

# THE SILENT TREATMENT

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## NEW ZEALAND-AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP TO SAVE “LOST” SILENT FILMS



John Ford's *Upstream* (1927)

SAN FRANCISCO. The New Zealand Film Archive and the National Film Preservation Foundation have announced a partnership to preserve and make available an astonishing collection of 75 American motion pictures that no longer survive in the United States—and have been unseen anywhere in decades.

Heading the list is John Ford's full-length feature *Upstream* (1927), a backstage romance involving an aspiring Shakespearian actor and the daring target girl from a knife-throwing act. Only about 15% of silent-era films by the four-time Academy Award-winning director are thought to survive.

Among the other important finds are *Maytime* (1923), an early feature with Clara Bow; the first surviving film directed by and starring Mabel Normand; an episode of the popular serial *The Active Life of Dolly of the Dailies*, starring Mary Fuller as the unstoppable woman reporter; West-

erns made in Tucson, San Antonio, and Yosemite; the only known narrative feature showcasing the Miller Brothers Wild West Show; comic shorts starring Charles Puffy, Snub Pollard, and Joe Murphy; an industrial film about the making of Stetson hats; and a number of documentaries and newsreels. About 70% of the nitrate prints are complete, and more than two-thirds have color tinting.



*Maytime* (1923)

The “lost” films will be preserved over the next three years

and accessed through the five major American silent film archives: the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, George Eastman House, the Library of Congress, the Museum of Modern Art, and the UCLA Film & Television Archive, which are collaborating with the NFPF on this project. Copies of the complete films will also be publicly available in New Zealand and viewable on the NFPF Web site.

“We are delighted to collaborate with the NFPF to preserve and make available these notable films,” said Jamie Lean, Division Director, the New Zealand Film Archive. “Hundreds of American motion pictures from the silent era exist in archives outside the United States. We hope that our example will encourage other international partners who have safeguarded “lost” American films for decades to share their long-unseen treasures with the world community.” ([www.filmpreservation.org](http://www.filmpreservation.org))

## THE GOLEM: READY FOR REVIVAL

Topol, the 74 year-old movie legend from *Fiddler On The Roof*, is attached to star in a new \$5 million Yiddish-language version of *The Golem*. The film is a classic, Frankenstein-style story based on an ancient Jewish legend of a clay statue brought to life by a rabbi. Silent actor Paul Wegener co-directed, co-wrote, and starred as the original giant figure in three different film versions of the legendary figure produced and released in Germany between 1915-1920. The most widely

recognized of the three films was the final installment *Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam*.



Stuart Urban is writing and producing the film, which is due to shoot in Prague next year. Topol will play Maharal, the 16th century chief rabbi of Prague who created a golem to protect the Prague ghetto from anti-semitic pogroms.

Urban is producing the film through his London-based company Cyclops Vision. The film is being put together as a UK/Czech/German co-production and Urban is working with Czech producer Rudolf Bierman and German producer Jens Meurer of Ego! Tossell. ([www.screendaily.com/festivals/cannes/topol-takes-on-the-golem/5014190.article?referrer=RSS](http://www.screendaily.com/festivals/cannes/topol-takes-on-the-golem/5014190.article?referrer=RSS))

#### FESTIVAL ROUND-UP

### THE FORSSA SILENT MOVIE FESTIVAL

August 27th — 29th

FINLAND. This year's eleventh international **Forssa Silent Movie Festival** running **August 27th - 29th** at the Elävienvuonon Teatteri in Forssa will once again bring more classics to the silver screen. The central focus for this season will highlight the si-

lent film work of legendary director John Ford. Ford is best remembered for his Western films released during the sound era, and from the 65 movies he directed in the silent era, only 15 are known to survive. The four silents selected to run this year include *The Shamrock Handicap* (1926), *Hangman's House* (1928), *Three Bad Men* (1926) and *The Iron Horse* (1925) – all which portray Ford's most beloved themes, Ireland and Westerns.



