

# THE SILENT TREATMENT

ALL THE NEWS FIT TO HEAR • VOLUME 06 • NUMBER 04 • JUL/AUG 2012

## 100 YEARS OF KEYSTONE COMEDY THURSDAY NIGHTS IN SEPTEMBER



*The Keystone Cops*

This August marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of **Mack Sennett's Keystone Studios**, America's first studio dedicated to the production of motion picture comedies. Keystone Studios, under the guidance of pioneering producer/director Mack Sennett, was the birthplace of the classic American slapstick comedy. This historic studio was at one time home to early Hollywood luminaries such as Harold Lloyd, Harry Langdon, Mabel Normand, Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle, *The Bathing Beauties*, Marie Dressler, Ben Turpin, *The Keystone Cops*, Ford Sterling and countless others. Even Hollywood icon Charlie Chaplin, still the world's most recognized actor, introduced his beloved Tramp character under the auspices of Keystone.

Sadly, time has not been kind to the original films which have made many generations laugh. In fact, of the 1000 films produced by Sennett throughout his career only several hundred are known to survive—and many exist only in fragmentary form. Further, there is no single source from

which the remaining Sennett library can be accessed. Surviving prints and negatives are scattered around the globe, held by various government archives, museums and private collectors.

In honor of Keystone's 2012 centenary, noted director/film historian Paul E. Gierucki and producer Brittany Valente have teamed with Turner Entertainment Networks to digitally restore a large portion of the Mack Sennett film library—100 films for the 100th anniversary.



These long neglected classic comedies will finally receive a desperately needed restoration in the HD

format. Titles, intertitles and missing footage will be replaced, images cleaned and stabilized, original tinting and toning will be restored and newly created scores by some of the best musicians in the industry will ensure that these wonderful films will once again be seen as originally intended.

Approximately 78 of these restored titles will be showcased on Thursday nights throughout the month of September on **Turner Classic Movies** with host Robert Osborne. The entire library, including 25 extras, will also be made available to the public for the very first time in DVD and Blu-Ray formats. Digital masters will then be struck for long term storage and preservation. ([www.tcm.com](http://www.tcm.com) for broadcast schedule)

### **FORBIDDEN WOMAN** Restoration Underway

LOS ANGELES. The Academy Film Archive at the Pickford Center for Motion Picture Study has embarked on restoration efforts towards a long forgotten melodrama *The Forbidden Woman* (1927) starring a largely understudied silent star, **Jetta Goudal**. The Dutch born actress was likened to other contemporary women cast in exotic roles of the 1920's such as Barbara La Marr and Nita Naldi, and though her filmography is a near equivalent to the rise and fall in popularity of these fellow vamps, Goudal's contribution to the height of the craze is not as thoroughly documented in the canon of women featured in those tantalizing roles.

Cast as Zita, a seductive spy for the Sultan of Morocco, Goudal carries the audience through her web of deception on orders from the Sultan to meet and marry a Colonel of the French Foreign Legion and smuggle military secrets back to her country to outsmart their combatants. Produced by the DeMille Picture Corporation under the direction of Paul L. Stein, the intriguing drama co-stars Victor Varconi and Joseph Schildkraut who are regularly assigned to pictures under the supervision of William and Cecil B. DeMille.



*Zita Goudal*

Preservation Officer Josef Lindner of the AFA has gathered what is known to be the best surviving material on this feature. A tinted nitrate print with French intertitles from the Lobster Film Collection will form the basis of the restoration, with an incomplete 16mm safety print from the UCLA Film & Television Archive collection providing some additional scenes from the opening. Another 35mm print with Dutch and French titles from the collection of the Cinematheque Royal in Belgium is also being consulted.

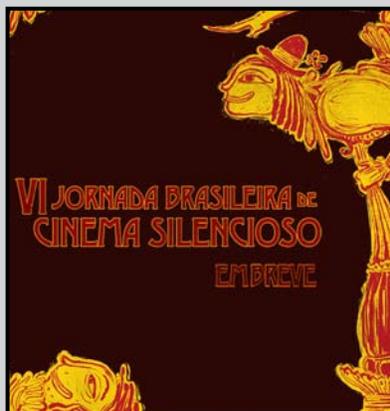
The AFA hopes to restore the picture back to its intended edit and length, plus reconstruct and translate French intertitles back to the original English language. There are tenta-

tive plans for the restoration to debut at one of their theatrical venues before the close of 2012. (*Info courtesy A.M.P.A.S.*)

## VI Jornada Brasileira de Cinema Silencioso

SÃO PAULO. Prior to the industry of dreams that we know today, motion pictures were merely an attraction at fairs and bazaars in the late 19th century. Part of the popular show (along with tricks, magic and circus) cinema satirized an innovative look at the contradictions of a world that turned quickly toward modernity. To create this atmosphere of change, the **VI Jornada Brasileira de Cinema Silencioso**, running August 11th–19th, presents a collective experiment in different ways to address the magic of cinema.

