

THE FILMS OF JOSEF VON STERNBERG

From November 1 through January 1, The Museum of Modern Art will present 16 films directed by Josef von Sternberg between 1925 and 1953. The series, the most comprehensive ever held of the artist's films, was selected by Andrew Sarris, movie critic and lecturer, columnist for The Village Voice, and commentator of a weekly program on the movies for WBAI.

"Sternberg," says Mr. Sarris in his forthcoming monograph*, "has always been interested less in men and their societies than in men and women, or more precisely, in man's confrontation of the myths of womanhood, the underlying theme of Sternbergian cinema from THE SALVATION HUNTERS to ANATAHAN. What has always seemed oblique and obscure in Sternberg's art as compared with that of his contemporaries is the director's reluctance to reveal everything about his characters.... There is usually more to Sternberg's characters than meets the eye, and after the advent of the talkies, the ear."

Included in the series are von Sternberg's four silent films: his first and rarely seen film, THE SALVATION HUNTERS (1925); THE LAST COMMAND (1927-28); and, two of his gangster films: UNDERWORLD (1927) and THE DOCKS OF NEW YORK (1928). THE BLUE ANGEL (1930), the great success in which von Sternberg introduced Marlene Dietrich as the "femme fatale" to the screen, will be shown, as will six other films in which the actress starred: MOROCCO (1930), DISHONORED (1931), SHANGHAI EXPRESS (1932), BLONDE VENUS (1932), THE SCARLET EMPRESS (1934) and THE DEVIL IS A WOMAN (1935).

Born in Vienna in 1894, Josef von Sternberg came to New York in 1914 and entered the film business as a film patcher for the World Film Company. From here

(more)

THE FILMS OF JOSEF VON STERNBERG by Andrew Sarris. A 48-page booklet; 24 illustrations. A reassessment of an influential filmmaker and the very personal cinema world he created, with annotations for 18 of his most important films. Price: \$2.50. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, N.Y. Distributed by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

he progressed to a film cutter, editor, writer and assistant director. In 1925, he launched his directorial career with THE SALVATION HUNTERS, and two years later directed the popular UNDERWORLD. Speaking of UNDERWORLD, the Sternberg film that inspired the entire gangster genre, Mr. Sarris says: "Sternberg's hoodlums, like Cocteau's motorcyclists in ORPHEUS, partake of the manners and machinery of the modern world without ever escaping from the dream world of their creator. The avenging forces of law and order are never related to society but rather to an implacable Fate which awaits every tragic hero."

Of the influential director's technique Mr. Sarris states: "Sternberg entered the cinema through the camera rather than the cutting room, and thus became the poet of light and shadow rather than the master of montage. His photography is designed to give visual expression to feeling and emotions. He concentrated on the stylistic integrity of his images rather than on their metaphorical juxtaposition."

Arthur Kleiner, Music Director of The Film Library, will arrange and play piano accompaniments for the silent films. The series is divided into two parts, the silent films and sound films, separated by a week of THE INDEPENDENT FILM.

In conjunction with the series a portfolio, Josef von Sternberg: Ten Stills, with brief comments by Eileen Bowser, Assistant Curator of The Film Library, is being published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. (\$3.95.)

Program Attached

Stills and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Nancy Sage, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N. Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.

THE FILMS OF JOSEF VON STERNBERG

Showings daily at 2:00 and 5:30, Thursdays at 8:00; Saturdays at 11:30, 3:00 and 5:30, except where noted.

Part I: The Silent Films

- Nov. 1 - 3: THE SALVATION HUNTERS, 1925, U.S., United Artists; with George K. Arthur, Georgia Hale.
- Nov. 4 - 6: UNDERWORLD, 1927, U.S., Paramount; with George Bancroft, Evelyn Brent.
- Nov. 7 -10: THE LAST COMMAND, 1927-28, U.S., Paramount; with Emil Jannings, Evelyn Brent.
- Nov. 11-14: THE DOCKS OF NEW YORK, 1928, U.S., Paramount; with George Bancroft, Betty Compson. Shown through the courtesy of the George Eastman House, Columbia Pictures Corp., and Paramount Pictures Corp.

Part II: The Sound Films

- Nov. 23-25: THUNDERBOLT, 1929, U.S., Paramount; with George Bancroft, Richard Arlen. Shown through the courtesy of Twelvetrees, Inc.
- Nov. 26-27: THE BLUE ANGEL, 1930, Germany, Paramount; with Emil Jannings, Marlene Dietrich. German dialogue, no English titles.
- Nov. 28 - Dec. 1: MOROCCO, 1930, U.S., Paramount; with Gary Cooper, Marlene Dietrich, Adolphe Menjou.
- Dec. 2 - 4: DISHONORED, 1931, U.S., Paramount; with Marlene Dietrich, Victor McLaglen. Shown through the courtesy of Twelvetrees, Inc.
- Dec. 5 - 8: AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY, 1931, U.S., Paramount; with Phillips Holmes, Sylvia Sydney. Shown through the courtesy of Twelvetrees, Inc.
- Dec. 9 -11: SHANGHAI EXPRESS, 1932, U.S., Paramount; with Marlene Dietrich, Clive Brook. Shown through the courtesy of the George Eastman House, Columbia Pictures Corp., and Paramount Pictures Corp.
- Dec. 12-15: BLONDE VENUS, 1932, U.S., Paramount; with Marlene Dietrich, Herbert Marshall. Shown through the courtesy of Twelvetrees. December 13, no 5:30 showing.
- Dec. 16-18: THE SCARLET EMPRESS, 1934, U.S., Paramount; with Marlene Dietrich, John Lodge, Sam Jaffe. Shown through the courtesy of Twelvetrees, Inc. December 18, no 3:00 showing.
- Dec. 19-22: THE DEVIL IS A WOMAN, 1935, U.S., Paramount; with Marlene Dietrich, Lionel Atwill, Cesar Romero.
- Dec. 23-24: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, 1935, U.S., Columbia; with Edward Arnold, Peter Lorre, Marian Marsh. Shown through the courtesy of the George Eastman House, Columbia Pictures Corp. & Paramount Pictures Corp. December 24, no 5:30 showing.
- Dec. 26-29: THE SHANGHAI GESTURE, 1941, U.S., United Artists; with Gene Tierney, Walter Huston.
- Dec. 30 - Jan. 1: ANATAHAN, 1953, Japan, Arias Quality Pictures; with Okemi Negishi. Shown through the courtesy of Pathe-Contemporary Films.