

THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 05 • NUMBER 05 • SEP/OCT 2011

EUROPE TRIUMPHS WITH RESTORATIONS OF "PHARAOH" AND "MANIA"



The Loves of Pharaoh

The Loves Of Pharaoh (1922) was prominent German Director Ernst Lubitsch's last big film production before leaving Europe to continue his career in America. Together with the great German star Emil Jannings playing the lead of Pharaoh Amenes, Lubitsch filmed this massive spectacle on the southern outskirts of Berlin where no expense was spared to build a huge Egyptian palace, an ancient city, and a gigantic Sphinx in real-size scale.



Before Restoration

The lead actors were clothed in lavish costumes and thousands of extras were employed to photograph the epic battle scenes.

For decades, no copy of *The Loves Of Pharaoh* was known to have survived following the 1930s until an incomplete tinted nitrate print was found in the Russian Gosfilmfond archive and restoration efforts commenced. In 2004 another fragment of the film was found in an Italian collection that was relocated to George Eastman House in New York, and the combination of the two prints complemented each other in such a way that *Pharaoh* could be reconstructed nearly to its entire original length.

The Loves Of Pharaoh is the first full feature film restoration using digital tinting technology. The original nitrate-based fragments were scanned image by image with a high-resolution 2K film scanner and

digitally restored and retouched.

Lubitsch authorized Eduard Künneke to compose an original symphonic score for the film, which has fortunately survived and was used to produce a new orchestral recording, adapted and synchronized to the restored film images thanks to a collaboration with ZDF/art. Audiences today can now see the nearly complete film, extensively restored and accompanied by a high-quality recording of the original score for the first time in 80 years.

Mania, the history of a cigarette factory worker (1918) is one of the first movies in the rich portfolio of the Polish actress Pola Negri. The 20 year old rising actress was already charming audiences with her exotic beauty, expressive eyes, and unique personality.



Pola Negri

Negri was put to good use by the Hungarian director Eugen Illés in a moving story of a young worker who sacrifices herself for the sake of art: to let the opera composed by her lover be seen by the public.

The movie was shot in Berlin in politically turbulent times. The great artistic value of *Mania* comes from the lively narration, interesting acting and characters, as well as the innovative camera operator's techniques that make it a most valuable relic of cinematography in the era of silent movies. The elaborate scenery was designed by Paul Leni, later known for his direction of such important movies as *Waxworks*, *The Man Who Laughs* and *The Cat & The Canary*.

Mania was acquired from a Czech collector and added to the archives of Filмотека Narodowa in 2006. The film was chosen for full reconstruction due to the advanced deterioration of the surviving source material. The print largely lacked perforations and had become extremely shrunken.

Before it could be scanned, a manual reconstruction was conducted and then 87,000 frames of *Mania* were recorded in DPX (Digital Picture Exchange) format before being sent for reconstruction, montage, conforming and color correction.

Both restorations are currently on exhibition in Europe and will soon tour the United States. Extended info and newly designed trailers advertising each film can be found at www.alpha-omega.de and www.mania-film.pl

MEDIA HISTORY DIGITAL LIBRARY PROJECT LAUNCHES

The history of American media industries exists in the magazines of their day, but are largely inaccessible to modern researchers. Primary materials, such as *Exhibitors Herald World* and *Photoplay* are of significant research value to media scholars, historians, and the general public; however, use of these resources is severely limited by necessary non-circulating access restrictions and/or

the lack of indexing or finding aids.

Using private funds, a pilot project is underway to digitize 300,000 journal pages, including volumes of *Moving Picture World* and *Photoplay*, and a range of additional materials that will appeal to varied research interests.



Several major libraries and the owner of the largest private collection of such materials are participating in the program. The goal of the **Media History Digital Library** project is to establish additional partnerships with libraries and archives for a joint digitization project to conserve and provide broad free access to these important resources.

For today's students, microfilm is an obsolete and irrelevant format. The original printed record of our audiovisual past is deteriorating, while the use of Google and other search engines are becoming the instruments of choice of a new generation of researchers. Involving various partners and their collections at multiple institutions will ensure that the best available original materials are digitized for conservation and free access purposes, that funds and grant opportunities will be maximized by a united effort, that inefficient duplicative efforts will be avoided, and that consistent standards and formats will be utilized to enhance search capa-

bilities across the digital collection.

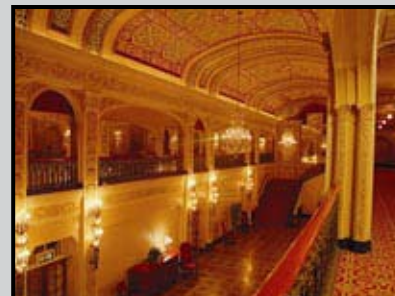
Each archive or library that participates agrees to offer its pre-1964 public domain journals for digitization. Each archive or library will provide an inventory of its holdings, perform condition inspections and pack selected materials for shipping. The project will pay transportation and reasonable insurance both ways. Any funds for digitization will be welcome, but not required.

