

THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 04 • NUMBER 02 • MAR/APR 2010

TORONTO SILENT FILM FESTIVAL MAKES DEBUT IN APRIL 2010

CANADA. The inaugural **Toronto Silent Film Festival** will be a first of its kind for Toronto, Ontario. While many organizations, such as the Ontario Cinematheque, Toronto Film Society, TIFF, and the Revue Cinema, have showcased silents in the past, this is the first festival devoted entirely to the era to further raise awareness of silent films as an entertaining and viable art form while building a new audience for its future survival.

The festival will also serve as a spotlight for a variety of musical talent to play alongside these screen gems in some of the best venues around the city.



TSFF hopes to become the face of a charitable endeavor dedicated to raising funds for film preservation and presentation, financially assist students who wish to enroll in mo-

tion picture conservation programs, and support fellow exhibitors that screen silent pictures.

The selection of films running for five nights in April includes a stop at the Fox Theater on **Thursday, April 8th**, to fall under the swashbuckling spell of *The Black Pirate* (1926) with Douglas Fairbanks.



Sunday, April 11th will bring an afternoon of giggles and gaffes at the Revue Cinema with the superb comedy program *A Thousand Laughs* where programmer Chris Seguin introduces the audience to a great selection of shorts such as *Too Many Mamas* (1924) with Charley Chase, *Breezing Along* (1927) with Lloyd Hamilton, and *Looking for Trouble* (1919) with Snub Pollard.

Finally, the program takes a trip to Innis Town Hall on **Tuesday, April 13th**, where renowned jazz musician Richard Underhill and the members of *Astrogroove* will add their own original spin to the Sovi-

et avant garde wonder *Man With a Movie Camera* (1928) that is sure to add fire to this mind-binding feature. (www.ebk-ink.com/tsff for tickets and full schedule)

COWBOYS OF THE SILVER SCREEN

Stamp Collection Unveiled

The U.S. Postal Service is paying tribute to the **Cowboys of the Silver Screen** with a set of commemorative collector stamps available for purchase beginning **April 17th, 2010**.

Among the elite selection of honorees are silent actors William S. Hart and Tom Mix, who were a part of a handful of early film talent that helped define the American Western genre and turned it into a popular form of entertainment. Both stamps feature the illustrative talent of freelance artist Robert Rodriguez, whose work has been featured on more than a dozen previous stamps.



Rodriguez based his portrait of William S. Hart on a likeness of the actor that appeared on a poster for the epic film *Tumbleweeds* (1925), and the portrait of Tom Mix is based on a likeness that appeared on the movie poster *Cupid's Round Up* (1918).

(Visit www.usps.com)

TST

Roscoe Arbuckle's **PLANTATION CAFE**

After Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle's career was deep-sixed by one of the biggest scandals of its day, he tried his hands at a few things, not the least of which was **Fatty Arbuckle's Plantation Cafe**.

Lavishly decorated by the head

by Mabel Normand (it was her last public appearance). Numerous luminaries were in attendance, including Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, Bebe Daniels and Buster Keaton. Arbuckle performed to the delight of the full house -- and



of the MGM art department, the cafe opened in 1928 with star-studded fanfare, performances by the Talmadge sisters and was part, along with the Cotton Club and King's Tropical Inn, of the hopping Culver City club scene. Culver City was close to the coast and convenient for the bootleggers to bring in their wares. These clubs drew the non-famous in hopes of dancing side by side with the stars while listening to the Henry Halstead Orchestra.

On opening night, the club's name was spelled out on the front lawn in flowers and Arbuckle was presented with a life-sized statue of himself made entirely of blossoms gifted

continued to do so on a regular basis.

Los Angeles is a fickle town and when the stock market crashed in 1929, the Plantation Cafe suddenly found itself empty as even the rich and famous stayed home and pinched pennies. Arbuckle sold his interest in the restaurant and nightclub and went east to New York, where he died three years later.

