

# The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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## MoMA TO SALUTE FIVE DECADES OF WARNER BROS. CARTOONS WITH GOLDEN JUBILEE PROGRAM OPENING SEPTEMBER 13

The art and antics of Bugs Bunny and friends will be the subject of a double exhibition this fall at The Museum of Modern Art, as the Department of Film salutes five decades of Looney Tunes and Merrie Melodies from Warner Bros. Cartoons.

Screenings of Warner Bros. classics will be held each weekend from September 13 through January 26 in the Museum's Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters 1 and 2. The guest curator for the film series will be Leonard Maltin, author of two standard works on film animation--Of Mice and Magic: A History of American Animated Cartoons and The Disney Films--and film critic for television's Entertainment Tonight. A total of 17 programs will be shown, spanning the years from the first Warner Bros. cartoon (the 1930 Sinkin' in the Bathtub, starring Bosko) through the early 1960s. During the first weekend of the exhibition, screenings will be introduced by Chuck Jones and Friz Freleng, the animator-directors who were responsible for many of the Warner Bros. classics, and by Mel Blanc, the voice of Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Sylvester the Cat, and some 400 other characters.

Concurrently with the film series, the Museum will mount an exhibition of original Warner Bros. cartoon art, "THAT'S <sup>NOT</sup> ALL FOLKS!," in the lobby gallery of Titus Theater 1. Sketches, cels, and a variety of outstanding and rare drawings will be on display, supplemented by a video installation. The wall exhibition is co-curated by Mary Corliss, assistant curator in the Department of Film, and by Stephen Schneider, an expert on Warner Bros. animation whose writing has appeared in publications including Art in America, Millimeter, and The New York Times. The majority of the artwork in "THAT'S <sup>NOT</sup> ALL FOLKS!" is on loan from Stephen Schneider's personal collection.

An invitational gala will open the exhibition, with Friz Freleng, Chuck Jones, and Mel Blanc as the special guests. Freleng--in whose films Porky Pig and Yosemite Sam first appeared--joined the Warner Bros. Cartoons studio in 1930, the year of its founding. Jones, who joined the Warner Bros. staff in the mid-1930s, was the inventor of such famed characters as the Road Runner,

Wile E. Coyote, and Pepe Le Pew. Between them, Freleng and Jones have won nine Oscars and three Emmy Awards. Mel Blanc, the voice of Looney Tunes, joined the studio in 1937; in addition to his work for Warner Bros., he has created roles and sound effects for The Jack Benny Show (on both radio and television) and has been the voices of Barney Rubble and Dino the Dinosaur on television's The Flintstones.

In assessing the Warner Bros. cartoons in their heyday, Leonard Maltin writes that the studio's "track record during this time was remarkable. It created more lasting star characters than any rival studio.... [Warner Bros.] films were bold, brash, and innovative. Most important, they were funny in a way Disney's cartoons had never been." It is a testament to the lasting popularity of the Warner Bros. cartoons that they have been on television continuously since 1960, making them one of the longest-running programs in history.

The exhibition coincides with the return of the classic Warner Bros. cartoons to the ABC Television Network. Beginning September 7, 1985, from 8:00-9:00 a.m., The Bugs Bunny Looney Tunes Comedy Hour will air regularly as part of ABC's Saturday Morning children's schedule. The Bugs Bunny cartoons originally premiered on the network in 1960 and were presented at various times until 1975.

WARNER BROS. CARTOONS GOLDEN JUBILEE has been organized for The Museum of Modern Art by Adrienne Mancina, curator, and Jytte Jensen, curatorial assistant, in the Department of Film. The exhibition is made possible through the generous support and assistance of ABC, Inc., and of Warner Bros., Inc./The Licensing Company of America. The Department of Film would also like to thank MGM/UA for its cooperation.

For further information, the public may call 212/708-9500; for a recorded announcement of the day's screenings: 212/708-9490.

PLEASE NOTE: A full schedule of films to be shown will be issued in August 1985.

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No. 55

For further press information or photographic materials, please contact Howard Feinstein, film press representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.