Final programs of current season: April 30: MAN ABOUT TOWN (52, Frank Craven, with Warner Baxter), THE PASIONATE FRIENDS (49, David Lean, with Ann Todd, Claude Rains); May 7: PROCESSIONARY (Robert Montgomery, with Judge Evans), P.P. NICK (1937, U.S. premier, with Joan Davis, Ralph Lynn, Roberta Hill); May 14: A CHAPPEL III IN THE LITE (23, Lois Weber, with Jane Heggum, Fred Thomson), YOUNG APRIL (1926, Donald Crisp, with Beulah Mae, Joseph & Rudolph Schreiber); both toned prints.

The Theodore Huff Memorial Film Society April 16 1979

We seem doomed never to play "A Sea Dog's Tale", and this is the second time we are delaying it. However, in view of the bonus that has been presented itself, there will probably be few complaints, and both shorts will be added to our May 18 program. Considering the importance of the films, these notes are hardly cover them adequately. I got back from the East Coast only a few hours before show time, and these notes are being done rather hurriedly, with the second print not even being screened (other than a check for quality). In a like manner, Stuart Gedney has had no chance to pre-screen the film, so will be ad-libbing his musical accompaniment and doubts doing it extremely well as always.

DAS SCHIFF DER VERLORENEN INSELN (SHIP OF LOST Men) Germany, 1929
Written and directed by Maurice Tourneur; Camera, Nicholas Farkas; 9 reels With Marlene Dietrich, Fritz Kortner, Gaston Modot, Robin Irvine, Vladimir Sokoloff, Doris de Prim, P. Schallapin, Max Maximilian.

Although unsullied, this melodrama also has few subtleties, and is very easy to follow for those who do not read German. It was one of the last German silents, and like all of Tourneur's best work, a superb display of pictorial virtuosity. Some incredible stylized street sets are there for only a shot or two, and the huge ocean liner, with its spacious ballroom, is an art director's dream. Composition and lighting throughout have Tourneur's painter-like quality; would that the print was worthy of them! It was made from a stunning 35mm original (that some of you may have seen when we ran it at the New Yorker on a Sunday morning some 12 years ago) and a negative from it should have been almost as good. Alas, with the standards considered acceptable by today's labs, it isn't. You can see by design what Tourneur achieved, but much of the rich beauty is gone. However, even in this soft print, it's still quite impressive -- and a handsome, big-scale production. For a rugged melodrama, it's a big sluggish in pace, although it erupts into violent action every so often. The cast is a typical international one of the period, with Robin Irvine (from Hitchcock's "Easy Virtue") representing Britain, and many familiar German faces among the bit players. Considering how plum she seemed in the same year's "Blue Angel," Dietrich is surprisingly attractive (even though she denies ever having made the film!). Tourneur, by the way, is quite sage in withholding the introductory clisme of her for as long as possible! Some credits eliminated above: Asst. Dir. Jacques Tourneur; Art Direction, Franz Schrecker; Producer, Max Glass; From a novel by Frank Reznikoff; released by Orphil-Premo. (Released in France & Britain, but not U.S.A.) Piano accompaniment by both films by STUART OBERST.


A cruder film than its sequel "Son of the Sheik," the original is nevertheless equally interesting in being the kind of full-blooded exotic romance that took itself entirely seriously, while the follow-up, to its advantage, was very tongue in cheek. Inevitably disappointing to those who have never seen it, it is still flavorful and briskly paced, and an elaborate production -- although sexually and romantically, it promises more and delivers less than the sequel. Unfortunately, no really good prints survive, even archivally. This one is adequate but no more, and is the only way the film will hereafter be seen. A little more pictorial gloss might well enable it to come a little closer to its reputation. -- W.K. EVanson