Curated by Adilson Mendes, the VI Jornada brings to the public the exposition of **Lights and Shadows** dedicated to German expressionist cinema and their stylized use of light and scenarios, featuring pictures directed by Paul Leni, Arthur Robison, and Robert Wiene; an overview of 1920's **Soviet Cinema** showcasing numerous artistic responses to the Russian Revolution of 1917 with the presentation of avant-garde productions by Boris Barnet, Aleksandr



*Backstairs*

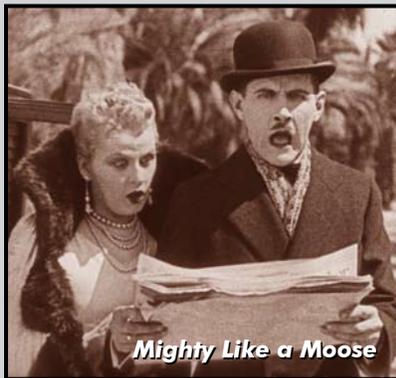
Dovzhenko, and Lev Kuleshov; plus a presentation of silent cinema produced and released within the country of Brazil itself. The program titled **Brazil: 1922 Spectacle** is a celebration of Brazilian independence during the period where filmmakers acknowledged their nationality and modernization through the recording of actualities and documentaries covering events such as the Rio Carnival, the Arrival of Portuguese Airmen, and the coverage of festivities marking the centenary of Brazilian Independence, all taking place within that magical year.

The festival has partnered with several musicians to provide live accompaniment throughout the event with exhibitions taking place at Sala Cinemateca, the Ibirapuera Auditorium, and the Cinemateca Petrobras. Admission is free to all scheduled activities and the complete list of events are available to review on the official festival website [www.cinemateca.gov.br/jornada/](http://www.cinemateca.gov.br/jornada/). (Translation provided by Paula Maricato, [silentbeauties.blogspot.com.br/](http://silentbeauties.blogspot.com.br/))

## THE DENVER SILENT FILM FESTIVAL

The University of Colorado Denver's College of Arts & Media presents its **2nd Annual Denver Silent Film Festival (DSFF)** from September 21st – 23rd, 2012. The DSFF presents a broad spectrum of silent film by programming a lively and thought-provoking mix of educational and entertaining films, American and foreign classics, as well as lesser-known rare and restored films presented in 35mm.

The Opening Night Gala will be held on Friday, September 21st at Seawell Ballroom at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Following the Gala at the DCPA, *Wings* (William Wellman, 1927) will open the festival at the King Center at 8PM. There will be a post-film Q & A with William Wellman Jr., son of the director, and Howie Movshovitz, Artistic Director for the DSFF.



*Mighty Like a Moose*

Weekend highlights include a presentation of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1919) on Saturday, September 22nd with live accompaniment by Donald Sosin, Joanna Seaton, and UCD music students; and four short comedies - *Cops* (Buster Keaton, 1922), *Mighty Like a Moose* (Charley Chase, 1926),

*Pass the Gravy* (Fred Guiol and Leo McCarey, 1928, with Max Davidson) and *Easy Street* (Charlie Chaplin, 1917) on Sunday, September 23rd. (Complete program and ticket info at [www.denversilentfilmfest.org](http://www.denversilentfilmfest.org))

## LAUGH-O-GRAM STUDIO RESTORATION PROJECT



By James A. Fussell (excerpted article, 5/27/12)

KANSAS CITY. Amid cracked sidewalks, a weedy lot and a “keep out” sign behind an old metal fence, a boarded-up brick building off Troost Avenue awaits its rebirth. For 15 years, a Kansas City group has raised money to revitalize **Laugh-O-Gram**, Walt Disney's first professional animation studio, and turn it into an interactive historical site, educational museum and perhaps more. Now, 90 years after Disney began work there in May 1922, organizers are launching their final fund-raising push, hoping to complete the project by 2015.

“There is an important question people raise: Why is this taking so long?” said Butch Rigby, chairman of the group **Thank You Walt Disney Inc.** “The answer: It’s just a slow fund-raising process.” The group has raised and spent nearly \$1 million and hopes to raise at least \$2 million more. If the group can raise even more money, it plans to put a working animation and digital media studio on the second floor of the building, at the southwest corner of 31st

Street and Forest Avenue.

Sometimes called “the cradle of Hollywood animation,” Laugh-O-Gram turned out teams of talented animators who followed Disney to Hollywood. Through their careers they helped found the animation departments of MGM and Warner Bros. and launch the careers of a young William Hanna and Joseph Barbera. It is also said to be the place where a tame rodent sitting on Disney's desk gave him the inspiration for Mickey Mouse.

