

THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 06 • NUMBER 02 • MAR/APR 2012



ON THE WATERFRONT

EYE Film Institute Opens April 5th

AMSTERDAM. EYE, the new film museum located on Amsterdam's waterfront, will open its doors to the public on Thursday, **April 5th**, 2012. Starting on that day, visitors can watch films on four screens, explore the exhibition area and the interactive basement, and enjoy the museum store, a restaurant and café.

The new **EYE Film Institute** Netherlands is located on the northern side of the waterfront, directly across from Amsterdam's Central Station. The Vienna-based firm Delugan Meissl Associated Architects designed a striking complex that houses four screens, 640 seats, and 1,200 square meters of exhibition space.

EYE is the only museum in the Netherlands that is exclusively dedicated to film and the moving image. EYE exhibits film as art, entertainment, cultural heritage, and a conveyer of information. It offers exhibitions and corresponding film programs with a keen eye for current,

historical and artistic developments, paying particular attention to young people as well. In addition to films for children and their families, EYE organizes educational programs for both for children and adults.

The museum's basement offers visitors of all ages the opportunity to search through EYE's digitized collection in an interactive way. The museum store features a wide assortment of film paraphernalia, while the restaurant and café offers a breathtaking view of the waterfront.

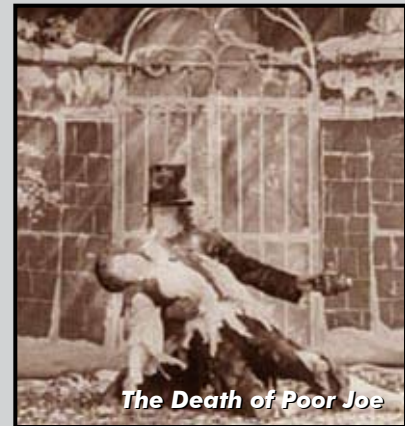
The opening exhibition **Found Footage: Cinema Exposed** reveals how filmmakers and artists create new works by using footage they have come upon. The exhibition stresses one of EYE's most important tasks: collecting, conserving and restoring film footage, much of which is of historical importance.

Apart from the gala opening is the world premiere of EYE's latest silent film restoration of *The Spanish*

Dancer (1923) taking place on Friday **April 6th**, along with an encore presentation on April 8th. *The Spanish Dancer* is a comical costume drama set in Spain in 1625; it tells of the adventures of Maritana (Pola Negri), a Spanish gypsy singer, who is in love with the penniless nobleman and bon vivant Don César de Bazan (Antonio Moreno). (www.eyefilm.nl)

WORLDS OLDEST DICKENS FILM DISCOVERED

BRITAIN. An archivist at the British Film Institute has stumbled across a 1901 movie just one minute long which turns out to be the earliest surviving film featuring a character from the works of Charles Dickens. Bryony Dixon was researching early films of China when she noticed an entry in a catalogue referring to *The Death of Poor Joe*, which she realised could refer to a character in Dickens' *Bleak House*.



Since most movies this old have not survived, Dixon says she was astonished to discover the film was actually in the BFI's collection, albeit under a different title. The discovery was announced on March 2, 2012, just over a month after the bicentenary of Dickens' birth was celebrated

around the world.

"It's wonderful to have discovered such a rare and unique film so close to Dickens' bicentennial," Dixon said. "Not only does it survive but it is the world's earliest Dickensian film. It looks beautiful and is in excellent condition." Before the BFI's latest discovery, the earliest known Dickens film was *Scrooge or Marley's Ghost*, released in November 1901 (it still remains the earliest direct adaptation of a Dickens' story).

The Death of Poor Joe has been identified as the work of British film pioneer G.A. Smith and is believed to have been filmed in Brighton some time before March 1901. It depicts Dickens' Jo, a poor street sweeper in *Bleak House*, at night against a churchyard wall freezing in the winter snow with his broom.

In the film, Jo (spelled "Joe" in the catalogue) is played by Laura Bayley, who was G.A. Smith's wife. The 1 minute film can be viewed online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqufG89Jlyc (Full article: www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/mar/09/oldest-charles-dickens-film-discovered)

"BRONCHO BILLY" MARKS 100 YEARS AT NILES

By Wes Bowers (excerpted article, 2/23/12, *Fremont Bulletin*)

FREMONT, CA. April 1st, 2012 will mark the 100th anniversary of the day silent film star "Broncho Billy" Anderson stepped off a train in Niles and began making motion pictures through his Essanay Film Co. To commemorate this milestone, the **Niles Essanay Silent Film Theatre and Museum** will hold a three-month long celebration filled with historical reenactments, specialty film festivals and era-specific entertainment.

