

The Museum of Modern Art

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NO. 52

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MUSEUM MARKS FIFTY FABLED YEARS OF METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

As MGM marks its fiftieth year, one of America's most prolific motion picture studios will be honored by The Museum of Modern Art, Margareta Akermark, Acting Director of the Department of Film, has announced. The Museum plans a four-month retrospective that will span the five decades of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer history. Starting August 1, it will include over 200 films from 1924 to 1974. The first film on the program is "He Who Gets Slapped," made in 1924 and starring Lon Chaney, a legendary name in the annals of film.

Many landmark films are scheduled in this series, organized by Adrienne Mancina, Associate Curator, and Larry Kardish, Assistant Curator of Film, with the close cooperation and assistance of MGM President Frank Rosenfelt and his staff. Almost a year of preparation has gone into the selection, comprised of the original "Ben Hur" and the remake; two versions of "Mutiny on the Bounty"; and no less than three screen treatments of "The Merry Widow," one by Erich von Stroheim. Other films include "The Scarlet Letter," starring Lillian Gish (1926); "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" (1929), with Lily Damita and Ernest Torrence; "Trader Horn" (1931), starring Harry Carey; "Ah! Wilderness" (1935); "Boys Town" (1938); and, in 1939, "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," "The Wizard of Oz" and "Ninotchka."

While the Museum program also embraces films of the 40s, 50s and 60s, right up to the present year, including "That's Entertainment!", it does not purport to be an exhaustive historical survey of MGM; it does, however, contain several rare, seldom-seen items, among them Buster Keaton in "Doughboys," "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath" and "The Passionate Plumber"; Marie Dressler in "Emma"; "Politics," with Polly Moran; and Joan Crawford opposite Lon Chaney in "The Unknown," made by Tod Browning, whose pictures "The Thirteenth Chair" and

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"Freaks" are on the program. Also to be shown are "Rasputin and the Empress," starring the three Barrymores, John, Ethel and Lionel; Jean Harlow in "Red Headed Woman"; and Marion Davies in "Lights of Old Broadway." Another Marion Davies film, "The Red Mill," with comedienne Louise Fazenda, was directed by William Goodrich, otherwise known as Fatty Arbuckle. Two noteworthy films not seen since their original release are "Night Flight" (1933), with John and Lionel Barrymore, Clark Gable and Helen Hayes, and "Paid" (1930), starring Joan Crawford.

Many directors who distinguished themselves in Hollywood are represented: Rex Ingram ("Garden of Allah"); Victor Seastrom ("Confessions of a Queen"); Clarence Brown ("National Velvet"); Sam Wood ("A Night at the Opera"); Busby Berkeley ("Babes in Arms"); Ernst Lubitsch ("Ninotchka"); Fritz Lang ("Fury"); Vincente Minnelli ("An American in Paris"); George Cukor ("Adam's Rib"); Victor Fleming ("Treasure Island"); Mervyn Le Roy ("30 Seconds Over Tokyo"); Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen ("Singin' in the Rain"); and Stanley Kubrick ("2001").

Fifty years of MGM has to include classic films like "Intruder in the Dust" and "The Red Badge of Courage," that reflect aspects of American life. In addition there are staples of American film culture such as "Tarzan," "Lassie," "Andy Hardy," "Dr. Kildare," and "The Thin Man." They are recognized and beloved in many parts of the world. As Margareta Akermarck states in a program note: "The Museum of Modern Art hopes that its audiences will enjoy not only old favorites but features that have not been seen publicly since their first release. This major program has been made possible by the generosity of MGM who gave us access to the prints it has preserved. This studio has been more conscientious and foresighted than many others in the industry in conserving its films."

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