

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

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## THE GOLEM, BACKSTAIRS, AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

An excerpt from The Golem (1920) and Leopold Jessner's Backstairs (1921) will be shown November 7 - 9 at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, the current program in the series "Past and Present: A Selection of German Films, 1896 - 1957." There will be showings daily at 3 and 5:30.

A Ufa film written and directed by Paul Wegener, The Golem is based on a 15th Century legend: hoping to avert expulsion of the Jews from their ghetto, a rabbi moulds a giant figure of clay and through magic brings him to life. Hans Pölzig's architectural settings use buildings and ornaments to express emotion and mood rather than simple atmospheric background, a technique related to the Expressionist movement.

The influence of Expressionism, in significant decor and externalization of inner feeling, is also seen in Backstairs, the only film by Leopold Jessner, Germany's most advanced theater director after Reinhardt. During the greater part of the action only three characters appear - allegoric figures representing impulses and passions. The use of stairs, a device always associated with Jessner's stage productions, dramatizes both the social status of the characters and their emotional relationships. Jessner directed from a scenario by Carl Mayer; design by Paul Leni; the cast, Henny Porten, Wilhelm Dieterle and Fritz Kortner.

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