Gilbert M. "Broncho Billy" Anderson (born Maxwell Henry Aronson in Little Rock, Ark. in 1880) arrived in Niles in 1912 and immediately walked through town soliciting funds to build the western branch of the Chicago-based Essanay Film Manufacturing Co. The structure cost about \$52,000 to build, and Anderson filmed more than 350 motion pictures there. Anderson later closed the studio in 1916; and with the advent of "talkies" in 1927, the silent film industry ultimately shut down altogether.



April 1st will kick off the anniversary with a reenactment of Broncho Billy and about 52 players and colleagues stepping off a train. The reenactment will be filmed with the same camera equipment used 100 years ago in stock format. Later in the day there will be a procession down Niles Boulevard to the Niles Town Plaza, where museum staff is hoping to receive a proclamation.

At 2:30 p.m., several films about Niles will be shown including *When Movies Came to Niles*, a documentary created in the 1970s detailing the history of the district, and *Broncho Billy, the First Reel Cowboy*, which describes Anderson's life and career.

Other anniversary events will

take place on Sundays, when passengers on the Niles Canyon Railway can see mock filming in Niles Canyon watching film crews in costume filming scenes from some of the early 20th century films. The anniversary will conclude July 1, the final day of the theater's annual **Broncho Billy Film Festival**. (For more information, visit www.nilesfilmmuseum.org)

CHAPLIN IS BROADWAY BOUND

By Gordon Cox

Charlie Chaplin is poised for Broadway with Tramp tuner *Becoming Chaplin*, targeting a Main Stem berth in the 2012-13 season.

Helmed and choreographed by Warren Carlyle (*Hugh Jackman, Back on Broadway, Finian's Rainbow*), the bio-musical has songs by Christopher Curtis with book by Thomas Meehan (*Annie, The Producers, Hairspray*). The 22-person production began life under the title *Limelight* in a La Jolla Playhouse staging co-helmed by Carlyle in 2010. The musical charts Chaplin's career from his music-hall childhood to his film-star days, as well as a personal life that included four marriages.



Becoming Chaplin arrives in New York under the auspices of a

producing team that includes Bob and Mindy Rich, Roy Gabay (*Fela!*) and John and Claire Caudwell, with additional members still to be set. The Riches and the Caudwells are also among the producers of the spring revival of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. No cast for *Becoming Chaplin* has been announced. In La Jolla, Chaplin was played by Rob McClure. (www.variety.com/article/VR1118049305)

SILENT SPOTLIGHT

CLARENCE BROWN: *The Forgotten Director*

By Jack Neely (excerpted article, 03/6/08)

Who was Clarence Brown? His life and career are full of surprises and puzzles. His most popular movies were family films, but his own family life is obscure—his child, his child's mother, their identities, and their fates are unknown, unmentioned in profiles. Alternately called “warm” and “cold” in his treatment of people, Brown churned out an average of two movies a year for a quarter century before he quit at the relatively young age—for a director—of 62.



Clarence Brown

He was born in Clinton, Mass. in 1890, to Larkin Brown, an ambitious loom repairman and a weaver named

Catherine Ann, originally of County Down, Ireland. They had only one child, a kid who seemed to make up for his lack of stature with energy and a quick mind. After graduating from the University of Tennessee at age 20 with two degrees, he settled in Birmingham where he set himself up as an automobile salesman and mechanic. Then a lunch break at a nickelodeon near his dealership convinced him he should be making movies. In 1915, he set out for Fort Lee, N.J., the pre-Hollywood movie capital and the headquarters of Peerless Studios, determined to meet the director Maurice Tourneur.

While on a ferry he heard that Tourneur was looking for an assistant director, and he followed some movie people onto the location. When the day's shoot was over, Brown told Tourneur he came to apply for the job. “Who have you been working for?” Tourneur asked. “Nobody,” Brown responded. “I’m in the automobile business.”

Brown subsequently worked with Tourneur as an assistant and editor, but it is believed he had a strong hand in some of Tourneur’s films, like the unusual special-effects fantasy *The Blue Bird*. After Tourneur was injured and unable to finish it, Brown ended up directing much of the classic *Last of the Mohicans*.

After moving to Hollywood, Brown split amicably with Tourneur and went to work for Universal in 1923, making several unusual and striking silent features, like *The Signal Tower* (in which Brown appeared in a cameo), *Smouldering Fires*, and *The Goose Woman*. His films of that era have a stark, vivid, artistic quality to them; some are almost like a series of carefully framed photographs at an exhibition.

