

# THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 08 • NUMBER 02 • MAR/APR 2014

## “LOST” AMERICAN FILMS REPATRIATED FROM AMSTERDAM



*Fifty Million Years Ago (1925)*

The NFPF and EYE Filmmuseum in Amsterdam are partnering to preserve and make available dozens of early American films that have been unseen anywhere in decades. Among the one-of-a-kind prints slated for preservation are *Fifty Million Years Ago* (1925), an animated introduction to the theory of evolution; *Flaming Canyons* (1929), a tour of national parks in the Southwest; short comedies featuring Mickey Rooney, Oliver Hardy, and Chester Conklin; Koko the Clown cartoons; the only known work from the Esperanto Film Manufacturing Company of Detroit; *The Reckless Age* (1924), a flapper feature starring Reginald Denny; and the crime melodrama *For the Defense* (1922), with ZaSu Pitts. The first 26 films are already in the laboratory queue; more will follow in the months ahead.

The American partnership with EYE Filmmuseum in Amsterdam will preserve and make available dozens

of rare films from its extensive early cinema collection. The project began with a generous invitation from EYE to survey the unpreserved American nitrate prints in its vaults. With support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the NFPF sent Leslie Lewis, the seasoned researcher from the New Zealand Project, to the Netherlands to assess which titles might be the most valuable to save. She examined 206,000 feet of film over two months of fieldwork in spring 2013.



*The Darling of the G.S.A.*

Working closely with Elif Rongen-Kaynakçi of EYE and a team of American archivists, Leslie identified dozens of fascinating American titles that have been unseen by the public in decades. In late 2013, the first films were shipped to the United States for preservation at Colorlab, under the direction of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science and the Library of Congress.

As part of the preservation process, the Dutch-language intertitles will be translated back into English. When work is completed, the American archives will take custody of the new digital scans, 35mm masters, prints, and access copies.



*The Village Chestnut*

EYE, whose public-spirited stewardship set the stage for the collaboration, will also receive new prints and digital copies, thus ensuring that the titles are available for screening and research on both continents. A generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities will fund the preservation and web presentation of the nonfiction films. The NFPF, which is coordinating and raising matching funds for the undertaking, plans to post copies for streaming. ([www.filmpreservation.org](http://www.filmpreservation.org))

## LOUD SILENTS 2014 FESTIVAL

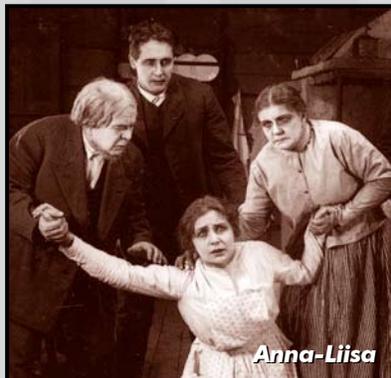
Tampere, FINLAND. Silent film festival **Loud Silents** will take over Tampere with international silent classics and short film screenings.

The opening night screening on Friday 25th of April will take a look at 1920s avant-garde films and early works from Hans Richter, Man Ray and Henri Chomette. The visual fireworks are accompanied by German DJ Sad Sad Calzone who is one of the members of a silent film collective stummfilm:djs. The collective emphasizes the magic of two analogue art forms—film and vinyl—coming together in live setting.

The short film theme continues on Saturday 26th of April with a trio of Charlie Chaplin's Mutual films. As the year 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of his iconic Tramp character, the festival will honor and celebrate his legacy with three outstanding short films, *The Rink*, *One AM*, and *Behind the Screen*.



Representing the Finnish silent canon is *Anna-Liisa* by Teuvo Puro and Jussi Snellmann. The film, named after its protagonist and based on a play by the early feminist writer Minna Canth, begins when Anna-Liisa plans to marry the young and



naïve Johannes. The story's tensions peak when a man from the past has firm intentions to marry Anna-Liisa.

Providing the soundtrack to Anna-Liisa's inner turmoil is Lau Nau, the electro-folk project of Finnish musician Laura Naukkarinen. Her works have recently earned her a nod at the Jussi-awards, the "Finnish Oscars" and a Teosto nomination for outstanding record for Valohiukkanen (2012).

The closing screening of the festival will draw from the filmography of master director, F.W. Murnau. A feast of cinematography, *The Last Laugh* (1924) is a golden era German film that tells a complex, yet subtle story about a dignified hotel portiere who is demoted to work at the lavatories because of his old age. (<http://loudsilents.com/>)

### Unpublished Chaplin Novella Released

By Rachel Donadio (Excerpted, February 3, 2014)

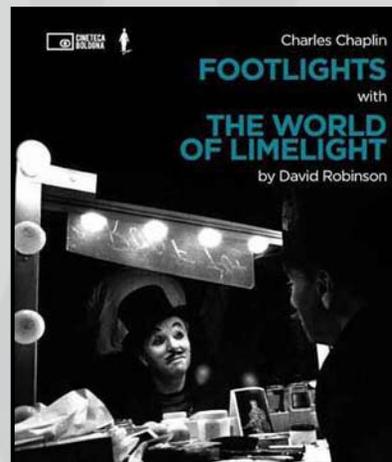
On February 4th, 2014 the Cineteca di Bologna released a previously unpublished novella by Charlie Chaplin which inspired his 1952 film, *Limelight*, widely considered his last great film.

