

THE SILENT TREATMENT

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BAMPFA GRAND OPENING

New Facility Will Screen Retro of Jean Epstein's Silent Classics

BERKELEY, CA. The University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is renowned internationally as one of the best venues for experiencing historical and contemporary world cinema. Totalling 83,000 square feet, the new BAMPFA combines serene spaces for viewing art and film with public areas that will inspire with fresh, imaginative design. Forward-looking and versatile, the project integrates a repurposed building—the former UC Berkeley printing plant, at the corner of Oxford and Center Streets—with a dramatic new structure.

BAMPFA opened its new downtown Berkeley building to the public on January 31, 2016, and its state-of-the-art film theater will continue to honor cinema in the widest possible sense. During the inaugural year in the new building, international and local filmmakers, critics, special guests, and experts on film will share



their love of the movies in the series **Cinema Mon Amour**.

During March and April, cinema fans will be treated to a number of Jean Epstein's innovative and thought provoking silent films such as *Coeur Fidèle* (*The Faithful Heart*, 1923), *L'auberge Rouge* (*The Red Inn*, 1923), *Le Lion Des Mogols* (*The Lion of the Moguls*, 1924), *Le Double Amour* (*Double Love*, 1925), *Six Et Demin, Onze* (*Six and a Half by Eleven*, 1927), *La Chute de la Maison Usher* (*The Fall of the House of Usher*, 1928), and *Finis Terrae* (*End of the Earth*, 1929), most of which will feature Judith Rosenberg playing live accompaniment on the piano.

BAMPFA patrons will enjoy two cutting edge film theaters (232 and 33 seats, respectively), an exterior LED screen for occasional outdoor programs, and easier accessibility to the well-appointed Film Library and

Study Center, galleries, store, and cafe. (For additional information, visit <http://bampfa.berkeley.edu/>)



La Chute de la Maison Usher

MOTHERS OF MEN *The Restoration of an Early Women's Suffrage Film*

Mothers of Men, made in 1917, is one the few surviving women's suffrage films with the added distinction that it was made in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Starring Dorothy Davenport, *Mothers of Men* (a.k.a. *Every Woman's Problem*) was penned by notable playwright Hal Reid (father of silent film actor Wallace Reid) and depicts the first woman to be elected governor in the United States.

A film made just three years before the 19th Amendment was ratified (which allowed women to vote),

Mothers of Men attempted to enter into the suffrage campaign by showing the nation how strong women can be if allowed to hold political office.



Dorothy Davenport

The only known film elements are held outside the United States, so a collaboration between the British Film Institute, the San Francisco Silent Film Festival, and the Library of Congress was formed to save what was remaining of the deteriorating film. All that is required is to raise the funds for the laboratory work, so a campaign goal of \$60,000 has been set, and so far more than half of that money has been pledged to complete the restoration.

Rescuing and resurrecting *Mothers of Men* presents an incredible opportunity to save and share this important film. Please visit the official website www.mothersfilm.com for up-to-date info on the project, its progress, and how to help reach the campaign goal.

Lost Walt Disney Film Discovered at BFI

By Mark Brown (Excerpted Article)

A long-lost Walt Disney film featuring his first animated character, **Oswald the Lucky Rabbit**, has been discovered tucked away in the national archive of the British Film Institute.

The BFI announced the remarkable discovery of the six-minute film *Sleigh Bells*, unseen since its release in 1928, and feared lost forever. The film has since been restored by Walt Disney Animation Studios and had a

world premiere at the BFI in London in December 2015.

Robin Baker, the BFI National Archive head curator, said the film “demonstrated the vitality and imagination of Disney’s animation at a key point in his early career,” adding “What a joyful treat to discover a long-lost Walt Disney film in the BFI national archive, and to be able to show it to a whole new audience 87 years after it was made.”

The film entered the archive 34 years ago, part of a job lot from a Soho film laboratory that had gone out of business. The stock was dated 1931 and there was nothing to indicate it was an important lost film. The discovery was made by a researcher browsing the BFI archive catalogue for lost Disney titles, recognizing that the words “Sleigh Bells” could mean it was the missing short film.