By the mid-1920s, Brown had a reputation among the studio heads as one of the best directors in Hollywood. After a brief flirtation with

Paramount, he joined an arrogant new company called MGM in 1926, and befriended co-founder Louis B. Mayer.



One of his first jobs was to take a little known Swedish actress and put her in a movie with John Gilbert. Greta Garbo had never gotten along with an American director before Clarence Brown, and his patience and calm demeanor disarmed the famously temperamental actress.

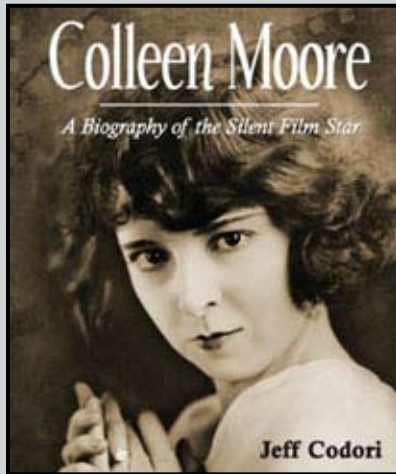
Brown would direct Garbo in six major movies over the next 10 years, including her first talkie, *Anna Christie*, in which she plays a former prostitute, as well as *Flesh and the Devil*, *A Woman of Affairs*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Conquest*.

With sound came Brown’s salad days, when he made one big-budget movie after another. He made his final film, *Plymouth Adventure* in 1952, then quit the film business completely at about the same time his friend Louis B. Mayer retired. Clarence Brown died in 1987, at the age of 97. (Full article: www.metropulse.com/news/2008/mar/06/clarence-brown-forgotten-director/)

BOOK CORNER

COLLEEN MOORE:

A Biography of the Silent Film Star



By Jeff Codori

Colleen Moore (1899-1988) was one of the most popular and beloved stars of the American silent screen. Remembered primarily as a comedienne in such films as *Ella Cinders* (1926) and *Orchids and Ermine* (1927), Moore's career was also filled with dramatic roles that often reflected societal trends. A trailblazing performer, her legacy was somewhat overshadowed by the female stars that followed her, notably Louise Brooks and Clara Bow.

An in-depth examination of Moore's early life and film career, the book reveals the ways in which her family and the times in which she lived influenced the roles she chose. Included are forewords written by film historian Joseph Yranski, a friend of the actress, and by Moore's stepdaughter, Judith Hargrave Coleman. (www.mcfarlandpub.com)

ON DVD

POLA NEGRI

The Iconic Collection: The Early Films

For the first time, four of Pola Negri's films from the early days of her career in Europe are now available in a three disc DVD collector's box set. The collection features never before released to DVD *The Polish Dancer* (1917) which may be the only complete feature film to survive from Poland from this time, and *The Yellow Ticket* (1918) the first film to expose anti-Semitism in Imperial Russia. Complementing these two historical gems are *Eyes of The Mummy Ma* (1918) with co-star Emil Jannings, and *Sappho* (1921), the story of a love triangle that ends in tragedy for two brothers.

All films have been digitally remastered, color-corrected and edited with English title cards and set to an original piano score performed by composer Rick Dejonge. (www.brightshiningcity.com)



WINGS:

Released on DVD and Blu-Ray

This first Academy Award® winner for Best Picture features Charles 'Buddy' Rogers, Richard Arlen, Clara Bow and a youthful Gary Cooper in a tale of two young aviators fighting in Europe during World War I. William A. Wellman established himself as an A-list director with this production.



The Blu-ray is presented in 1080p high definition format while the DVD is presented in full screen. The high-definition remastering was undertaken from a duplicate 35mm negative held by Paramount and involved a frame-by-frame digital restoration of the picture, removing emulsion scratches and nitrate decomposition. Both discs will feature a new recording of the orchestral music score by J.S. Zamecnik presented in DTS-HD 5.1 surround sound and the beloved theatre organ music score performed by Gaylord Carter in Dolby Digital 2.0 stereo sound. Special color effects and color tints, replicating the original release prints, is a feature of the new release, and period sound effects were added to the soundtrack by sound designer Ben Burt to evoke the silent era viewing experience. (www.amazon.com)

TST EDITED & PUBLISHED BY:

Brandee B. Cox:

Content Manager

Steven K. Hill:

Layout & Graphic Design

Contact us at: tstnews@yahoo.com

www.tstnews.net

TST