Program for Tuesday, January 10th at the Marine Room, 5th floor, Capitol Hotel, 51st Street and Eighth avenue, at 8:00 p.m. Order of screening will correspond with the arrangement of these notes.

A FILM INAGURAL PROGRAM OF CORBY AND ADORE

DOUGLAS FAIRBAINS - JESSE CARSON - LAUREL AND HARDY - JEAN HARLOW - JACK PERRIN - JOHN GILBERT
BILLIE DOVE - CLIVE BROOK - RICARDO CORTEZ - LOWELL SHERMAN - CARMEL MYERS - BERNIS ADORE

"WILD BLOOD" Universal, 1926. Presented by Carl Laemmle. Directed by Henry MacRae.

70 mins.
Starring: JACE PERRIN with Ethylma Claire, Theodore Lorch, Nelson McDowell, and Rex and Starlight, the wonder-horses.

Universal always made the most consistent profits on bread-and-butter horror yarns and on westerns. "Wild Blood" shows just what ingenuity and real production value the company packed into their horse operas, and why they always remained out in the lead in that particular field. It is a strange, quite unorthodox little western, very sharply divided into two. On the one hand, there is a sub-plot involving wild horses which is given almost as much prominence as the human angle. This portion of the film is nicely pleasing, complete with long dialogue exchanges (via titles) between the animals. The wild horse stampede footage, much of which is stock from Hal Roach, is splendid material. The story-line proper brings in elements quite alien to the horse opera, including a sympathetic but frustrated heroine who is quite prepared to sell herself to the villain for the luxury that he can provide.

One of the most unusual angles of the whole production is the consistent use of a decidedlly Germanic camera technique. Here one finds use of the moving camera, distorted angles and symbolic superimpositions that resulted one instantly to the great German dramas of the mid-twenties. It seems very likely (though it is difficult to prove this theory) that Henry MacRae has seen William K. Ledyard's classic "White Gold" of a year earlier, and impressed by the effectiveness of its application of German technique to a western story revolving primarily around sex, decided to utilize some of its mood in a more humble cater.

MacRae was Universal's leading exponent of westerns and serials, and continued to turn out wonderfully vigorous material for their right up until the forties. Jack Perrin, one of the lesser western stars, played the young honeymooner in Stroheim's "Blind Husbands", and is still very active in westerns in small roles. His career as a western hero came to an end in the mid-thirties. Miss Claire, another serial recruit, is appealing as the heroine, but Theodore Lorch unfortunately rather overshadows the villain. (An old failing of his, as though of you one saw the talkie serial "Flash Gordon" will realize.)

Incidentally, at least four different camera speeds are employed in "Wild Blood". By 1926, the average speed was nearer to 24 frames than to the original 16. Thus certain dramatic scenes with no movement seem wholly protracted if projected at complete silent speed. Some action sequences seem just "right" at 16 frames, others too fast even at this silent speed. The reason for this is that certain sequences were deliberately under-cranked to create an artificial illusion of speed. I.e., Jack Perrin performs his own stunts in the closing reel, leaping from a really galloping horse to a running buckboard. This apparent disregard for danger and scoring of doubles is not as remarkable as it might seem however. Look attentively and you will see that the horse is in fact trotting along quite slowly, the speed being achieved solely through an under-cranking of the camera. And finally, some of the stock material was of course shot at a different rate, and forms a decided contrast. We mention this only in case some of our members feel that we are stretching speeds on them; the whole film will be run off at the standard 16 frames, and variations will be in the print, not the projector.

A Compilation of Silent Reel (6 minutes) Also, there won't be anyMusic for forthcoming programmes. The trailers themselves are all we have. However, they represent a fascinating compilation - not only for the fine shots from the film, but also for the delightful old-time art-work and magnificent personalities ("Sold into marriage ... struck down by a scandal on her wedding day ... Ricardo Dart, an astounding entertainer!?) employed to lure the ticket-buyers back the following day. Five films are involved: THE COSSAGAS, with John Maclure; THE VOODOO, with Ernest Torrence; PRINCESS OF THE SAND with Ricardo Cortez, Carroll Myres; THIE FREEDOM, Clive Brook, with Frederick Burton; THE MARRIAGE with Lewis Stone, Robert Frazer, Margaret Livingston and THE YELLOW DOLPHIN, with Clive Brook and the lovely Billie Dove. This is really a unique, enjoyable (and fascinating) item.
"DOUBLE WHOOPES" Hall Roach-PRM, 1928. Directed by James Parrott. Photography: George Stevens Stars: Laurel and Hardy. It is particularly as a comedy by the absolute best of the classic Laurel and Hardy comedy in New York. A little before the absolute top standard of "Big Business" and "Two Tars" perhaps, it is still one of the best comedies the boys ever turned out, and a how from beginning to end. There is little or no plot: Laurel and Hardy are initially mistaken for visiting royalty, and ultimately assume their true positions as hotel doormen - to even more devastating effect. All of the brilliant timing and play that they made famous is exploited to the full: Hardy's joy delight in moments of triumph and his pitiful direct appeal for audience sympathy when things go wrong, Laurel's child-like innocence and occasional unexpected temper tantrums which result in a finger being jabbed into it, Hardy's eye. Most of all, none of those wonderfully controlled exhibitions of civilized sedate are on view, the hapless victims patiently taking the worst that the boys can dish out before responding in kind.

