was the first Swedish actress ever honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The Cinematheque at the **Svenska Film Institute** has devoted a block of their programming schedule

in April to celebrate the life’s work of Ms. Nilsson with a diverse selection of her films, including the exhibition of Anna’s sole Swedish production, *Värmlänningarna* (1921), on **April 25th**. Other silents on tap for the retrospective is the Cecil B. DeMille production of *Adam’s Rib* (1923) on **April 5th**, with Anna as the wife of a Chicago wheatbroker who meets and falls in love with the deposed King of Morania; that is followed with *Sorrell and Son* (1927) on **April 17th** with H.B. Warner returning home after military duty to find that his pleasure-seeking wife has abandoned him and his son when his wealth and status have dried up. The first known gangster picture, *Regeneration* (1915), is scheduled later the same day with Anna portraying a socialite who transforms into a settlement worker after witnessing a brutal beating in a cafe. The final silent on the schedule is the hard boiled western *The Toll Gate* (1920) on **April 21st** with Anna as Mary Brown, the deserted wife of a lieutenant in a band of outlaws that betrays his leader, played by William S. Hart. All of the silent pictures will be accompanied with live piano.

(Full program details at www.sfi.se/sv/cinemateket/Stockholm/Aktuella-serier/Anna-Q-Nilsson - Swedish language only)

SILENT SPOTLIGHT

Gareth Hughes - Desert Padre

Gareth Hughes began acting at a very young age in Wales and at 17 traveled to London. He joined the Welsh Players and went on a failed tour of America. Gareth decided to stay stateside and ended up very successful in theater on both coasts.

After appearing in many the-

atre productions such as *Little Miss Llewellyn* and *The New Word*, Gareth was handpicked by J.M.Barrie to star in a film based on his book *Sentimental Tommy*, released in 1921. In total, Hughes made forty five films from 1918 to 1931, including early films *Mrs. Wiggs of The Cabbage Patch* (1919), *Eyes of Youth* (1919), and *The Midnight Girl* (1925). His talent garnered respect and praise from many filmmakers and literary contemporaries. American playwright and novelist Thornton Wilder considered his work to be “Sheer genius and poetry” while journalist Fulton Oursler described him as “the charm boy to end all charm boys.”



At the height of his popularity Gareth was earning as much as \$2000 a week and was under contract to big film studios of the time including Fox and MGM. In 1929, Gareth lost his fortune in the Wall Street market crash and was left penniless, but he carried on making films until 1931 when he appeared in *Scarce Heads*. As the film offers began to dry up, he decided to leave the world of film and return to his first love, the theatre.

In the early 1940’s he joined the Protestant Episcopal Society of St. John the Evangelist in Massachusetts and adopted the name of Brother David. By chance he heard that a mis-

sionary was needed in a place called St. Ann Chapel, Fort McDermitt, on the Oregon-Nevada border. There he had his first encounter with the Paiute Indian tribe, a relationship that lasted for the next fourteen years. Later his parish included Pyramid Lake Reservation, where he was called "Bro."

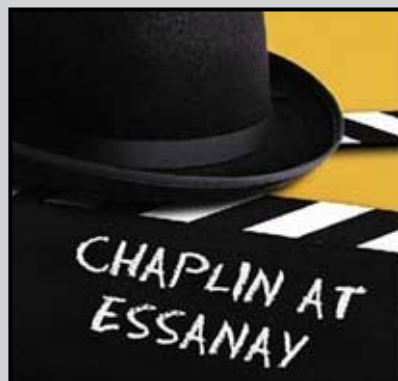
Hughes spent his retirement at the Motion Picture Country Home in Woodland Hills and passed away on October 1st, 1965, following a long illness. (Info courtesy of Kelvin Guy)

BOOK CORNER

CHAPLIN AT ESSANAY: A FILM ARTIST IN TRANSITION

By James L. Neibaur

When Charlie Chaplin left Keystone Studios for more money and greater creative control at Essanay Film Manufacturing Company, he added more depth to his character, more thought to his direction, and more substance to his humor: at Essanay, he grew from a comedian to a true cinematic artist.



This work carefully examines all sixteen Chaplin comedies produced at Essanay, showing Chaplin as an artist in transition from the knockabout Keystone farces to more refined,

sometimes brilliant Mutual productions. From *His New Job* (1915) to *Triple Trouble* (1918), the book covers each film with key details, a history of its production, and valuable commentary that places the picture in context within Chaplin's canon.



JACK LONDON IN PARADISE

By Paul Malmont

Explorer. Social activist. Romantic. Self-educated genius. *White Fang*. *Call of the Wild*. *Martin Eden*. *The Sea-Wolf*. Generations worldwide have been thrilled by his tales, probably never realizing how true to life they really were. By the time Jack was forty, no American was more famous, and in the winter of 1915 the great writer set sail on one last adventure. But in this story of that adventure, he is being hunted.

Hobart Bosworth -- an aging matinee idol and filmmaker -- is desperate for one more Jack London picture to save his career. Hollywood machinations have driven a wedge between him and his old friend and now he has to track Jack and his wife, Charmian, from the mysterious ruins of their once-magnificent Wolf House across

the Pacific to the volcanic islands of Hawaii. (<http://paulmalmont.com>)

ON DVD

WEISS-O-RAMA

As the Silent Era drew to a close, the Brothers Weiss (low-budget independent producers of westerns and serials) entered the silent comedy business with a vengeance. These two-reel shorts are forgotten little gems of laughter, featuring genuine comedy greats (such as Ben Turpin and Snub Pollard) plying their trades for the last time before talkies came in vogue. In new, sparkling transfers from the original 35mm camera negatives, these comedies look as fresh and funny as when originally released, with music by top silent film accompanists Philip C. Carli and David B. Drazin, and commentaries by Film Historian Richard M. Roberts. (www.amazon.com)

MOMENTS IN SILENCE

March 26, 1910 – Film stars Florence Lawrence and King Baggot publicly use their own names.

April 15, 1915 – Supreme Court invalidates all Motion Picture Patent Corporation's patents.

May 11, 1927 – Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences founded.

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