The website is now online at: <http://mediahistoryproject.org>

A FRIGHT NIGHT EVENT: THE CAT AND THE CANARY

INDIANA. On May 14, 1928, the doors of the magnificent Emboyd Theatre opened in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Built as a movie palace and vaudeville house, the Emboyd was a majestic backdrop for the entertainment of the day and came complete with the seven-story, 150-room Indiana Hotel wrapped around the north and west sides of the theatre.

For nearly 25 years the biggest and brightest stars of stage and screen graced the Emboyd but by 1952, television and "talkies" slowly eroded the mainstay of the theatre and both it and the Indiana Hotel were sold to the Alliance Amusement Corporation and the name was changed to the **Embassy**.



In 1995, the Embassy underwent a major renovation to bring the theatre up to modern standards that in-

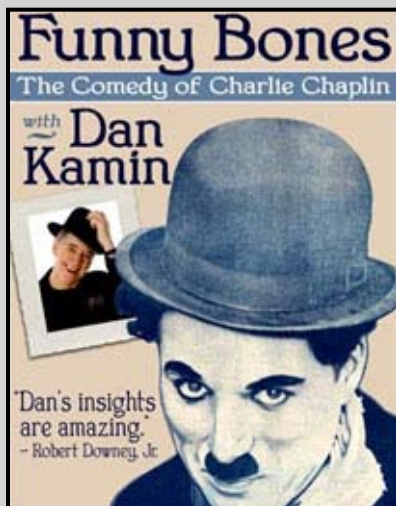
cluded a facelift for the hotel lobby and mezzanine. The renovation restored the stage and hotel to its former grandeur, once again making the Embassy the showplace of northern Indiana.

Dennis James will perform on the original Grande Page Pipe Organ as the Embassy Theater's hosts its annual "Fright Night" silent film screening of *The Cat and The Canary* (1927) on October 22nd. It's the classic terror tale of a mysterious figure stalking the halls of a haunted mansion preying on the overnight guests. (www.fwembassytheatre.org)

Funny Bones:

The Comedy of Charlie Chaplin
September 29th - October 2nd

AUBURN, NY. Stage artist Dan Kamin trained Robert Downey Jr. for his Oscar-nominated performance in *Chaplin* (1992) and created Johnny Depp's comedy moves for *Benny and Joon* (1993). *Funny Bones* invites you to experience the artistry of cinema's greatest comedian from the inside the Auburn Public Theater.



Kamin deconstructs Chaplin's comedy with film clips, live demonstrations, audience participation, and

a classic Chaplin short with live musical accompaniment by local keyboard artist Harvyn Tarkmeel. You'll never look at comedy the same way again. (www.auburnpublictheater.org)

THE DAY THE LAUGHTER STOPPED

Arbuckle Biopic Underway

(Excerpted Article 08/11)

Modern Family cast member Eric Stonestreet is attached to star as comedian Roscoe Arbuckle in *The Day the Laughter Stopped*, an HBO Films project currently in development, written by Kirk Ellis with Barry Levinson assigned to direct.



The project, based on the book of the same name by David A. Yallop, promises to detail how, virtually overnight, false accusations of rape and murder against Arbuckle transformed one of the most popular & highest paid Hollywood stars into a showbiz pariah.

"He was the biggest and most loved star of the time, bigger than Chaplin, especially with children," Ellis says of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, who served as a mentor to Chaplin and gave Bob Hope his first break.

His rapid, tragic descent began 90 years ago when the stocky thespian checked into a suite at San Francisco's St. Francis Hotel for what was to be a few days of rest and relaxation between movie shoots. Instead, following a rowdy (for the time) holiday

party, Arbuckle found himself being charged with the rape and murder of another hotel guest, actress Virginia Rappe. While he would be acquitted of all the charges against him after three sordid trials, Hollywood didn't care: Arbuckle's career was over.

Stonestreet has harbored the idea of one day playing Arbuckle since the late 1990s, well before he shot to fame on **Modern Family**. "In addition to the fact that I'm from Kansas and he's from Kansas, I just always found it to be such a fascinating and tragic story...he went from this jolly person who fell down and entertained people into a sexual deviant. It's a true story people don't know about, with a twist."

While *Laughter* will revolve around Arbuckle's personal story, those involved say the movie won't be a simple biopic. Instead, the goal is to tell the tale of how America transformed from the exuberance that followed the end of World War I into a more repressive, conservative place during the era of prohibition.