Though it sits vacant, the building has been lovingly decorated with drawings by students from the Kansas City Art Institute, including a large replica of Disney's famous business card, which shows the artist drawing at his easel. The windows are covered with drawings by famous cartoonists from around the country—including Mort Walker (Beetle Bailey), Cathy Guisewite (Cathy) and Jim Davis (Garfield)—as a tribute to Disney's legacy.



The building's champions have made progress. “We've taken a building on the city's demolition list and saved it,” Rigby said. “We've removed the collapsed rubble, replaced a significant portion of the exterior masonry and brick, installed new concrete floors, new framing, a new steel structure and a new roof.”

To help with fundraising efforts please visit [www.thankyouwaltdisney.org](http://www.thankyouwaltdisney.org). (Full article [www.kansas-city.com/2012/05/27/3630308/animated-effort-to-revive-a.html](http://www.kansas-city.com/2012/05/27/3630308/animated-effort-to-revive-a.html))

## BOOK CORNER

### HOLLYWOOD LIGHTING FROM THE SILENT ERA TO FILM NOIR

By Patrick Keating

Lighting performs essential functions in Hollywood films, enhancing the glamour, clarifying the action, and intensifying the mood. Examining every facet of this understated art form, from the glowing backlights of the silent period to the shaded alleys of film noir, Patrick Keating affirms the role of Hollywood lighting as a distinct, compositional force.



*Girl Shy*

Closely analyzing *Girl Shy* (1924), *Anna Karenina* (1935), *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939), and *T-Men* (1947), along with other brilliant classics, Keating describes the unique problems posed by these films and the innovative ways cinematographers handled the challenge. Once dismissed as crank-turning laborers, these early cinematographers became skillful professional artists by carefully balancing the competing demands of story, studio, and star.

Enhanced by more than one hundred illustrations, this volume counters the notion that style took a backseat to storytelling in Hollywood film, proving that the lighting practices of the studio era were anything but neutral, uniform, and invisible. Cinematographers were masters of multifunctionality and negotiation, honing their craft to achieve not only

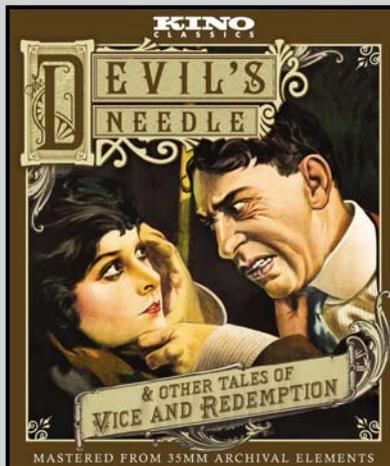
realistic fantasy but also pictorial artistry. (<http://cup.columbia.edu/>)

## ON DVD & BLU-RAY

### THE DEVIL'S NEEDLE

AND OTHER TALES OF VICE & REDEMPTION

Presented in association with the Library of Congress, **The Devil's Needle and Other Tales of Vice and Redemption** is comprised of three feature films that dared to address incendiary subject matter: drug abuse, prostitution, and the exploitation of labor. By folding these explosive issues within layers of melodramatic storytelling, the filmmakers were able to dodge public criticism while making their political views even more compelling. These films were among the first to demonstrate the cinema's potential as a persuasive cultural force.



*The Devil's Needle* (1916, dir: Chester Withey) stars silent superstar Norma Talmadge as Renee, a French artist's model who uses morphine as an escape from the dull reality of her life. *Inside of The White Slave Traffic* (1913, dir: Frank Beal) deals with forced prostitution; while *Children of Eve* (1915; dir: John Collins) is most famous today for its detailed reenactment of the tragic fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911, which had

become a symbol of unsafe working conditions and capital's apparent disregard for labor. ([www.kino.com](http://www.kino.com))

### LONESOME

The early Hollywood gem *Lonesome* is the creation of a little-known but audacious and one-of-a-kind auteur, Paul Fejos (a filmmaker, explorer, anthropologist, & doctor!), who bridged the gap between the silent and sound eras.



Fejos pulled out all the stops for this lovely New York City symphony set in antic Coney Island during the Fourth of July weekend—employing color tinting, superimposition effects, experimental editing, and a roving camera (plus three dialogue scenes, added because of the craze for talkies). For years, *Lonesome* has been a rare treat for festival and cinema-theque audiences; it's only now coming to home video. Rarer still are the two other Fejos films included in this release: *The Last Performance* (featuring a new score by Donald Sosin) and a reconstruction of the previously incomplete sound version of *Broadway*, in its time the most expensive film ever produced at Universal. ([www.criterion.com](http://www.criterion.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