*The Shamrock Handicap*

The program will also mark the 80th anniversary of the passing of the versatile actor Lon Chaney with a screening of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923), a marvelous movie and a perfect example of Chaney's transformation skills. Additional film presentations include *Broken Blossoms* (1919), one of director D.W. Griffith's great commercial successes, further cementing his position as a powerhouse director of the early movie industry; plus the eagerly requested feature *Queen Kelly* (1928), directed by Erich Von Stroheim and starring the lovely Ms. Gloria Swanson. All movies playing during the three day festival will be accompanied with live music ranging from a single musician to an entire symphony orchestra. (*Full Festival Details at [www.forssasilentmovie.com](http://www.forssasilentmovie.com)*)

## CINECON 46

September 2nd — 6th

LOS ANGELES. The 46th Annual **Cinecon Classic Film Festival** and movie collectibles show will take place in Hollywood, California, over Labor Day Weekend, **September 2nd through the 6th, 2010**. Cinecon is the oldest and the grandest of the movie related fan festivals, and Cinecon 46 will offer an outstanding five day program of unusual films, exciting celebrity guests and one of the best movie memorabilia marts in the nation.

Cinecon is highly regarded among film fans for screening rare and unusual films of the silent and early sound era and combs through film archives and Hollywood studio vaults to select often forgotten gems that deserve a fresh look and reappraisal. At Cinecon, there is something for everyone; comedy, drama, musicals, and Westerns, all screened at the restored 1922 Grauman's Egyptian Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard.



This season's silent film highlights include: the west coast premiere of the recently rediscovered short *A Thief Catcher* (1914), featuring Charlie Chaplin in an early role; the sole surviving reel of the lost Colleen Moore flapper feature, *Flaming*

*Youth* (1923); *Crooked Streets* (1920) with kidnapping, opium smuggling, and secret government agents woven into this unusual action-packed drama; *The Breaking Point* (1924) starring the seductive Nita Naldi in a narrative of murder and amnesia; *The Case of Becky* (1915), with Blanche Sweet falling victim to the powers of Balzamo the hypnotist, and *Down On The Farm* (1920) one of the few surviving feature-length comedies directed by Mack Sennett about a girl who is bartered by her father to pay off a mortgage and thwarts the attempt by forging a letter sent by a "mystery man" claiming she is already betrothed. ([www.cinecon.org](http://www.cinecon.org))

## SLAPSTICK FASHION

### THE TRAMP GOES "COUTURE"



By Tim Blanks (excerpted, 06/25/10)

PARIS. The biannual John Galliano menswear spectacular began this season with a tip of Charlie Chaplin's bowler hat to his silent masterpiece, *Modern Times*. Dressed as Chaplin, model Scott Barnhill tumbled out of a huge clock backdrop, and Galliano's movie madness began to unspool. Why Charlie? The rationale was that the designer wanted to make a state-

ment about new proportions in menswear, and the Little Tramp's shrunken jacket and baggy pants seemed like a good place to start. Hence, Galliano's dropped-crotch pants and jackets fitted to the body (exaggeratedly so for the show). A trench in a Lurex military twill might not have been specifically Chaplin-esque, but it captured his flagrant dandyism.

Chaplin was followed on the catwalk by Buster Keaton, porkpie hat, lugubrious expression, three-piece suit, and all. (Full article: [www.style.com/fashionshows/review/S2011MEN-JNGALLNO](http://www.style.com/fashionshows/review/S2011MEN-JNGALLNO))

## VOICES FROM THE PAST

### VALENTINO DETESTS "SHEIK" ROLE

Fears That Male Fans Will Think He is Just Ladies Matinee Idol

(Excerpted Article: *The Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, 04/04/1923)

"I will live down the Sheik" declared Rodolph Valentino yesterday morning in his private car in the Union Station, where he faced a group of newspaper men and women. "Anyone who calls me the Sheik is my bitter enemy," and he smiled with unsheiklike simplicity.

