

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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MUSEUM OF MODERN ART TO SHOW SECOND HALF OF CYCLE OF 300 FILMS
INCLUDING PICTURES DIRECTED BY RENE CLAIR AND EISENSTEIN

On Saturday, November 1, the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, will begin the presentation of Part II: THE TALKIES, the second half of its Cycle of 300 Films highlighting the history and development of the motion picture from 1895 to 1940. The first half, which began June 30, will conclude October 31. The entire series includes 107 programs. The second half of it, to begin November 1, is made up of 45 of these programs and will continue through January. The Museum will show each program on two successive days at 4 P.M. daily and at 2 and 4 P.M. on Sundays.

The opening program of the new series has the general title of THE TALKIES ARRIVE and includes The Jazz Singer, 1927, starring Al Jolson; the Movietone Newsreel of 1927 with George Bernard Shaw; and Steamboat Willie, 1928, the first Mickey Mouse to be released by Walt Disney. This program of three films will be shown both Saturday and Sunday, November 1 and 2. The second program will be the first all-talkie, a motion picture directed in 1928 by Bryan Foy entitled The Lights of New York. This, like all the programs in the series, will be shown on two successive days and will be followed by a program called THE MICROPHONE MOVES, consisting of the motion picture Hallelujah produced in 1929 with a colored cast and directed by King Vidor.

Other films to be shown in Part II are Little Caesar with Edward G. Robinson; Anna Christie with Greta Garbo and Marie Dressler; Morocco with Marlene Dietrich and Gary Cooper; and All Quiet on the Western Front; all of them made in 1930. The new series will present not only American but foreign films such as Maedchen in Uniform, 1931; A Nous La Liberté, 1932; Chapayev, 1934; La Maternelle, 1934; and Alexander Nevsky, 1938.

In a foreward to the printed program of the second half of the Cycle, Iris Barry, Curator of the Museum's Film Library, writes:

"The retrospective of motion picture history which is being presented day by day in the Museum auditorium has already covered in considerable detail the progress of the silent film.

The sixty-two programs thus far given have offered to students and amateurs alike a new opportunity of observing at first hand the vigorous growth of this contemporary art through its early stages, and of discerning afresh its inherent qualities, intangible as those of music and equally original. As an experience, it has been a novel one and the increase in the number of visitors who make a habit of seeing each program in turn suggests that it must be repeated. For the moment, however, the Cycle continues with a reexamination of the sound film.

"With the appearance of the part-talking film The Jazz Singer in 1927 a new era began. Talking films had been introduced before, but not until then had the electrical engineers solved the problem of amplifying as well as recording and reproducing sound. As often, technical invention precoded creative use and at first the new machines were used clumsily. It almost seemed, momentarily, that in gaining a voice the movies had lost a soul. Aesthetic pleasure or intellectual content are hard to find in the first talkies, though the newsreels gained much through the new dimension. The rest was mostly a tinpot substitute for theatre. Yet it is well to recall the character of such primitive talkies as Lights of New York in order to understand what the elements were which stirred the wonderment and curiosity of the public in 1928, and it is the only effective way of appreciating the speed and ingenuity with which this apparent retrogression in film-making was overcome during the next few years. That it has been overcome absolutely, even today, is perhaps open to question. The future is certainly rich in potentialities."

After showing this series on The Talkies at the Museum the Film Library will circulate many of them to other museums, colleges, schools and study groups throughout the country. The number of these institutions showing films circulated by the Museum has been steadily increasing during the six years of the Film Library's existence. This year the number is almost 400.