

The Museum of Modern Art

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THE CAREER OF AN ACTOR: ANTHONY QUINN

EXHIBITION OF STILLS AND COLOR SLIDES

The Career of An Actor: Anthony Quinn, an exhibition of 140 still photographs, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art starting November 7. The exhibition covers more than 30 years of film-making from "Waikiki Wedding," made in 1937, when the actor appeared as a native of Hawaii, until his most recent role as the first Russian-born Pope in "The Shoes of the Fisherman."

Quinn will be able to note the changes in his own colorful career - the Mexican killer of "Viva Zapata," the brutal strongman of "La Strada," and the half-breed of "The Ox-Bow Incident" - when he attends the preview, November 6, as guest of honor at a dinner for invited guests in the Founders Room of the Museum.

Willard Van Dyke, Director of the Film Department, selected the stills with Kathleen Haven, Graphics Coordinator of the Museum, who installed the exhibition. Thousands of photographs were examined; many of them from Quinn's personal collection and the collection of Sam Shaw, the photographer, a close friend of the actor.

Of the 96 films Quinn has made, 54 will be represented. Color slides from "The Shoes of the Fisherman" will be continuously projected onto a specially constructed screen in the gallery.

Pointing out that Mr. Quinn is "truly an actor," Mr. Van Dyke said, "There have been many stars in the short history of the motion picture, but not all of them have been actors. The remarkable range of Quinn's talents can be seen in almost one hundred roles. Rugged, virile, magnetic, he brings intuition and intelligence to his interpretation of the script. He never relies upon his

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personality alone."

This diversity is seen in the pictures on display. Quinn has appeared as a French pirate in "The Buccaneer" (1938); Chief Crazy Horse in "They Died with Their Boots On" (1941), a biography of Custer; a Mexican wrongly hanged in "The Ox-Bow Incident" (1943); a matador's manager in "The Brave Bulls" (1951); Attila in the film of that title (1953); Quasimodo in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1957); and a has-been fighter in "Requiem for a Heavyweight" (1962).

In the early years Quinn for the most part was cast as a traditional heavy in films such as "Daughter of Shanghai" (1937) with Anna May Wong. His career changed direction when he played the brutish, gigantic circus strong man Zampano in the Academy Award-winning Italian film "La Strada" (1954).

Quinn won an Academy Award for his supporting role in "Viva Zapata" (1952) and again, as Gauguin, in "Lust for Life" (1956). Probably his best-known role is the inimitable, irascible "Zorba the Greek" (1964), for which he won the Best Actor Award from the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures.

In recent years, he has made "Behold a Pale Horse" (1964), "The Visit" (1964), "The 25th Hour" (1967), "The Happening" (1967), and his current "The Shoes of the Fisherman."

Biographical Notes:

Quinn, described by Alfred Bester in Holiday magazine as a "beautiful creature with the body of a matador, the voice of a ruffian, the face of an Aztec Indian," was born Anthony Rudolph Oaxaca Quinn in Chihuahua, Mexico. His father Frank Quinn, was an Irishman, and his mother Manuella Oaxaca Quinn, a Mexican of Aztec ancestry. During the Mexican Civil War his parents took Anthony and his sister to El Paso, Texas. Later the family moved to Los Angeles, where his father found work as a cameraman and property man at a movie studio.

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Before becoming an actor, Quinn preached in Aimee Semple McPherson's temple and worked as a construction worker, ditch-digger, boxer, fruit-picker, taxi driver, and foreman of a mattress factory. His first professional acting assignment came in 1936 in a Los Angeles production of Mae West's play "Clean Beds."

His first movie role was in "Parole" (1936), which he secured because of his authentically haggard and unemployed appearance. Then Cecil B. De Mille cast him in "The Plainsman" (1936). Quinn continued to play swarthy villains and ignoble savages, although an attempt was made to establish him as a latter-day Valentino in such films as "Last Train from Madrid" (1937) and "Blood and Sand" (1941).

On Broadway Quinn starred in "The Gentleman from Athens" (1947) and was described by Newsweek magazine as "tough and ingratiating - a 'dese-and-dose' Don Quixote, tilting at windmills." He also toured the country as Stanley Kowalski in "A Streetcar Named Desire," and played the role in New York in 1950. He later played on Broadway in "Becket" (1960).

In recent years Quinn has devoted most of his time to film-making here and abroad. He has, however, also written a play, and is interested in painting. His own collection of paintings includes a Renoir, a Degas, and a Rouault. He is himself a portrait painter and had a one-man show of his work in Chicago.

The Museum received the cooperation of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in assembling this exhibition and making it available to the public.

Photographs and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lillian Gerard, Film Coordinator, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. 245-3200.