HE SOLD HIS SOUL
...FOR A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN
...TO GAIN FAME AND FORTUNE—
only to be HAUNTED by the SECRET of 7 HIDDEN GENERATIONS!

CARNIVAL of SINNERS

See the FRIGHTENING HALL of INFAMY!

THEIRs WAS A HUNGER
ONLY GREED AND PASSION COULD SATISFY

with PIERRE FRESNAY and Introducing Josseline GAEL

"THE DEVIL'S HAND"
ADVERTISER

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Eng. Titles

3 Col. Ad Mat 301

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2 Col. Ad Mat 202

UNPARALLELED PRAISE FROM THE CRITICS!

"Extraordinary thriller...gripping...true...well-acted"—CUE Magazine

"RECOMMENDED!"—Casile Agr, P.M.

"This is the picture to turn to when the Hollywood pattern has pallled."—A. M. C. Clark, World Telegram

1ST N.Y. SHOWING
French Film
English Titles
Released by Distinguished Films

2 Col. Ad Mat 203
Read these Thrilling TRADE REVIEWS!

NEWS WEEK Says:

It’s rather refreshing to note the arrival of a movie which does not depend on low comedy, broad allegory, or fire-and-brimstone voodooism in handling the old "Devil and Daniel Webster" theme. Currently turning this trick is a French film, "Carnival of Sinners," an intelligently acted, gripping account of one man’s hell on earth.

Aside from some unsubtle symbolism, "Carnival of Sinners" sticks closely to the painful dilemma of an obscure French painter (Pierre Fresnay) who acquires artistic fame and a beautiful wife (Josselline Goell) by buying for one sou a devil’s charm. This Aladdin-like talisman consists of a left hand neatly boxed, which the owner, to keep from forfeiting his soul, must sell before he dies.

These macabre doings manage to maintain the initial suspense with an offhand realism, that includes a bowler-hatted devil (Papau), who strolls about in the innocuous guise of a rabbity-looking manservant.

SYNOPSIS

At the height of tension at a Swiss mountain hotel, cut off by an avalanche, a strange, excited young man arrives, carrying a little black box. For a left hand he has a Stump Carman man persuade him. As the guests gather to his identity, the lights go out! When they re-appear, the box has vanished. Amid great excitement, he, Roland Brisset, tells his story.

As a starving painter, he had fallen in love, about a year ago, with Irene, who repulsed him because of his poverty. Then a man frantic to be rid of he, sold him a talisman to bring him everything he wished. It was a human left hand that must be re-sold in a year. But it brought Brisset to his goal—fame and Irene. A year later, at their anniversary party, a little, genial man appeared, reminding Brisset the year was up. He offered to take the hand. Brisset, fearing to lose his powers asked time to consider. But the little man said Brisset would have to pay him the time due the first day of delay, the sum to double each day. The sum became fabulous. Brisset’s luck ran out. Irene and his friends abandoned him. Then Irene offered him the money. When Brisset came to her, he found her murdered. The games at Monte Carlo took what he had left. Only the fear of eternal damnation prevented his suicide.

One Carnival evening he found himself in a strange hall. Grotesquely masked men sat at a long table. Each had once owned the hand, but had re-sold it before dying. Each had a stump for a left hand. They offered the money to redeem him, but the little man was there, insisting he wanted Brisset’s soul. Brisset called to the original owner of the hand, a young monk to whom God had endowed it. All his life the little man had tempted to sell it but all in vain. When he died, the little man broke into his tomb and replaced the hand. ... To the monk, Brisset now returned the hand in return for salvation. The men at the table vanished. Brisset found himself with a stump on his arm. At his feet lay a dried-up hand. He placed it in a box and went in search of the monk’s tomb. He placed the hand in persuit... The tale is ended as Brisset accomplishes his mission.

CAST and CREDITS

Roland Fresnay
Irene Josselline Goell
Small Man Papau
Melisse Noel Roquevert
Gibelin Guillaume de Sax
Colonel Andre Vorenaux
Angel Pierre Larquey

Released by Distinguished Films
Produced and directed by Maurice Tourneau
Screen play, Jean-Paul Le Chanois, music, Roger Dumos
English titles, Charles Clement
P. M. (New York) Says:

For "Carnival of Sinners", three astonished "biens!" Behind that murky title, why, it's old friend "Faust!". In Paris today, very much at his ease too, the old chameleon, is bewitching and perplexing as ever, but with a lighter wit, a nice Gallic irony, a fine French feeling of independence. It's always fascinating to see him, but so refreshing to see him like this. "Queul"! pleasant surprise!

As Pierre Fresnay retells the legend, it takes on its own pace and nervous excitement. He bats it about like a shuttlecock, whisks it into all sorts of unexpected places—a bistrot, a glove shop, an atelier, an art gallery, the ruins of an abbey, a grave-yard, the Montmartre—permits it with his intelligent, hypnotic eyes, meanwhile permitting the audience the benefit of his sensitive actor's profile and his special tense sincerity. Assisted by Josseline Gaël, the enticing wench who plays his girl, and Palau, as genial a little Devil as one prays never to meet, Fresnay leads this little variation on an old theme to its inevitable grim conclusion, yet somehow keeps it always light and, blissfully, plausibly implausible, since in essence it is the most horrendous horror story of them all.

Cecilia Ager

NEW YORK JOURNAL AMERICAN

Says:

A French equivalent of our horror pictures, "Carnival of Sinners", the newest foreign film tenant, emerges as one of the better French imports.

It's an interesting, entertaining piece, a macabre melodrama that stems from the Faustus legend which has always and probably will intrigue dramatists and poets. It relates in modern settings the plight of an artist who sells his soul to the devil in return for prosperity on earth.

Adroitly spun out, the film was directed by Maurice Tourneur, one of Hollywood, and stars Pierre Fresnay, well known to followers of the Gallic cinema. There is humor in its telling as well as suspense.

Outstanding is a sequence in which all the lost souls who had once owned the hand before him assembled at a banquet to help the young artist free himself from the devil. The latter who is amusingly played by Palau who characterized him as a smiling, unobtrusive character who is never without a briefcase.

Rose Pelswick

WALTER WINCHELL

Says:

Censors didn't shave an inch of "Carnival of Sinners," which is practically unheard of for a French Film.

SUN Says:

"The picture is imaginative melodrama—a horror thriller—"

Eileen Creelman

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