Titled *Footlights*, the 1948 novella was reconstructed by the Chaplin biographer David Robinson

and researchers at the institute from multiple drafts found in the private Chaplin archive in Switzerland.

Like his film *Limelight*, the novella is set in London and centers on an aging clown, Calvero, who finds he can no longer capture the attention of an audience. He rescues a beautiful dancer who has attempted suicide, and helps her return to dancing.

The novella (Chaplin's only work of fiction, written when he was 59) and the film emerged from one of the darkest periods in Chaplin's life. In 1947, Chaplin, an avowed pacifist, was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. His reputation was further damaged by a lawsuit from a young actress who claimed he had fathered her child. (He denied the claim, but a court eventually declared him the father.)



In this difficult moment, Chaplin began to look back on his life and his childhood in England, where his parents performed in musical theater and his father suffered from stage fright and eventually died of alcoholism.

"It's not only nostalgic, it's a very emotional look at those times, but it's also kind of a deep reflection on the medium, of art and the audience," said Cecilia Cenciarelli, co-director of the Cineteca's Chaplin Project, along with Gian Luca Farinelli, the

Cineteca's director.

The publication is the first time the Chaplin family has allowed previously unpublished material to appear in print. In addition to the novella, the newly released volume also includes an essay by Mr. Robinson, "The World of 'Limelight'" on the history of the film, as well as photos and other documentary material from the Chaplin archives. (Full article at [http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/03/unpublished-chaplin-novella-to-be-released/?\\_php=true&\\_type=blogs&\\_r=0](http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/03/unpublished-chaplin-novella-to-be-released/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0))

## AIR DeMILLE FAMED DIRECTOR ATTEMPTED LAUNCH OF L.A. AIRLINE

Posted by Nathan Masters

Cecil B. DeMille had already pioneered one Los Angeles industry, and in 1920 he was on the cusp of launching another. As president of the newly formed Mercury Aviation Company, DeMille was pursuing the ambitious goal of inaugurating regularly scheduled airline service between Los Angeles and other West Coast cities.



Mercury's headquarters: a barley field at the northwest corner of Wilshire and Fairfax (then Crescent Ave.) where the company had cleared a primitive runway, built a hangar, and opened a filling station that refueled airplanes on one side and automobiles on the other. The aerodrome doubled as a shooting

location for aviation stunts, but the real stars here were Mercury's fleet of Junkers-Larsen monoplanes. Built of lightweight corrugated aluminum, the planes could soar to altitudes of 20,000 feet, propelled by a single 185-horsepower engine. And thanks to a sealed cabin, passengers could fly without goggles and other gear.



To demonstrate the comfort and convenience of air travel, DeMille staged a round-trip flight to San Diego with a few of Los Angeles' titans of industry. On September 9, 1920, DeMille and his guests took off from the Mercury airfield at 12:25 p.m. and touched down at 1:35 p.m. in San Diego—a trip that then took four hours by train or five by automobile. The party then lunched at the Hotel Coronado before reboarding the plane and returning to Los Angeles by mid-afternoon. DeMille's demonstration flight avoided mishaps, but an alternate fate might have created a local power vacuum; among DeMille's passengers were Times publisher Harry Chandler and the presidents of Southern California Edison and First National Bank.

Ultimately, DeMille never succeeded in creating L.A.'s first commercial airline—an idea that was probably ahead of its time. Just a year after his demonstration flight, DeMille and his associates sold Mercury Aviation to Emery Rogers. What had been DeMille Field became Rogers Airport, and by the 1930s the city's burgeoning Miracle Mile district

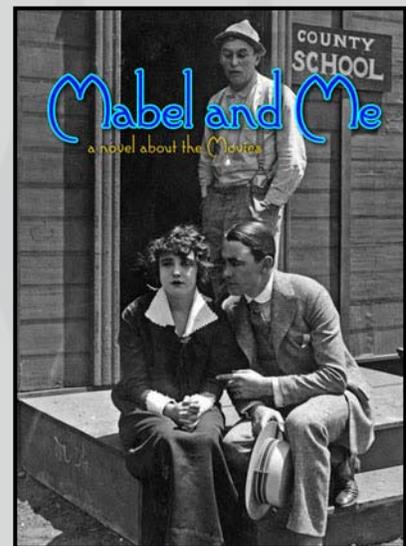
had absorbed the onetime airfield. (Full article <http://www.lamag.com/citythink/citythinkblog/2014/01/21/citydig-how-a-hollywood-director-almost-launched-las-first-commercial-airline>)

