

## MUSEUM PAYS TRIBUTE TO VETERAN HOLLYWOOD DIRECTOR HENRY HATHAWAY

Henry Hathaway, 75-year-old Hollywood director, whose first major success was "Lives of a Bengal Lancer," will be honored by The Museum of Modern Art when the Department of Film presents 13 of some 65 pictures made by this veteran filmmaker. The mini-retrospective, which begins at the Museum December 27, indicates the wide range of Hathaway's work. The films, selected by Associate Curator Adrienna Mancia and Assistant Curator Larry Kardish together with Hathaway himself, include "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" (1936), "House on 92nd Street" (1945), "Kiss of Death" (1947), "Call Northside 777" (1948) and "The Desert Fox" (1951).

"True Grit" was the most recent success of Hathaway, who started his career at age eight, working for Allan Dwan as a child actor, performing in a picture a day, five days a week. At 14, he was a property boy on the Universal Pictures lot; later he became assistant director to such masters as Frank Lloyd, Victor Fleming, and Josef von Sternberg, before taking on full directorial duties. His first seven pictures were all adaptations of Zane Grey Westerns and all were successes.

The first Hathaway film to attract critical attention was "Lives of a Bengal Lancer," made in 1935. The film, starring Gary Cooper, with the background of India, utilizes some of Hathaway's knowledge of that country, where he had traveled for almost a year after serving in the army in World War I.

Hathaway became known as a director of action pictures and was a pioneer in the practice of extensive location shooting. "Trail of the Lonesome Pine," starring Sylvia Sydney, Fred MacMurray and Henry Fonda, is the story of a feud between two old Kentucky families and was the first all-Technicolor feature produced 100% outdoors. Several other pictures were unusual for their time in their use of New York City locations: "House on 92nd Street," a semi-documentary about Nazi spies, produced by "March of Time" producer Louis De Rochemont; "Fourteen Hours," about an unbalanced potential suicide;

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and "Kiss of Death," which concerns a small criminal gang led by Richard Widmark, who made his notable debut in this picture.

"The Desert Fox" has James Mason cast in the role of Rommel as "a military figure of great courage, generosity and humanity." The picture, with Sir Cedric Hardwicke and Jessica Tandy, is based on the biography by Brigadier Desmond Young; it has been described as "a good, high-level, conspiracy yarn."

With "Niagara" (1953) Hathaway again indulged his penchant for location shooting. It is set against the scenic splendor of Niagara Falls, and Marilyn Monroe, whom Hathaway personally admired as an actress, plays the starring role opposite Joseph Cotten.

"Seven Thieves" (1960), with Edward G. Robinson and Rod Steiger, has been called by British film historian Kingsley Canham "...one of the best examples of a formula thriller about a group of assorted thieves...it is also considered in France to be an overtly political film that makes reference to the McCarthy era..."

When the National Film Theatre honored Hathaway, Kingsley Canham pointed out certain of the director's thematic concerns: revenge, often linked with the disruption of the family; the search for maturity; frequent lack of moral concern in the heroes; the group hero structure in which a father figure presides and comes to the hero's aid at the cost of his own life. Most Hathaway films "display a robust humor and professional competence," according to Canham, and his high-powered melodramas or action pictures were often considered violent. Hathaway admits "no one has used violence any more than I have." At the same time, the director finds that violence is acceptable "when the action really justifies it." He states, "Brutality must be an integral part, not just gratuitous." He cites two famous scenes from his own films. In "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" a man shoots his own son because he has just killed another man in cold blood; in "Kiss of Death" Richard Widmark shoves an old lady in a wheelchair down the stairs. The latter action made the audience aware of the violence of which the character was capable.

Having served the motion picture industry for 65 years, Hathaway may be too easily dismissed by some critics as an "action director." The quantity of his output, one critic notes, may have displaced any serious examination of his work which lacks any specific

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style or personal signature. Its very versatility, however, is characteristic of the scope of the American cinema.

Mr. Hathaway's latest film, as yet unreleased, is "Hang-Up," a Brut Production.

#### Henry Hathaway Schedule

Trail of the Lonesome Pine. 1936. With Sylvia Sidney, Henry Fonda, Fred MacMurray. 100 min.  
Thursday, December 27, 8:00

Kiss of Death. 1947. With Victor Mature, Brian Donlevy, Richard Widmark. 99 min.  
Friday, December 28, 2:00

House on 92nd Street. 1945. With Lloyd Nolan, Signe Hasso. 88 min.  
Saturday, December 29, 3:00 and Monday, December 31, 2:00

Man of the Forest. 1933. With Randolph Scott, Noah Beery. 63 min. -- To the Last Man.  
1933. With Randolph Scott, Noah Beery. 60 min. Both films adapted from Zane Grey.  
Saturday, December 29, 5:30

Down to the Sea in Ships. 1948. With Richard Widmark, Lionel Barrymore. 120 min.  
Sunday, December 30, 2:00

Fourteen Hours. 1950. With Paul Douglas, Richard Basehart, Barbara Bel Geddes. 92 min.  
Sunday, December 30, 5:30

The Desert Fox. 1951. With James Mason, Cedric Hardwicke, Jessica Tandy. 88 min.  
Tuesday, January 1, 2:00 and Thursday, January 3, 8:00

Niagara. 1952. With Marilyn Monroe, Joseph Cotten. 89 min.  
Tuesday, January 1, 5:30 and Saturday, January 5, noon

Seven Thieves. 1960. With Edward G. Robinson, Rod Steiger, Joan Collins. 100 min.  
Wednesday, January 2, 5:30 and Saturday, January 5, 5:30

Call Northside 777. 1948. With James Stewart, Richard Conte, Lee J. Cobb. 111 min.  
Thursday, January 3, 5:30 and Friday, January 4, 2:00

The Sons of Katie Elder. 1965. With John Wayne, Dean Martin, Martha Hyer. 122 min.  
Friday, January 4, 5:30

Prince Valiant. 1954. With James Mason, Janet Leigh, Robert Wagner. 100 min.  
Saturday, January 5, 3:00 and Sunday, January 6, 12:30

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