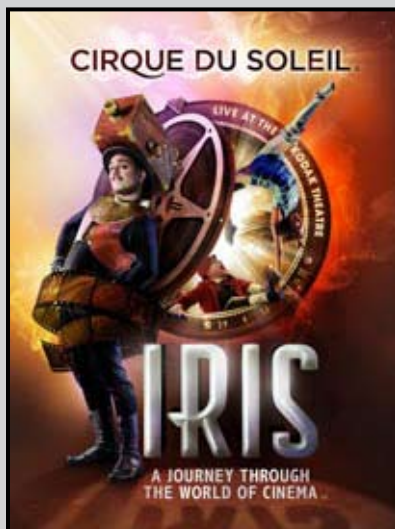


# THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 05 • NUMBER 04 • JUL/AUG 2011

## IRIS: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF CINEMA

HOLLYWOOD. With 72 performers, 200 costumes, and 8,300 square feet of floor surface, Cirque Du Soleil's new mega production **IRIS: A Journey Through the World of Cinema** is taking up permanent residence at the Kodak Theater at Hollywood & Highland starting July 2011.



IRIS is a lyrical, fanciful, kinetic foray into the seventh art. Bringing together dance, acrobatics, live video, filmed sequences and animation, the show takes spectators on a fantastic voyage through the history of cinema and its genres, taking them into the heart of the movie-making process. From illustration to animation, black and white to color, silent films to talkies, fixed shots to swooping camera movements, spectators witness the poetic construction/deconstruction of this art as an object and as a way of transcending reality.

Written and directed by Philippe Decouflé, the founder and artistic director of the acclaimed French dance troupe Compagnie DCA, with musical composition by Grammy®- and Emmy Award®-winner Danny Elfman, IRIS will join other Cirque du Soleil resident productions such as *Mystère™* and *Zumanity™*, as a massive multi sensory event complete with 174 loudspeakers, 603 lighting features, 20 video projectors, and 166,000 watts of sound. (Tickets available at [www.cirquedusoleil.com](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com))

### SOMERVILLE THEATRE SCREENS KEATON

MASSACHUSETTS. The **Somerville Theatre** first opened its doors on May 11, 1914 as part of the Hobbs Building in the heart of Davis Square, and it was designed for stage shows, vaudeville, opera, and that new fad – motion pictures. The theatre was only one of the Hobbs Building attractions, which also included a basement café; bowling alley and billiards hall; ten ground floor storefronts; and the Crystal Ballroom on the second floor.



In 1926, the Hobbs family leased and subsequently sold the theatre to Arthur F. Viano and throughout the next four decades the Somerville remained a prime neighborhood movie house. But as the 1990's approached, movie attendance dropped considerably and something had to be done to keep the theatre competitive.



In 1996, the bowling alleys in the basement and a portion of the first floor retail space were gutted to create modern bathrooms and two new cinemas. Two more screens were built in the former ballroom space on the second floor, and the theatre lobby was expanded by incorporating an adjacent storefront. In recent years, the Somerville became one of the few venues in New England to offer beer and wine to film and event patrons, plus upgraded seating and a revamped projection booth enabling the theater to screen pictures in 35mm and 70mm formats.

On Sunday, **August 7th** at 7 p.m. the Somerville Theater is turning back the clock to present **Steamboat Bill, Jr.** (1928) – Buster Keaton's last independent silent feature that finds him as the bumbling son of a rundown riverboat's rough captain. The evening will open with the Keaton comedy shorts **The High Sign** (1921) and **Cops** (1922). All films will be presented in 35mm with live music by Jeff Rapsis. (<http://feitheatres.com/somerville-theatre/>)

# JANET GAYNOR

## Celebrated at

# CAPITOLFEST 9

August 12th through 14th

NEW YORK. **Capitolfest** is Central New York's premiere summer Cinephile film festival—a place to see rarely-shown and newly-discovered films of the silent and early talkie era. The event is held annually at the historic 1,788-seat Capitol Theatre movie palace, which opened in December, 1928.



The focus of the festival this year is Janet Gaynor, Fox Picture's leading lady of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Capitolfest will be running a mix of Miss Gaynor's more famous pictures, such as *The Johnstown Flood* (1926) and *Sunrise* (1927), as well as some of her more obscure early work, including Universal's 1926 Edmund Cobb short, *Pep of the Lazy "J."*

In addition to the Gaynor tribute, there will be an extra session on Friday afternoon providing a wider variety of motion pictures for the early birds. Other films selected for Capitolfest's silent film line-up include *A Ship Comes In* (1928) featuring Rudolph Schildkraut and Lousie Dresser on Friday, August 12th; *North of 36* (1924) starring Jack Holt and Ernest Torrance on Saturday, the 13th; and

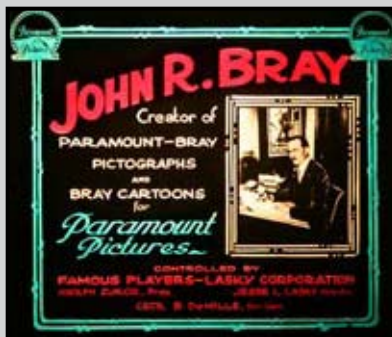
*What Happened to Jones?* (1926) with Reginald Denny and Marion Nixon on Sunday, the 14th.