### TST BOOKCORNER

## Mabel and Me: A Novel About the Movies

By Jon Boorstin

It's 1912 in Hollywood, the birth of the movies, and Mabel Normand, the talented prototype of the contemporary comedienne, is shocking the world. Mabel Normand—the visionary who turned Charlie Chaplin into a movie star, enchanted Mack Sennett, and became the first actress to have her name emblazoned in the title of a motion picture—is the funniest woman on earth. And she is undoubtedly the most beguiling.



Author Jon Boorstin captures the most exciting period of film history in this novel. Sharply observant and historically accurate, Boorstin brings us to another world and we are able

to see why film developed as it did. We may never look at the movies the same way ever again. ([www.angelcitypress.com](http://www.angelcitypress.com))

## **ROOM 1219:** The Life of Fatty Arbuckle, and the Scandal That Changed Hollywood

By Greg Merritt

The story of a beloved comedian turned pariah illuminates the mystery behind one of Hollywood's most shocking events.

Part biography, part true-crime narrative, this painstakingly researched book chronicles the improbable rise and stunning fall of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle from his early big screen success to his involvement in actress Virginia Rappe's death, and the resulting irreparable damage to his career.

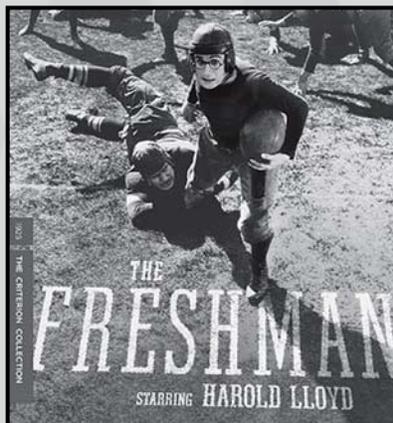


In addition, it covers the evolution of the film industry—including the implementation of industry-wide censorship that altered the course of Hollywood filmmaking for five decades. ([www.chicagoreviewpress.com](http://www.chicagoreviewpress.com))

### HOME ENTERTAINMENT

## **THE FRESHMAN**

Harold Lloyd's biggest box-office hit was this silent comedy gem, which featured Lloyd as the befuddled everyman at his eager best, resulting in one of the most famous sports sequences ever filmed.



This dual format edition features a new 4K digital transfer from a 1998 restoration by the UCLA Film & Television Archive; a new orchestral score composed and conducted by Carl Davis; three newly restored Lloyd shorts: *The Marathon* (1919), *An Eastern Westerner*, and *High and Dizzy* (both 1920); plus visual essay *Harold Lloyd: Big Man on Campus*. ([www.criterion.com](http://www.criterion.com))

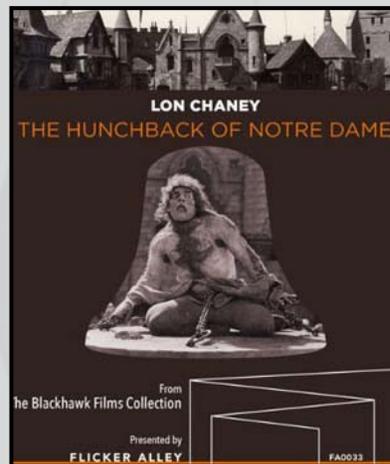
## **THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME**

*The Hunchback of Notre Dame* took six months to shoot and the climactic sequence employed two thousand extras, but it's Lon Chaney's performance that makes the character unforgettable. The success of the film was immediate; it made Carl

Laemmle and Universal Pictures a fortune and turned Lon Chaney into a screen legend.

This edition is mastered from a multi-tinted 16mm print struck in 1926 from the original camera negative (the film apparently does not survive in 35mm). A new symphonic score arranged by Donald Hunsberger was recorded in the Czech Republic with a full orchestra conducted by Robert Israel.

Bonus materials include an audio commentary by Chaney scholar Michael F. Blake; rare footage of Chaney out of makeup on the Cathedral set; a 1915 film, *Alas and Alack*, in which Chaney plays a hunchback; a dynamic HD photo gallery with over 50 original production and publicity stills; and a digital reproduction of the original souvenir program. ([www.flickeralley.com](http://www.flickeralley.com))



### **TST EDITED & PUBLISHED BY:**

**Brandee B. Cox:**

*Content Manager*

**Steven K. Hill:**

*Layout & Graphic Design*

**Contact us at: [tstnews@yahoo.com](mailto:tstnews@yahoo.com)**

[www.tstnews.net](http://www.tstnews.net)

TST