Arbuckle may have lived a substantial amount of his life in undeserved infamy, but he left us with many gifts, including being a big part of the original Sunset Strip when it was in Culver City. (http://laist.com/2009/04/11/lais-tory_fatty_arbuckles_plantation.php)

LONDON MEETS ITS WATERLOO

LONDON. The Philharmonia Orchestra at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall will present a live screening of *Waterloo*, Karl Grune's 1928 epic picture, along with the UK premiere of Carl Davis's specially composed soundtrack for the feature, on **Thursday, April 22nd**.

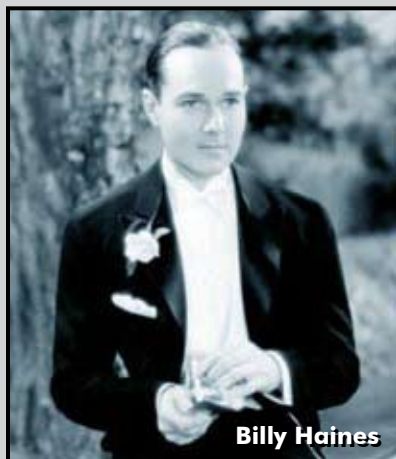
Waterloo was filmed in Munich at the very end of the silent film period, and tells the story of Napoleon's defeat from the German point of view. This remarkable film features a number of virtuoso set-pieces and extraordinary cinematic effects: the spectacular crowd and battlefield scenes are particularly notable.

Silent film specialist John Riley will make introductory remarks regarding the film at the start of the evening and a pre-concert talk is scheduled for 6:00 PM. (Visit www.philharmonia.co.uk for ticket info)



LOOKING FOR BILLY HAINES

NEW YORK CITY. Running March 25th through May 22nd at Theatre Row's Lion Theatre, is the Off-Broadway Stage Show *Looking for Billy Haines*. The play is a funny, touching love story set in present-day New York City about a struggling actor auditioning for a role in a film about the life of William Haines. Haines was one of the first openly gay movie stars of the 1920s and 30s who gave up his film career to stay in a relationship with his longtime partner Jimmie Shields.



Billy Haines

The story begins with an actor, named Jamie Hollis, recounting a pre-audition nightmare. Though his audition is for a dramatic movie, Jamie dreams he is wearing tap shoes and has just started taking lessons only to discover he can dance like Gene Kelly or Fred Astaire and engages in a vibrant dance number.

When Jamie gets a callback for the movie to play the role of Billy's lover, he starts researching every avenue that recounts Billy's personal

and professional life. Whenever he imagines Haines, he envisions him as the Mystery Man with the charismatic smile that haunts his dreams. Soon after, Jamie finds himself longing for that same kind of connection and devotion in his own relationship. (www.lookingforbillyhaines.com)

A NIGHT AT THE NOT-SO-SILENT MOVIES

MAY 14th and 15th

MALIBU, CA. The Montgomery Arts House for Music and Architecture is nestled in the beautiful foothills overlooking Zuma Beach in Malibu, California, and is home to extraordinary classical music and dance performances in a unique space designed by Eric Lloyd Wright, grandson of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Montgomery Arts House Composer-in-Residence, Maria Newman, has scored a major library of classic silent films based on her association with the Mary Pickford Foundation, Timeline Films, and Milestone Films (just to name a few) and currently presides over the **Malibu Coast Silent Film Series**.

As both a part of the regular **Winter Season Kairos Musical Soirees**, and the **Annual Summer Season Malibu Coast Music Festival**, classic feature length silent films and silent film shorts are screened regularly with world-class performances of original music. Maria Newman and the Malibu Friends of Music will host **A Night at the Not-So-Silent Movies** with a two night presentation of Mary Pickford short subject films in May. Along with distinguished guest speakers Andy Stern, Hugh Munro Neely, and Scott Tallal, the