All films are shown in 35 mm on the theatre's carbon-arc, variable-speed projectors with live accompaniment played on our original 3-manual, 9-rank Möller Grand Theatre Organ. ([www.romecapitol.com](http://www.romecapitol.com))

## THE BRAY ANIMATION PROJECT

"*A Bray a day, Movie Fans pray*" was one of several clever slogans used in a 1921 pamphlet promoting the exhibition of Bray Studios animated cartoons. A leading figure in early twentieth-century comics, J.R. Bray opened the first successful commercially-oriented animated cartoon studio in 1913.

If you're an animation history enthusiast, the newly developed **Bray Animation Project** website is the perfect research tool devoted to the 1913-1927 output of animated films from the Bray Studios in New York City. Combining imagery, videos, essays, and the most complete filmography published to date, the site pays homage to a company whose product has been painfully understudied.



Noted film and comics historians David Gerstein, Charlie Judkins, Mark Newgarden, Ray Pointer, Tom

Stathes, and Jack Theakston have all provided informative texts for the site. The extensive cartoon filmography can be viewed either chronologically or by series and indicates whether each film is lost or accounted for.

There is also a discussion board available on the site where film scholars, historians, fans and surfers are encouraged to post messages and connect with others through the site. (<http://bryanimation.weebly.com>)

## SILENT SPOTLIGHT

### L. FRANK BAUM: THE WIZARD OF OZCOT



By Allan R. Ellenberger (excerpted article)

**Lyman Frank Baum** was born in Chittenango, New York on May 15, 1856. After graduating from Syracuse Academy he began newspaper work in 1880, and two years later he married Maud Gage of Fayetteville, New York. Baum was the editor of the *Dakota Pioneer* of Aberdeen, South Dakota from 1888 to 1890 and the *Chicago Show Window*, from 1897 to 1902. During that time he began writing books and plays. His first effort was "**Mother Goose in Prose**," which was published in 1897.

One of the five books he published in 1900, based on stories he had told his sons and illustrated by W. W. Denslow, was "**The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**," which instantly broke records for sales and made Baum a celebrity.

More Oz books followed and over the next two decades he wrote over 35 non-Oz books under various pseudonyms aimed at various audiences. Always looking for new channels for his creativity, Baum founded a company to produce hand-colored slides featuring characters from his Oz books. These were shown while he narrated and an orchestra played background music.

With his health failing, Baum and his wife came to California in January 1910 to create his own fairyland and found the sparsely settled village called Hollywood, which at the time was mostly citrus groves. He soon bought a plot of ground on which he built a two-story frame house that he named "Ozcot." In 1910, the street was known as Magnolia but was renamed Cherokee two years later and at 1749 N. Cherokee Avenue, Baum wrote many of his best loved "Oz" books, including "**The Emerald City of Oz**" (1910), "**The Patchwork Girl of Oz**" (1913), and "**The Lost Princess of Oz**" (1917).



Baum's arrival in Hollywood, just a year before motion pictures became established there, made it inevitable that he would be drawn into the

fledgling industry. An earlier attempt at filmmaking in Chicago lost him a great deal of money, and in June 1911 he was forced to declare bankruptcy. A later venture into the film business, the **Oz Film Mfg. Company** in 1914 at the corner of Santa Monica Blvd. and Lodi, produced six movies but experienced severe distribution problems and also failed.



Baum and his wife Maud lived quietly at Ozcot, gardening, writing stories, and answering the hundreds of letters he received from Oz-struck children. In February of 1918, Baum took ill and was admitted to Angelus Hospital where he was operated on. Maud blamed the illness on the hard work of his newest novel, "**The Tin Woodman of Oz**," which was due to be published in the fall.

Baum, left immobile due to the illness, was restricted to minor tasks throughout the day. After a 24-hour coma, L. Frank Baum died at Ozcot on May 6, 1919, supposedly uttering "Now we can cross the Shifting Sands" just a minute before expiring.

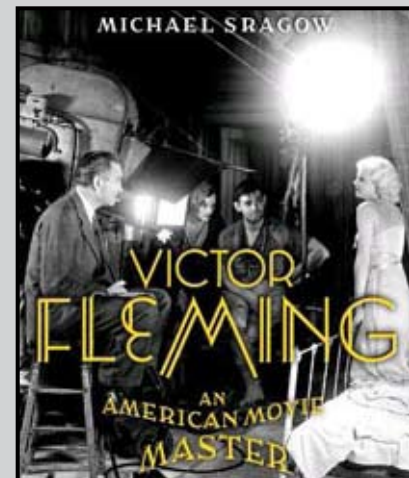
Funeral services were held at the Little Church of the Flowers in Forest Lawn Cemetery in Glendale. Rev. E. P. Ryland, who was a close friend of the author, officiated and during his remarks said of Baum: "He was a man who knew the heart of a child, and was a friend of men." Two of Baum's works, "**The Magic of Oz**" (1919) and "**Glinda of Oz**" (1920)

were both published posthumously. Ozcot was razed in the late 1950s and a non-descript apartment building was built in its place. (Full article at <http://allanellenberger.com/>)