If the flappers who thronged the station hoped to catch a glimpse of the latest screen idol and his bride, they were bitterly disappointed. For not once did the handsome Rodolph allow himself to be seen, nor did he appear to take special interest in the homage which was quite evidently and audibly visited upon him.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Valentino, after the reporters had managed to penetrate beyond the maze of sec-

retaries and personal representatives who barred the way, "that the public misunderstands me because of the ridiculous roles I have had to play under the terms of my recent contract with Famous Players-Lasky. I heartily detested the roles of the 'Sheik' and the 'Young Rajah,' and played them under vigorous protest. A few more parts like that and I would pass rapidly into the oblivion that meets players of such vapid characters. In these roles I may have gained a few feminine admirers, whose appreciation, of course, I do not discount, but this gain could in no way compensate for the number of admirers I lost among the men. I want to prove to the men that I am a man's man, not a matinee idol, a term which I regard as only a polite name for a dumbbell.

"*The Sheik* was a travesty. I did not realize this until I saw the picture all put together. They had me ranting through scenes, flashing my teeth, popping my eyes nearly out, and acting like a person in a fit."



Rodolph flashed his teeth and flicked the ashes from his cigarette. "The typical Oriental is reserved and impassive. His religion teaches him never to betray emotion, but to maintain a calm dignity. I tried to explain to my director, Mr. Melford, that this

fellow as an Arab, and not an excitable Sicilian. My director replied that the Sheik was, neither. He was an Englishman. I replied that Englishmen also were phlegmatic, But Mr. Melford is Irish and I am Italian. We had considerable difficulty understanding each other, perhaps on this account, though we remained the best of friends.”

Valentino, when asked at what date he expected to begin work on pictures again replied that the injunction forbidding him to appear in motion pictures was in force only pending the outcome of the suit, which he has every expectation of winning.

## BOOK CORNER

### INSIDE THE HOLLYWOOD FAN MAGAZINE:

**A History of Star Makers, Fabricators & Gossip Mongers**



By Anthony Slide

The fan magazine has often been viewed simply as a publicity tool, a fluffy exercise in self-promotion by the film industry. But as an arbiter of good and bad taste, as a source

of knowledge, and as a gateway to the fabled land of Hollywood and its stars, the American fan magazine represents a fascinating and indispensable chapter in journalism and popular culture.

**Inside the Hollywood Fan Magazine** provides the definitive history of this artifact. It charts the development of the fan magazine from the golden years when Motion Picture Story Magazine and Photoplay first appeared in 1911 to its decline into provocative headlines and titillation in the 1960s and afterward.

This major cultural history includes a new interview with 1970s media personality Rona Barrett, as well as original commentary from a dozen editors and writers. The book is enhanced by an appendix documenting some 268 American fan magazines and includes detailed publication histories. ([www.upress.state.ms.us/books/1260](http://www.upress.state.ms.us/books/1260))

## ON DVD

### THE VON STERNBERG COLLECTION

The Criterion Collection has announced their upcoming DVD boxset **Three Silent Classics by Josef von Sternberg (1927-1928)**. The collection includes *Underworld* (1927), *The Last Command* (1928) and *The Docks of New York* (1928). This DVD collection of three late silent era films directed by Josef von Sternberg features new, restored high-definition digital transfers of the films and each will be accompanied by two different musical scores: one small orchestra score by Robert Israel for all three films; one score for *Underworld* and *The Last Command* by the Alloy Or-

chestra; and a piano and voice piece by Donald Sosin and Joanna Seaton for *The Docks of New York*.



The collection's supplemental material includes visual essays by UCLA film professor Janet Bergstrom & film scholar Tag Gallagher, a 1968 Swedish television interview with Sternberg himself, and a 96-page booklet featuring the original film treatment for *Underworld* by Ben Hecht, plus essays by Geoffrey O'Brien, Anton Kaes, and Luc Sante, and an excerpt from von Sternberg's biography, *Fun in a Chinese Laundry*, on actor Emil Jannings. ([www.criterion.com](http://www.criterion.com))

## MOMENTS IN SILENCE

**July 1, 1919** – Charles Chaplin begins filming *The Kid*

**July 2, 1929** – Actress Gladys Brockwell dies in auto accident

**August 12, 1895** – Leon Gaumont and Company formed

**August 25, 1908** – Romeo Bossetti creates film actors relief fund in Paris

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