

The Museum of Modern Art

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RARE FILMS IN MUSEUM RETROSPECTIVE

"The Guardsman," co-starring Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, is one of several rare films included in the MGM retrospective currently at The Museum of Modern Art. Directed in 1931 by Sidney Franklin, "The Guardsman" featured the famous theatrical couple who made this comedy by Ferenc Molnar a popular Broadway stage success seven years earlier. The only sound film in which Lunt and Fontanne appeared, "The Guardsman" was praised by Mordaunt Hall in The New York Times: "It is a pity that there are not more Fontannes, Lunts and Molnars to help out the screen, for then this medium of entertainment would be on a far higher plane." The film will be shown August 26 at 5:30 P.M. and August 28 at 2:00 P.M.

Another rare film, not seen since its original release in 1933, is "Night Flight," directed by Clarence Brown from the novel of the same title by Antoine de Saint-Exupery. This adventure about the first night airplane flights in South America starred John and Lionel Barrymore, Helen Hayes and Clark Gable and was cited by Mordaunt Hall for its "excellent acting by an imposing list of players and the meticulous attention to details of flying." "Night Flight," produced by David Selznick of "Gone with the Wind" fame, will be shown September 16 at 5:30 P.M.

All three Barrymores, Lionel, Ethel and John, starred in "Rasputin and the Empress" (1932), the only film in which the renowned theatrical family appeared together. The film's unfortunate prologue led to legal difficulties: "This concerns the destruction of an empire, brought about by the mad ambition of one man. A few of the characters are still alive. The rest met death by violence." After the film was made Prince Felix and Princess Irina Yousepoff, members of the royal family, instituted legal action against the producers, claiming they had been maligned in the film. Courts in the U.S. and Great Britain ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and the film continued to be

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subject to tangential suits wherever it played. "Rasputin and the Empress" will be shown at the Museum August 31 at 5:30 P.M.

Another seldom seen MGM film is "The Garden of Allah" (1927), a desert romance filmed partly in Algeria by Rex Ingram after his successful "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." The film, which starred Alice Terry, Ingram's wife, was considered lost until recently. It can be seen August 20 at 5:30 P.M. and August 23 at 2:00 P.M.

There are also several Buster Keaton films, all directed by Edward Sedgwick in the early 1930s, not built as exclusively around his talents as those Keaton himself directed and therefore less often screened. These are "What! No Beer?" and "The Passionate Plumber," both co-starring Jimmy Durante, and "Doughboys." The Keaton films will play September 9, 10 and 11. Two rare films with another MGM comedy star, Marie Dressler, will be shown: "Politics" with Polly Moran and "Emma" with Myrna Loy and directed by Clarence Brown, both playing September 5 at 8:00 P.M. and September 6 at 2:00 P.M. (Dressler's "Tugboat Annie," in which she teamed with Wallace Beery under the direction of Mervyn Le Roy, is also on the program though it is, of course, better known to filmgoers.)

The MGM retrospective, which began at the Museum August 1, has been drawing large audiences to the Museum's auditorium. The cycle continues until January 5, 1975.

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