## BOOK CORNER

### VICTOR FLEMING: An American Movie Master

Victor Fleming was the most sought-after director in Hollywood's golden age, renowned for his ability to make films across an astounding range of genres: westerns, earthy sexual dramas, family entertainment, screwball comedies, buddy pictures, romances, and adventures. Fleming is remembered for the two most iconic movies of the period, *Gone With the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz*, but the more than forty films he directed also included classics like *The Way of All Flesh*, *Red Dust*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Captains Courageous*. Paradoxically, his talent for knowing how to make the necessary film at the right time, rather than remaking the same movie in different guises, has resulted in Victor Fleming's relative obscurity in our time.

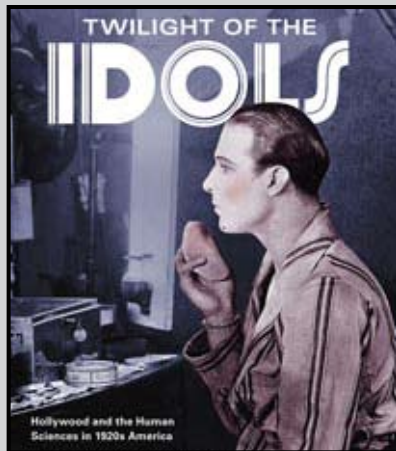


Author Michael Sragow restores the director to the pantheon of our greatest filmmakers and fills a gaping

hole in Hollywood history with this vibrant portrait of a man at the center of the most exciting era in American filmmaking and gives us the story of a man whose extraordinary personal style was as thrilling, varied, and passionate as the stories he brought to the screen. ([www.randomhouse.com](http://www.randomhouse.com))

**TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS:**  
Hollywood and the Human Sciences  
in 1920s America

**Twilight of the Idols** revisits some of the sensational scandals of early Hollywood to evaluate their importance for our contemporary understanding of human deviance. By analyzing changes in the star system and by exploring the careers of individual stars—Wallace Reid, Rudolph Valentino, and Mabel Normand among them—author Mark Lynn Anderson shows how the era’s celebrity culture shaped public ideas about personality and human conduct and played a pivotal role in the emergent human sciences of psychology, anthropology, and sociology.

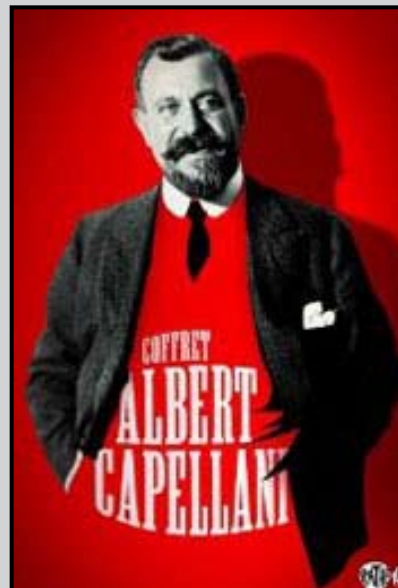


Anderson looks at motion picture stars who embodied various forms of deviance—narcotic addiction, criminality, sexual perversion, and racial indeterminacy. He considers how the

studios profited from popularizing ideas about deviance, and how the debates generated by the early Hollywood scandals continue to affect our notions of personality, sexuality, and public morals. ([www.ucpress.edu](http://www.ucpress.edu))

**ON DVD**

**ALBERT CAPELLANI  
BOX SET**



Rediscover almost 10 hours of programming filmed by one of the great masters of silent film: Albert Capellani. Director, producer and writer, plus artistic director of the Film Society of Authors and Men of Letters, he was one of the first filmmakers to shoot feature length films and to adapt prestigious works of French literature to the new medium.

The four disc DVD box set includes seven short subjects from his early film works all dated from 1906; four adaptations of masterpieces of French literature including *Germinal* (1913), and *Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge* (1914), and a 40 page booklet of essays about the filmmaker and notations on the restorations featured on this set. ([www.amazon.fr](http://www.amazon.fr))

**BUSTER KEATON:**  
The Short Films Collection

Authorized by the Buster Keaton estate and mastered in HD from 35mm archival film elements, **The Short Films Collection** gathers all of Keaton’s solo silent comedies in one monumental three-disc set.

Widely considered to be among Keaton’s finest work, the nineteen two-reel shorts are loaded with laughs, punctuated by breath-taking stunts, and bursting with raw creativity. Over the course of this three-year period, Keaton evolved from a successful slapstick comedian into one of cinema’s most inventive visual stylists, and became an enduring icon of American popular culture. ([kino.com](http://kino.com))



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