

The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

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MoMA SALUTES PIONEER PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR ALICE GUY-BLACHÉ ON SEPTEMBER 12

A selection of rare films by Alice Guy-Blaché, the world's first woman to produce and direct films, will be presented by the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art on September 12. Cosponsored by the Women's Independent Film Exchange, the program marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of women's filmmaking in America, which began with the founding of the Solax Company, Guy-Blaché's motion picture studio in New York. The program, screened at 3:00 and repeated at 6:30 p.m., consists of eight rare Solax films, most of which have not been publicly screened since their original releases between 1911 and 1913.

A TRIBUTE TO ALICE GUY-BLACHÉ also celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Department of Film, which recently announced a \$10-million capital campaign for film preservation. The films in the tribute have been programmed by Cecile Starr, director of the Women's Independent Film Exchange, an organization promoting increased visibility for women filmmakers in noncommercial film programs and in publications. Ms. Starr will introduce both screenings.

In 1982 the Women's Independent Film Exchange began concentrating on the Pioneer American Women Filmmakers Research Project, which collects, produces, stores, and disseminates information about women filmmakers and directors who began working in the United States between 1910 and 1970. "A number of those women are expected to attend the Guy-Blaché program," Ms. Starr reports, "and many of them are active in New York filmmaking today. We want them to be among the first to see the few existing films of the world's first woman filmmakers."

Alice Guy began her film career as a secretary to Léon Gaumont in Paris and went on to produce and direct hundreds of films for the Gaumont Company. In 1906 she married the English cameraman Herbert Blaché, who was later put in charge of Gaumont's New York office. In 1910 Guy-Blaché founded the Solax Company, which produced several hundred films, all of which she supervised and many of which she directed until Solax closed down late in 1914. She continued to direct and supervise feature films until 1920. Fortunately, a handful of the early Solax Company films have been preserved.

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Included in the tribute are the following films, which will be shown chronologically: Greater Love Hath No Man (1911), The Detective's Dog (1912), Canned Harmony (1912), The Girl in the Armchair (1912), Beasts of the Jungle (1913), A House Divided (1913), Matrimony's Speed Limit (1913), and Brennan of the Moor (1913). There will be live piano accompaniment for both the afternoon and evening programs, which will be held in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 2.

The program has been coordinated for the Museum by Jytte Jensen, curatorial assistant, Department of Film, in association with Adrienne Mancina, curator. Prints have been loaned through the courtesy of the Library of Congress and the George Eastman House, Rochester.

The event is made possible in part by a grant to the Women's Independent Film Exchange from American Express Company.

The Museum's film program is made possible in part through the support of The Roy and Niuta Titus Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

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For additional press information and photographic materials contact Howard Feinstein, film press representative, The Museum of Modern Art 212/708-9752.

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