

NATIONAL CINEMA SERVICE
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(201) 445-0776

Presents
Fall
1992



Blackhawk Films

NEW RELEASES!

OUR GANG FOLLIES OF 1938

\$160

The very last two-reeler to star the Little Rascals, this amazingly elaborate Hal Roach production is a take-off of the swing musicals other studios were offering. Impresario Spanky is producing a big show featuring Alfalfa, "King of the Crooners," but Alfalfa apparently knows his limitations as a crooner, and mistakenly opts for opera, much to the dismay of the rest of the Gang. Large sets and lavish production numbers combine to make this uniquely polished "Our Gang" a memorable comedy pleasure. (21 minutes)



THE AWFUL TOOTH *

(1938)

\$85

Alfalfa and his gang show up at the dentist's office to get all their teeth pulled. Why? So that the tooth fairy will leave them enough money to buy a catcher's mitt. The wise dentist spares no effort as he gets a crowbar and sledge hammer to teach them a lesson. (11 minutes)

CHARLEY CHASE

MOVIE NIGHT *

(1929)

\$160

It seems Charley Chase's family goes to the movies every Monday evening. Mrs. Chase's brother, Spec O'Donnell, who is old enough to go to college (were he smart enough), dons knickers and gets in line early as a kid. Finally inside the theater, they have trouble finding seats. Once seated, Edith gets hiccups and her father has to make his way out and back across a long row of absorbed patrons to bring a glass of water. Then Charley gets the hiccups himself...then he wins a live goose in the prize drawing...then the goose gets loose and flies about the theater...In *The Comic Mind*, Gerald Mast calls this Chase's best comedy, no small praise. (19 minutes at 24 fps, silent)



SKIP THE MALOO *

(1931)

\$160

Off the boat from England, Duke Chase (Charley) is to visit wealthy Dell Henderson's family, but determined to "disgust" his wife with royalty, Dell has the chauffeur waylay the Duke, then mistakenly hires Charley as a stand-in. "It'll be a lark!" says Charley. "My boy, it will be an eagle!" says Dell. Convinced Dukes are a silly lot, Dell has Charley sport a monocle and act like Claude Allister, but thanks to society reporter Gale Henry, Charley explains to daughter Jacqueline Wells what's really going on. They teach Dell a lesson with a game of "skip the maloo" and a pie in the face. Only experienced slapstick comedians need apply for such work, and this troupe pulls off the silliness with such panache that it's really quite funny! (20 minutes)

THE BAKERY



(1921)

\$160

Woe to the innocent customer that enters this bakery! Larry Semon is clerk, helper, and walking disaster. While serving customers he's fighting slapstick style with his fellow employees. Oliver Hardy, his gruff and dishonest boss, would like to kill our little clown but everything goes wrong and anyway, he's too busy embezzling. Finally there's a monumental chase with flour bins, dough, pies, cakes and more until the madcap heroic ending. A terrific comedy by one of the great gag and action stars of the early 1920s, Larry Semon. With piano score by Jon Mirsalis recorded for reproduction at 18 fps. (27 minutes)



RUSH ORDERS

(1921)

\$85

Tasty indeed is this rediscovered Snub Pollard one-reeler produced by Hal Roach and directed by Charles Parrott (Charley Chase). Marie Mosquini's short-order cafe is doing badly (her advertising slogan is "raspberries in season") but her pancakes explode when dropped on the floor. Ingenious customer Snub, attracted by the management, comes to her rescue — and twenty years later they're still happily together, flapping jacks. A prime quality print from Snub's prime period. (11 minutes)

HABEAS CORPUS *

(1929)

\$160

The boys are hired by crazy Professor Padilla to rob a cadaver for his experiments. Stan is leery of this assignment. "Don't you think the Professor is a trifle cuckoo?" he asks. "He is as sound mentally as you or I," assures Ollie. Having set off, they don't know that the police have taken the Professor off to the nut house. Our would-be ghouls find the cemetery "haunted" but after amusing blunders, the dauntless duo get their corpse — although rumors of his death have been greatly exaggerated! The added music and effects are of later vintage but enhance the film; print quality is outstanding; original main titles restored. (21 minutes)

THEIR PURPLE MOMENT *

(1928)

\$160

Stan and Ollie have hidden \$2 from their wives out of each paycheck, and now set out to spend their hoard on a little man-to-man fun at the bowling alley. En route they pass the Pink Pup cafe where they are suckered in to posing as sugar daddies for a couple of stood-up dames, and after big-ticket splurges, discover they have no money at all. The incidents are side-splitting but the greatest comedy is in close-ups of Stan's face as visions of what he can do and of what will happen to him flicker across that part of his head where his brain should be. (23 minutes, silent)

THEY GO BOOM *

(1929)

\$160

Ollie has a cold and Stan's taking care of him, waiting on him hand and foot. This single situation is meticulously expanded until their one room is practically demolished, landlord Charlie Hall is at the end of his rope, and the audience has laughed uproariously for 21 minutes.