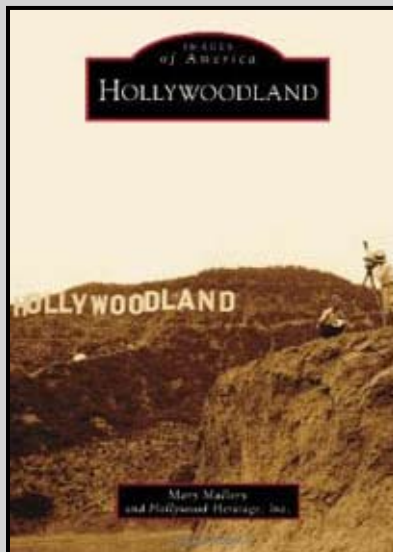
The film will also touch on Washington's relationship with Hollywood, as well as the role of media in modern society. (Full article: http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2011/08/modern_family_star_eric_stones.html)

BOOK CORNER

IMAGES OF AMERICA: Hollywoodland

By Mary Mallory

Established by real estate developers Tracy E. Shoults and S. H. Woodruff in 1923, Hollywoodland was one of the first hillside developments built in Hollywood. Touting its class and sophistication, the neighborhood promoted a European influence, featuring such unique elements as stone retaining walls and stairways, along with elegant Spanish, Mediterranean, French Normandy, and English Tudor-styled homes thoughtfully placed onto the hillsides.

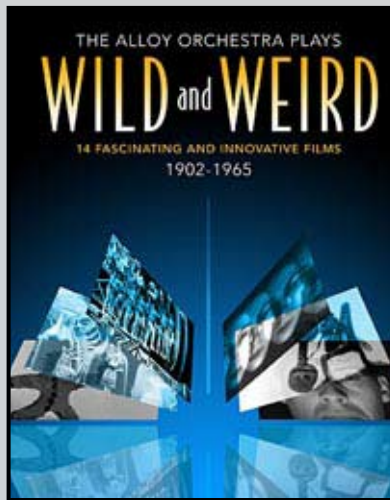


The community contains one of the world's most recognizable landmarks, the Hollywood sign, originally constructed as a giant billboard for the development and reading "Hollywoodland." The book illustrates the development of the upper section of Beachwood Canyon known as Hollywoodland with historical photographs from Hollywood Heritage's S. H. Woodruff Collection as well as

from other archives, institutions, and individuals. (www.arcadiapublishing.com)

ON DVD

WILD AND WEIRD 14 Fascinating and Innovative Films



Wild and Weird is a selection of 14 short films—some favorites, others unfamiliar—made between 1902 and 1965. All boast new music composed and performed by the Alloy Orchestra, a three-man ensemble critic Roger Ebert called "the best in the world at accompanying silent films."

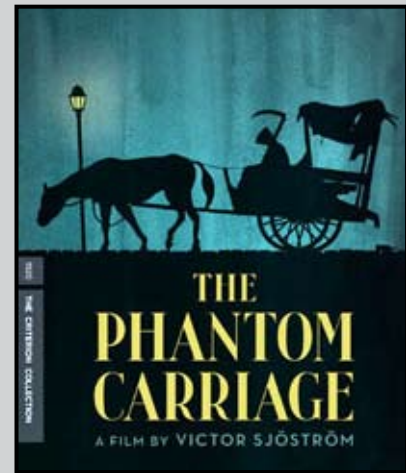
Films in this new collection are sourced from high quality prints, digitally mastered from around the world, offering wonder, laughter, absurdity, and charm. They represent many genres and styles, including "trick films," hand drawn as well as stop-motion animation, classic comedy, and avant-garde and surrealist surprises. (www.flickeralley.com)

THE PHANTOM CARRIAGE

The last person to die on New Year's Eve before the clock strikes twelve is doomed to take the reins of Death's chariot and work tirelessly collecting fresh souls for the next

year. So says the legend that drives **The Phantom Carriage** (1921), directed by the father of Swedish cinema, Victor Sjöström. The story, based on a novel by Nobel Prize winner Selma Lagerlöf, concerns an alcoholic, abusive ne'er-do-well (Sjöström himself) who is shown the error of his ways, and the pure-of-heart Salvation Army sister who believes in his redemption. This extraordinarily rich and innovative silent classic is a Dickensian ghost story and a deeply moving morality tale, as well as a showcase for groundbreaking special effects.

Special DVD and BLU-RAY features include a new digital restoration done in collaboration with the Archival Film Collections of the Swedish Film Institute; Two scores, one by Swedish composer Matti Bye and the other by the experimental duo KTL; and audio commentary featuring film historian Casper Tybjerg. (www.criterion.com)



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