

The Museum of Modern Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A History of Film to 1970, a chronologically arranged 25-month cycle of 109 film programs selected from the archives of The Museum of Modern Art, will begin twice - weekly showings Friday, May 3, and Saturday, May 4, with a program of late 19th century films including "The Passion Play," recently discovered in New Jersey. Made in 1898, "The Passion Play" was billed as an authentic record of the Oberammergau passion play but was actually shot on the roof of New York's Grand Central Palace Hotel.

The new History of Film cycle, compiled by members of the Department of Film and edited by Assistant Curator of Film Larry Kardish, is considerably larger than previous such Museum programs, expanded by many new acquisitions. Though "neither exhaustive nor definitive" according to Mr. Kardish, the cycle does represent all the major movements in film from its origins to the present, and attempts to show not only the pre-1900 roots of cinema but also its growth as both an art and a social force.

This program includes more documentaries, animated films and commercials than in years past. It features, as well, a new program of early American sound films, among them "St. Louis Blues" with Bessie Smith; the complete versions of two epics -- Eisenstein's "Ivan the Terrible" and Lang's "The Niebelungen"; several recent gifts including Ozu's "An Autumn Afternoon" and Resnais' "Muriel"; and the recently acquired "Zorns Lemma," Hollis Frampton's major work of the American avant-garde. Also new to the History of Film cycle are Max Ophuls' "Le Plaisir," King Vidor's "The Big Parade," the Buñuel/Dali long unseen "L'Age d'Or," and D. W. Griffith's little-known masterpiece "The Avenging Conscience."

Each program in the cycle will take place Friday at 5:30 and be repeated the following Saturday at noon.

Additional information available from Mark Segal, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019.

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