STAN LAUREL

WEST OF HOT DOG

(1924)

\$160

Stan Laurel gives comic treatment to the old saw of an Eastern dude who inherits Western property. Stan and Bad Mike, Hot Dog's local villain, are rival contenders for the same bequest. Bad Mike, played by Lew Meehan, spends the two reels trying to do Stan in, but instead he mistakenly wipes out his own gang, one man at a time. Commended by the sheriff and no longer a tenderfoot, Stan leaves town throwing the bull by the tail! (21 minutes at 24 fps, silent)

OLIVER HARDY

ONE TOO MANY

(1916)

\$85

One of the only surviving "Plump and Runt" comedies with Oliver Hardy and Billy Ruge, made in Jacksonville, Florida for Vim. It's described in detail by John McCabe in *Babe: The Life of Oliver Hardy* (1989), in part as follows: "Action had to be fast-paced, story line quintessential, but it is amazing how much action these early films carried...At times in the film Babe's physical dexterity astounds...Chaplin could not have done it as well." (15 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

FIDDLESTICKS

(1926)

\$160

In spite of his diploma proclaiming him a "naturalized" musician, Harry Hogan's family throws him out; his father thinks he's a loafer who hasn't contributed to the family welfare in years. Alone and destitute, Harry's musical career takes a distinctly different turn as he discovers there's money in music — if you play it right, all you have to do is pick it up! Harry Langdon's final short comedy before leaving Sennett for feature work at First National, *Fiddlesticks* remains one of his most memorable and a delightful example of the comedy routines used by a sad little clown who was once mentioned in the same breath with Chaplin, Keaton and Lloyd. (29 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

(1923)

THE SHOCK

\$425

Lon Chaney stars as Wilse Dilling, crippled emissary of Queen Ann, notorious underworld leader. He poses as a small-town station agent but actually watches the local banker, being blackmailed by Ann, until an emotional attachment to the banker's daughter intervenes. Fortunately, everyone is extricated from the tangled plot (and Wilse is cured) by the San Francisco earthquake! A Universal-Jewel, directed by Ince veteran Lambert Hillyer with a supporting cast including Virginia Valli and Walter Long. (70 minutes, silent)

OVER

MANHATTAN MEDLEY

(1932)

\$85

Clearly inspired by Ruttmann's *Berlin*, this shorter but similar treatment of New York was obviously a labor of great love for its anonymous director. The Fox Film production traces life on the island from early morn until late at night, finding in the landmarks, the ethnic pockets and the business mainstream of the city all the flavor of this colorful metropolis as it was sixty years ago. Early thirties nostalgia is also evoked by Louis de Francesco's fine original score. (11 minutes)

A PROPOS DE NICE *

(1930)

\$175

Jean Vigo's first film, a highly personal "point of view" documentary about Nice (a resort and gambling city on the French Riviera) made in collaboration with cinematographer Boris Kaufman. At the time an "insignificant succès d'estime," it has since gained recognition as the "first (though least) masterpiece" of the director of *Zero de conduite* and *L'Atalante*. Critics now recognize it as "a densely realized work which resists generalizations...and in a difficult genre...that of the film essay." The original master positive was available for preparation of our negative, and copies are excellent. (30 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

WAVERLY STEPS *

(1948)

\$230

A city portrait of Edinburgh constructed of episodes in the lives of some of its citizens between 5 o'clock one Sunday afternoon and late the following night, this dramatized documentary is highly individual and appealing. The stories of a sailor from a Danish ship, a student and his sweetheart, a businessman and his secretary, a railway fireman, a coalman, and a poor little bigamist receiving sentence meet and intertwine. Directed by John Eldridge. (31 minutes)

PRAISE THE SEA

(1960)

\$160

Subtitled "A Portrait of the Netherlands," this famous documentary by Herman Van Der Horst travels rhythmically from field and windmill to quaint town and modern city to celebrate the Dutch people and their lovely homeland. In the end, however, no place but rather the wordless signals between a shipyard foreman and his crane operator, guiding the positioning of a huge hull section, haunt the memory. Made without dialogue or narration, the film is a treasury of imaginative examples in sound design. (22 minutes)

NICKELODEON YEARS**A DAY WITH THE GYPSIES OF ENGLAND**

(1906?)

\$85

Reproduced on color stock in original tints, this amazing early British film made by Gaston Queribet for Hepworth follows a "gypsy" caravan through countryside and village until camp is set up for the night. What's amazing? There's moving camera (it was evidently lashed to an iron steam roller for smoothness). Careful attention to natural light and camera placement yields beautiful compositions in the style of John Constable; we see subjective camera, follow-focus, real night-time photography and more. This film is not listed in the British National Film Catalogue so our dating is conjectural, but whenever produced, it's a small masterpiece. (9 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

THE STREET-ARAB OF PARIS

(1910)

