

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 7-7470

FOR RELEASE Saturday afternoon, or Sunday
Morning, March 6 or 7, 1937

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library announces the initial showing of its fifth program of Series III: The Film in France: The Advance-Guard, a new series of outstanding foreign motion pictures. This program, composed of the second group of notable French films, will be presented to members of the Museum of Modern Art on Sunday evening, March seventh, at 8:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the American Museum of Natural History, 77th Street and Central Park West, New York City. After this showing in New York the Film Library will circulate this and subsequent programs in the new series to museums, colleges, and study groups throughout the country.

Program V, entitled: The Film in France: The Advance-Guard, will consist of:

The Smiling Madame Beudet (1922) Produced by Vandal-Delac-Aubert. Directed by Germaine Dulac. Scenario by André Obey from his and Denys Amiel's play. Acquired through the courtesy of Mme. Germaine Dulac and The Cinémathèque Française. Here a sombre but penetrating drama of domestic conflict was translated to the screen boldly yet with great sensitiveness at a time when films were chiefly preoccupied with action rather than with the more subtle emotions. Madame Dulac, one of the few women film directors, frequently uses slow motion and trick photography to express the emotional violence beneath the surface of an outwardly calm and commonplace marital existence.

Menilmontant (1924-1925) Produced and directed by Dmitri Kirsanov. Photography by Kirsanov and Léonce Crouan. With Nadia Sibirskaya and Yolande Beaulieu. Acquired through the courtesy of Dmitri Kirsanov. This little-known, twelve-year-old film which European critics have ranked among the masterpieces of the screen, was made, at a minimum of expense, by a young Russian émigré who had previously worked as a violinist in a Paris cinema. The story compressed to its stark essentials - murder, poverty, love, hunger, birth, death - is told with emotional force and sincerity by means of poetic imagery and bold realism. Kirsanov's direction generally,

his free cutting, and particularly the performance of Nadia Sibirskaya in the main role, remain extraordinarily fresh and brilliant to this day.

Ballet Mécanique (1924) Produced and directed by Fernand Léger. Photography by Dudley Murphy. Acquired through the courtesy of Mr. Léger. An abstract film by the internationally famous painter, in which reiterated shots of a country woman with bundle on shoulder forever climbing the same flight of stairs, pictures of saucepan lids and egg beaters, and a number of drawn and painted cubist forms are all combined into a rhythmic pictorial composition, with no attempt at narrative.

In her program notes for The Film In France: The Advance-Guard, Iris Barry, Curator of the Film Library, writes: "In France the impulse to analyze and explore the film medium has led amateurs and professionals alike to undertake many experiments. Moreover, there has been a tendency in France for commercial firms to encourage innovations and for individuals outside the industry to finance independent productions. The experimental school of films which thus arose offers much of interest to the student. There are among these films some that are formless or trivial, and many that abuse technical devices such as soft-focus photography, but others, full of vitality and invention, usefully suggest that at no stage have all the resources of the cinema been fully explored."

The Museum of Modern Art FILM LIBRARY

Corporation

485 Madison Avenue, New York
February 25, 1937
Telephone PLaza 3-1981

JOHN HAY WHITNEY
President

JOHN E. ABBOTT
Vice-President

EDWARD M. M. WARBURG
Treasurer

JOHN E. ABBOTT
General Manager

IRIS BARRY
Curator

TO MOTION PICTURE EDITORS
TO CITY EDITORS

Dear Sirs:

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library will give the initial showing of its fifth program of foreign motion pictures Sunday night, March 7, at 8:30 in the auditorium of the American Museum of Natural History, entrance on West 77th Street between Columbus Avenue and Central Park West.

The Press is invited to attend the Sunday night showing or, if more convenient, to come to a Press Preview in Room 502, 125 East 46th Street (Grand Central Palace) at 2:30 Monday afternoon, March first.

Program V, entitled The Film in France: The Advance-Guard, is composed of the following motion pictures:

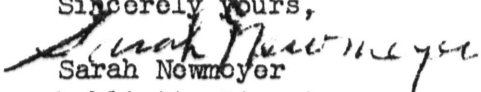
The Smiling Madame Beudet (1922) Produced by Vandal-Delac-Aubert. Directed by Germaine Dulac. Scenario by Andre Obey from his and Denys Amiel's play. Acquired through the courtesy of Germaine Dulac and The Cinematheque Francaise. Here a psychological screen drama of domestic conflict is presented boldly yet with great sensitiveness. The director, Madame Dulac, has at times used slow motion and trick photography to express the emotional violence beneath the surface of an outwardly calm and commonplace marital existence.

Menilmontant (1924-1925) Produced and directed by Dmitri Kirsanov. Photography by Kirsanov and Léonce Crouan. With Nadia Sibirskaia and Yolande Beaulieu. Acquired through the courtesy of Dmitri Kirsanov. Exceptional emotional force and sincerity emanate from this remarkable amateur film, made by a young Russian émigré in Paris. The story, compressed to its stark essentials--murder, poverty, love, hunger, birth, death--is told by means of poetic imagery and bold realism. The direction and photography, and the acting of Nadia Sibirskaia in the chief role, remain extraordinarily fresh and brilliant in this little-known twelve-year-old film which connoisseurs have ranked among the few masterpieces of the screen.

Ballet Mécanique (1924) Produced and directed by Fernand Léger. Photography by Dudley Murphy. Acquired through the courtesy of Mr. Léger. An abstract film in which the mechanically smiling lips of Kiki, famous French model, reiterated shots of a country woman with bundle on shoulder forever climbing the same flight of stairs, rhythmically photographed saucepan lids and egg beaters, and a number of drawn and painted cubist forms are all treated as geometrical patterns.

For further information, please call me at Circle 7-7470.

Sincerely yours,


Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director