

The Museum of Modern Art

West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 86

Tuesday, November 24, 1964
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE FILMS OF BILLY WILDER

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library will present sixteen Billy Wilder films from December 13, 1964, through February 6, 1965. The series is directed by Richard Griffith, Curator of the Film Library. Screenings are daily at 3 and 5:30 p.m., and Thursdays again at 8 p.m., in the Museum Auditorium.

Billy Wilder, Mr. Griffith says, "has become the most precise, indeed relentless, chronicler of the post-war American scene, in shade as well as light, that the movies have produced. Many of his films are enormously entertaining comedies, but they appeal to the experience of audiences with a sharp-edged bite of truth that seems the product of long observation of and involvement with the American ethos on all its levels."

The screenings cover the wide-range of three decades of Wilder's movie-making career. The series begins with examples of his initial script writing for the German-made films, *MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG* (1929) and *EMIL UND DIE DETEKTIVE* (1931), directed by Robert Siodmak and Gerhard Lamprecht respectively. It continues through his early Hollywood career of the '30s and '40s when he worked primarily with Charles Brackett; directing such well-known films as *THE MAJOR AND THE MINOR* (1942) and *SUNSET BOULEVARD* (1950) and script writing with Brackett. Also of this period are such literary adaptations as *DOUBLE INDEMNITY* and *LOST WEEKEND*, both of 1945.

The programs will conclude with Wilder's films of the '50s and '60s, which Mr. Griffith notes, "are more nearly the product of one mind and one temperament than would seem possible in this day of the pre-sold product and the big deal," when Wilder was writing, directing and producing his own films, frequently in collaboration with I. A. L. Diamond. Representative of this stage are his noted comedies *STALAG 17* (1953), *SABRINA* (1954), *SOME LIKE IT HOT* (1959) and *THE APARTMENT* (1960).

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Two of his earlier works, EMIL UND DIE DETEKTIVE and LOST WEEKEND, belong to the Museum's Film Library Collection. The other films are being shown through the courtesy of the George Eastman House, M-G-M, MCA, Paramount Pictures, Edward Small, and the Mirisch Corporation.

Stills and additional information available from Linda Goldsmith, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.