Sleigh Bells features Oswald in an ice hockey game against a winter wonderland backdrop and has surreal touches with the rabbit at one point removing his ear to make a balloon. There’s also an elephant and a laughing donkey, who gets the puck stuck in his mouth.

Andrew Millstein, president of Walt Disney Animation Studios, said the company was thrilled to be collaborating with the BFI on restoration of the short Oswald film. “The Oswald shorts are an important part of our studios’ history and we have been working with film archives and private collectors all around the world to research the missing titles.” (<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/nov/03/lost-walt-disney-film-discovered-in-british-film-institute-archive>)



PEOPLE WITH NO TOMORROW

Rediscovered Polish Silent Film

POLAND. *People With No Tomorrow* (*Ludzie Bez Jutra*) explores actual events that took place 125 years ago, namely the ill-starred love affair between Polish actress Maria Wisnowska and Russian cavalry officer Alexander Bartenev. The Russian hussar killed his lover in a notorious crime of passion in June 1890 at the actress’s Warsaw apartment.



The film, by noted director Aleksander Hertz, premiered in 1921, but it was only recently rediscovered in Germany’s Bundesarchiv. A fresh restoration of the feature premiered on December 15th and 16th, 2015, in the cities of Warsaw and Kraków. (<http://www.thenews.pl/1/111/Artykul/232474,Rediscovered-Polish-film-set-for-21st-century-premiere#sthash.2U5G3klj.dpuf>)

TST BOOKCORNER

The Ice Cream Blonde: The Whirlwind Life and Mysterious Death of Thelma Todd

By Michelle Morgan

A beloved film comedienne who worked alongside the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and dozens of others, Thelma Todd was a rare Golden Age star who successfully crossed over from silent films to talkies. This

authoritative new biography traces Todd's life from a vivacious little girl who tried to assuage her parents' grief over her brother's death, to an aspiring teacher turned reluctant beauty queen, to an outspoken movie starlet and restaurateur.



Increasingly disenchanted with Hollywood, Todd opened Thelma Todd's Sidewalk Café in 1934, a hot spot that attracted fans, tourists, and celebrities. Despite her success in film and business, the beautiful actress was privately having a difficult year—receiving disturbing threats from a stranger known as “the Ace” and having her home ransacked.

When she was found dead in a garage near her café, an inquest concluded that her death, at age twenty-nine, was accidental. In a thorough new investigation that draws on interviews, photographs, documents, and extortion notes—much of which have not been previously available to the public—the author offers a compelling new theory, suggesting the sequence of events on the night of her death and arguing what many people have long suspected: that Thelma was murdered. But by whom? (www.chicagoreviewpress.com)

The Hirschfeld Century: Portrait of an Artist and His Age

By Al Hirschfeld.

Al Hirschfeld redefined caricature and exemplified Broadway and Hollywood, enchanting generations with his mastery of line. His art appeared in every major publication during nine decades of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as well as on numerous book, record, and program covers; film posters and publicity art; and on fifteen U.S. postage stamps.

Now, **The Hirschfeld Century** brings together for the first time the artist's extraordinary eighty-two-year career, revealed in more than 360 of his iconic black-and-white and color drawings, illustrations, and photographs. The book also explores his influences, his techniques, his evolution from his earliest works to his last drawings, and includes a biographical text by David Leopold, who, as archivist to the artist, worked side by side with him and has spent more than twenty years documenting the artist's extraordinary output. (www.AlHirschfeldFoundation.org).



HOME ENTERTAINMENT

The Undesirable (1915)

The Undesirable, a silent film treasure thought to be lost forever, was recently discovered in the basement of the Hungarian House cultural center in New York and returned to Hungary for restoration. An eight-month restoration and digitization process was completed by the Hungarian Filmlab, with support from the Hungarian National Digital Archive and Film Institute, the Hungarian National Film Fund, and the Hungarian National Film Foundation.



Noted Hollywood producer Andrew Vajna (*Terminator*, *Rambo*, *Nixon*, *Angel Heart*) played a major role in overseeing the restoration process of *The Undesirable*, which features a newly commissioned score by Attila Pacsay (the renowned composer of the Academy Award nominated short, *The Maestro*) performed by the Pannonia Symphony Orchestra and conducted by Peter Illenyi. Available now in DVD and Blu-ray. (www.olivefilms.com)

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