\$85

An astonishing time capsule of the 19th century stage lives in this rare example of work from the pioneer Eclair studio of Paris, which specialized in such adaptations. It seems the scion of a noble family loves a beautiful girl below his station; things look hopeless until the girl's adolescent brother successfully brings everyone together. The actors are billed with prominent notice of their theatrical affiliations; the director, probably Emile Chautard, remains anonymous! In any event, this accomplished troupe showcases the Delsarte style of gestural performance with grace and conviction. (15 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

HIS TRUST

(1910)

\$85

An ambitious Civil War melodrama and one of director D. W. Griffith's trial balloons for *The Birth of a Nation*, this film and its sequel *His Trust Fulfilled* were issued by Biograph in successive weeks, making this, in a way, Griffith's first multi-reel film. Picturesque battle action results in the faithful slave (a white actor in blackface) taking responsibility for a young girl and her widowed mother. We recently found a fine original nitrate print which has yielded lovely copies; to them we added a new score (recorded for reproduction at 18 fps) performed by piano, violin, cello and flute, proving that we would have operated a very high-class nickelodeon! (15 minutes)

THUMBELINA *

(1953)

\$85

A silhouette film designed and animated by Lotte Reiniger which exhibits this famous artist at the peak of her form. Hans Christian Andersen's adventures of a tiny girl who grew from the heart of a flower afford Ms. Reiniger the chance to animate whimsical frog, fish, bird, mouse, mole and even beetle against exquisitely shaded backgrounds. Music by Freddie Phillips; narration in English, frog and sparrow. It will leave you smiling! (11 minutes)

CLAY, OR THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

(1965)

\$85

A stunningly imaginative, light-hearted gloss on evolution from primordial ooze to modern man in 8 minutes of clay animation by Eliot Noyes, Jr. With a sweet jazz score by the Sammy Saltonstall Quartet and without a spoken word, the film suggests the development of complex life forms, adaptation and mutation, and the food chain. *Clay* was made when Eli Noyes was a Harvard undergraduate; it was nominated for an Academy Award, and he went on to an outstanding career as designer, illustrator, author and filmmaker.

THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN

(1934)

\$85

One of the premier entries in Ub Iwerks' Comicolor animation series, the film more or less tells "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" by Washington Irving. Cartoon likenesses of spindly Ichabod Crane, hunky Brom Bones and winsome Katrina Van Tassel are on hand as expected but Iwerks' great triumph is atmosphere, with multiplane shots and the two-color process pushed to its limit. *The Headless Horseman* also features one of Carl Stalling's best scores (a concert version of the film is playing the "live cinema" circuit). (8 minutes)

RAGTIME ROMEO

(1930)

\$85

A pre-code charmer, never before released by Blackhawk. Flip the Frog motors to his sweetie's place, where he serenades her; then they play ragtime piano together while assorted residents of her apartment house cheer them on. The supporting cast looks like those Iwerks drew for Disney in the '20s (including a first cousin to Mickey Mouse), the animated piano playing is an absolute tour de force, and it's all set to a beautiful raggy score by Carl W. Stalling. (7 minutes)

DOCUMENTARY CLASSICS**BERLIN, THE SYMPHONY OF A GREAT CITY ***

(1927)

\$350

With the single exception of *Nanook*, Walther Ruttmann's *Berlin* is the most important and influential non-fiction film of the silent era. At its simplest level, it creates an impression of the city from dawn until late at night in what John Grierson called "smooth and finely tempo'd visuals." But it's also about the art of film itself, a departure from the movie tradition of narrative based upon plays and novels and an embrace of selection, arrangement, and the rhythmic pacing of thousands of little observations to create as its true content the experience of visual harmony and form. Prints are superior. 68 minutes at 18 fps, silent; 53 minutes at 24 fps. (Original recommended speed was 20 fps.)

HAUNTED VALLEY: THE BRINK OF ETERNITY

(1923)

\$160

After Pearl White, Ruth Roland was Pathe's most important "serial queen" whose flashing smile and daring-do modeled self-reliance for American women of the teens and early twenties. Here is a rare, complete chapter from Ruth Roland's final Pathe serial in which she is manager of a dam construction project which villain Francis Ford attempts to thwart. The plot is enhanced with action scenes, "futuristic" gadgetry, and an on-the-button score by John Muri, gifted veteran of the 1920s theater organ. (22 minutes)

TANGO TANGLES

(1914)

\$85

Charlie Chaplin comes to the dance a little unsteady on his feet and finds the hat check girl to his liking. That she already has the band leader in a whirl and one of the musicians ready to do or die for her deters him little. Capitalizing on the then-current craze for the Argentine tango, and the only Keystone comedy with Chaplin, Arbuckle and Sterling, *Tango Tangles* also inspired the composition of an original score by young Darius Milhaud, just completing his studies at the Paris Conservatory. (11 minutes at 18 fps, silent)

TILLIE'S PUNCTURED ROMANCE

(1914)

\$325

Marie Dressler, Charlie Chaplin, Mabel Normand, Mack Swain, Chester Conklin, Edgar Kennedy, Charley Chase and many other Keystone players appear in this first-ever American feature comedy.

OVER

New
1993
Prices
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-OVER-

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