Two additional elements make "Double Whoopse" unique among Laurel and Hardy films. There is a glorious, unrestrained take-off on the Von Stroheim of "Poiulish Wives". And there is Jean Harlow, sending glamour and sex-appeal in one wonderful comedy sequence.


The Cast: August Holaday (DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS); Gladys Kinglay (Jewel Carmen); Automat Joe (Andre Beranger); Her Friend (Lillian Langdon); Roland Babasay (Howard Gaye); August's pal (E.E. Lawrence); Polka (Charles Haydu); Landlord (Walter Higby); Detective (J.P. McCarthy); Bridgesmaid (Lillian Gish).

The billing of D.W. Griffith's name on this production should not be taken to imply that here we are presenting one of the great man's own pictures. He had little or nothing to do with its actual production. The film in not to be considered a Griffith film, but it is important as representative of Griffith's most commercial and prolific period. Between "The Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance", Griffith supervised a great many productions at Triangle. For fuller details, we refer you to Seymour Stern's admirable index of this period. Some of the films he wrote, others he produced. Some, like Max Marah's "Moonstruck" and films of Lillian Gish and Dorothy Love, probably received the benefit of his personal participation in production.

Not so the Fairbanks films. D.W. didn't like Fairbanks, had no time for comedy as such, unless it was an inherent part of a much broader, more dramatic canvas. Thus, Griffith left the Fairbanks unit pretty much to its own devices. Of course, the films were all made by Fairbanks-trained directors - in this case, Christy Cohanne, who continued as a slick producer of RPP pictures and occasional WP right through until the early nineteen-thirties.

"FLIGHTING WITH FATE" is typical of Triangle films of the period, rather than typical of the Fairbanks films for Triangle. It was far from being one of Doug's best at that time, having too much story and not enough movement. (Others, like "American Aristoocracy" and "Manhattan Madness" in particular, are just wonderful and stand up with the best things that Doug ever did). Not that we are making apologies for showing "Fighting with Fate" - it is a delightful little comedy-drama, with moments of chase and action. It is a film that seems never to be revived, and that alone makes it a film that we should show. We only suggest that those of you unfamiliar with Fairbanks' Triangle period do not regard this as an example of his peak achievements for that company.

The film has very much of a Renée Whitney flavor in both plot and characters. In some ways it resembles Whitney's "A Very Honorable Guy". Incidentally, Joe E. Brown once made a remake of "Fighting with Fate" - after a fashion. He retained the title and the same basic idea; otherwise there was no connection.

Griffith followers will note many members of his unofficial "stock company" in the cast. Jewel Carmen was one of the lowliest of his young female stars. J.P. McCarthy, the private detective, was the guard in "Intolerance" who runs to the scaffold with news of the government's telephone call, Andre Beranger, showing signs of the wonderful feature he was later to become, Lillian Langdon and of course Howard Gaye are other familiar Griffith names. And if you look very closely, you MAY spot Lillian Gish as a bridesmaid in just a few frames towards the end of the film! When Griffith wanted extras, he had no compunction about using his top stars for much chores!
OUR NEXT PROGRAM
Tuesday, January 19th at 3.00 p.m.

HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW — American premiere of a new British feature compilation of much really 'live' silent material from the U.K., Britain, Daily and France. Full details in our next program note.

WHERE THE NORTH BEGINS — a fine Tin Tin Tin subject — one of the best of the Warner series.

MYSTERYLAND — Lupino Lane in a two-reel comedy

LADY DODGER — a two-reel acclamation of the Richard Dix feature, directed by Frank Tuttle.