Malibu Chamber Players will provide live orchestral accompaniment to four rarely viewed Pickford shorts, *The Dream* (1911), *What Daisy Said* (1910), *The Gibson Goddess* (1909), and *As it is in Life* (1910). Both evening concerts are sponsored in part by A&F Productions, the Mary Pickford Library, and the Malibu Coast Youth Symphony. (www.malibufriendsofmusic.org)

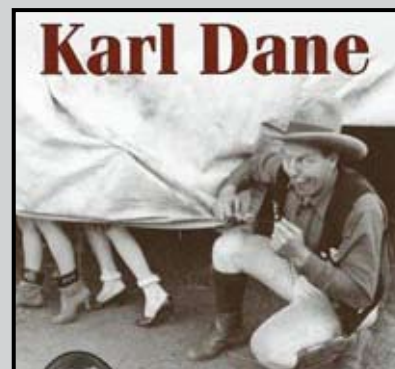
BOOK CORNER

KARL DANE:

A BIOGRAPY AND FILMOGRAPHY

By Laura Petersen Balogh

Karl Dane's life was a Cinderella story gone horribly wrong. The immigrant from Copenhagen was rapidly transformed from a machinist to a Hollywood star after his turn as the tobacco-chewing Slim in *The Big Parade* in 1925. After that, Dane appeared in more than 40 films with such luminaries as Lillian Gish, John Gilbert and William Haines until development of talkies virtually ruined his career.



The most famous casualty of the transition from silent to sound film, Dane reportedly lost his career because of his accent. Broke and alone at the height of the Depression, he committed suicide in 1934. (www.mcfarlandpub.com)

ON DVD

TALMADGE SISTERS COLLECTIONS RELEASED

Kino International is proud to release for the first time ever on DVD **The Talmadge Sisters Collection**, a two-DVD series making available four previously unreleased (on home video) films starring Norma and Constance Talmadge. These sisters were two of America's most influential early cinema stars, along with their sister Natalie Talmadge. The three of them were born into a poor family in Brooklyn, NY, and their film career peaked in the 1920s when the Talmadge sisters worked with top-tier directors such as Frank Lloyd, Clarence Brown, and Frank Borzage.

The Norma Talmadge Collection offers the feature film *Kiki* (1926) about a high-spirited Parisian gamine determined to become a chorus girl and win the heart of the Follies manager, and *Within The Law* (1923) that follows a shopgirl who is unjustly accused of stealing.



The Constance Talmadge Collection brings us *Her Night of Romance* (1924) about an heiress who travels to England in disguise to discourage fortune-hunters and falls in love with a handsome nobleman, plus *Her Sister From Paris* (1925) with Constance in comedic dual roles as a frumpy-but-faithful housewife and her sophisticated twin sister. (www.kino.com)



The Talmadge Sisters

THE ITALIAN STRAW HAT

René Clair's sparkling comedy of manners is a witty, delicate, inspired satire on propriety and behavior in the bourgeois mind-set.

Transposing the action of the perennial stage farce from 1851 to a summer wedding day in 1895 – the birth of cinema – Clair recalls detail, costume and design captured by the first movies. *The Italian Straw Hat* triumphantly survives its 1927 journey from stage to screen; a dozen eccentric characters, superbly acted, who try desperately to keep up appearances in the face of disaster.

This is the only fully complete edition of *The Italian Straw Hat* ever made available to American viewers. The film was mastered in high definition at 19 frames per second from the original 35mm negative

used for the English release in 1930. As that version had been subjected to about twenty edits, all the missing pieces were restored from an original French print. Intertitles are in English, with optional subtitles of the original French text.



There is a choice of two new accompaniments, one by the Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra and the other by pianist Philip Carli, each providing a unique interpretation on this delightful film. Bonus materials include a short film by René Clair, *The Eiffel Tower* (1928) and Ferdinand Zecca's *Fun After The Wedding* (1907). (www.flickeralley.com)

MOMENTS IN SILENCE

March 26, 1923 – Famed French stage and early film actress Sarah Bernhardt dies.

April 23, 1896 – *Vitascope* premieres

May 16, 1929 – Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel hosts first Academy Awards banquet.

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