THE FLOWER FAIRIES — a wonderful 2-minute gem from 35 years ago — a hand-colored Pathe fantasy.

Following programs: dates to be determined later; possibly by this time we may have referred to our two shows a month format:—

1. MY LADY OF WINDS — a fine Clara Bow subject from the mid-twenties. Three-toned print.

CHELSEA — Jennings, Keaton, De Patu & Theodore Lowe in the WFA production of 1922. Shorts to be announced.

2. THE SILENT SERIAL. A complete program devoted to the serial between 1912 and 1920. Helen Holmes in THE PAY TRAIN, forerunner of the serial films; PEARL WHITE in esp. of THE PARISIAN SPOILERS; CAVALLADES, a compilation of various serial serials.

material complete episodes from THE INDIANS ARE COMING (Tim Holt), LIGHTNING BRIDGE (Jack Holt), THE FLAMES OF VENGEANCE (Herbert Rawlinson), PEARL OF INDIAN (Pearl White) and others.

Also in the offering for the near future in an evening devoted to PAUL SELLEM. Among other items in the program are a number of outstanding one-reel somettes recently re-discovered in England, and not shown in the U.S. for many years.

Thoughts in Passing...

Many thanks to the various members and old friends who wrote of how pleased they were to see the society starting again; we're all looking forward to getting together again on the 19th... incidentally, the committee has no wish to monopolize these program notes. Any member who is particularly fond of one of our upcoming films, or who feels that he has a good deal of information about it that should be passed along, is always welcome as a "guest" program annotator. We guarantee that any such material received will be printed without changes or cuts... Our print of "Double Whoppers" was very kindly loaned to us by John E. Allen, the harman archive. Any of our members who are so evil of touch with the civilizing world as not to know Johnny, can reach him o/o Box 78, Radio City Post Office.

Johnny has an outstanding collection of prints, postcards, stills, scripts and other material from all countries and all periods. If you have material for disposal, or want to add material to your own film collections, let him know. Trading with Johnny can almost resemble the Will Rogers-Charles Middletown horse-trading in "David Harum," and is always a pleasure...

... We wonder how many of you spotted old-timey Franchy Fruma and Sibb Pallard in "The Country Girl"... Isn't it about time the Museum of Modern Art started to show some of the prints that they seem to have forgotten about? The Hart-Miller "Old hill Mikel" for example, Shirley Temple's "The Little Colonel," Tolman's "The President Vanishes," "Fragrant of an Empire," Griffith's "One Hundred Nights," Wallace Reid's "Excuse my Dust," Pathe's "The Hollywood Adventure"... The current issue of "Films In Review" contains some first-class articles, ranging from Ronald Sch护卫's excellent piece on stage actors in the early films to a piece on Carl Laemmle's near film and an authoritative summing-up of the Charlie Chan opus by Edward Corner... this magazine is really worth supporting... Interested in Japanese films? The Babbitt Temple at 271 West 44th Street always shows them frequently. Sometimes they're subtitled, sometimes not — but you can always bank on a good (and exhausting) double-feature show with reassurance. Hard seats are a drawback, but with good films who cares? And some of the films shown recently, particularly "Southern Scenes," have been wonderful. If interested, write and ask to be put on their mailing list. Prints are all 35mm incidentally — watch the new-theater for a fine new two-reeler made by our old friend Bob Youngman. Also "When the Brides Were Young," it contains first-class sequences from "Sinbad" (Bennet) and "Mail of the Barge" (Bull, Stemple). "Five Star Final" (Robinson), "20,000 Years in Sing Sing" (Tracy, Davis) and "Lumzy Holiday" (Ray). Finally — the proposed remake of "Birth of a Nation" defies comment. Nobody tried to remake "Caligari" — how can one remake an experiment? No artist ever tried to re-make the Mona Lisa on a wider canvas, recognizing the futility of trying to improve on a masterpiece. Why remake Griffith's film, which is a combination of both experiment and masterpieces? On the other hand, it was also well to walk down Broadway in 1956 and see "Ben Hur," "The Covered Wagon" and "The Iron Horse" — away to have to record the death of British screen comedian Charlie Blount at 76. In the death of Clyde Beelman, director of so many classic Keaton, Lloyd and Fields comedies. Including, presumably, he borrowed Keaton's gun and shot himself. Locking mutineers funds for a funeral, he filled his body to a medical association. Hollywood still seems incapable of appreciating and rewarding its architects...