

AUSTRALIA'S *silent film* FESTIVAL[®]



SUTHERLAND ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

Sutherland Entertainment Centre and Australia's Silent Film Festival are proud to host a series of restored silent film classics

Chaplin's *The Rink & Adventurer*; *Steamboat Bill Jr* – 11th February 2012, 11.00am
The Mark of Zorro – 11th February 2012, 7.30pm

Digital presentations of restored silent film
Live musical accompaniment at each screening

30 Eton Street, SUTHERLAND

Tickets from Sutherland Entertainment Centre: (02) 9521 8888
www.ozsilentfilmfestival.com.au

• Charlie Chaplin • Buster Keaton • Clyde Bruckman • Marion Mack • Douglas Fairbanks •



CHARLIE CHAPLIN AT MUTUAL

USA

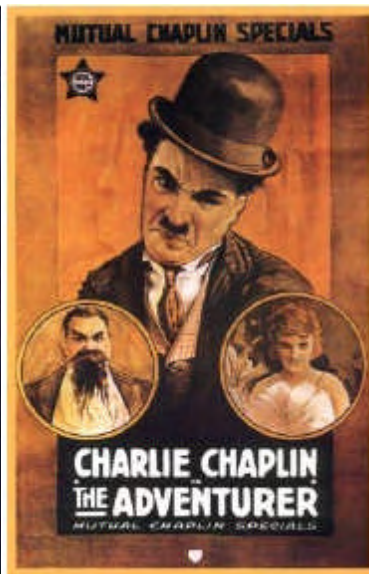
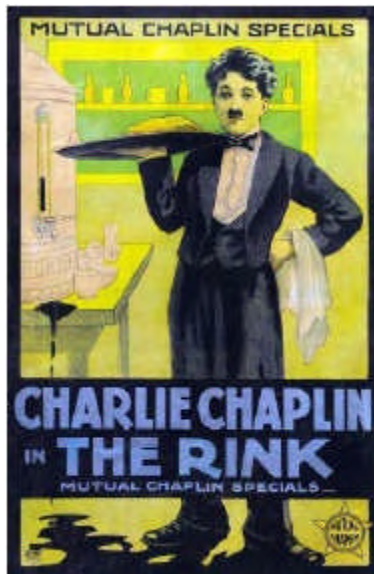
Directors: Charlie Chaplin

Starring: Charlie Chaplin

Duration: 40 mins

Accompanist: Mauro Colombis

Charlie's genius, glimpsed during his work at the Keystone studio, flourished at Mutual: from his balletic poise on skates creating and attracting chaos in *The Rink* to the Tramp adeptly cleaning up crime in *Easy Street*, saving the girl and transforming Eric the Tough. The final superb Mutual here, *The Adventurer*, showcases Charlie's inventive talents across a jail escape, the rescue of the heroine from drowning to a chase of course: all with his verve, brilliance and a smile.



The Rink (1916)

The Rink features Charlie's talent for elegant agility; first as a dexterous waiter in a restaurant, then on a roller-skating rink; a shining example of Chaplin's comical choreography at its best!

Chaplin then amuses us as 'the little tramp' by deciding to become a policeman, and manages to do what no one else dares to try, namely to tame the big bully that has been harassing the residences of *Easy Street*.

The Adventurer (1917)

Charlie is an escapee who rescues the damsel, thwarts the bully and draws us into the madcap brilliance of this brilliant Mutual short. Laughter and mayhem in equal doses are unleashed by Charlie as only he can.

STEAMBOAT BILL JR

USA

Directors: Charles Reisner

Starring: Buster Keaton

Duration: 69 mins

Accompanist: Mauro Colombis

No doubt the most recognized name and face of silent comedy next to Charlie Chaplin is Buster Keaton. One of the many reasons why *Steamboat Bill Jr* is so highly acclaimed today is that it features one of the most famous and breathtaking stunts in film history.



Filmed in Sacramento, California, with a production cost of \$135,000, breakaway street sets and riverbanks were constructed and then their destruction by six powerful Liberty-motor wind machines was filmed for the famous hurricane scene. Keaton himself was suspended by a cable from a forty-meter crane which hurled him around, as if airborne in the wind storm.

Buster, who plays the sensitive college boy son, Bill Jr, reluctantly learns the river boating trade from his tough and grouchy father, but is more interested in the daughter of his father's riverboat rival, which leads to escalating antics, culminating in the amazing windstorm scenes.



THE MARK OF ZORRO

USA

Directors: Fred Niblo

Starring: Douglas Fairbanks Sr, Marguerite De La Motte, Noah Beery

Duration: 107 mins

Accompanist: Sharolyn Kimmorley AM & Ian Bloxson



The Mark of Zorro was an evolutionary film that changed the course of early Hollywood and the career of one of its greatest pioneers: Douglas Fairbanks, Senior. It is a milestone in silent cinema because it was the first of the great action-adventure, historic costume dramas, followed by other Fairbanks productions like Robin Hood, The Three Musketeers and The Iron Mask.

This golden era of the 1920s was also the best decade for Douglas Fairbanks, having started his acting career on Broadway in the early 1900s and becoming an overnight success in his motion picture debut in 1915. Before long, he was already writing stories and screenplays for his films, and then began producing them so that by 1919 he was already a firmly established and highly respected Hollywood identity.

Inspired by Shakespeare and having written short stories and many magazine articles, Fairbanks quickly applied his talents to writing the screenplay for The Mark of Zorro, adapting it from a short story entitled The Curse of Capistrano in a weekly readers' magazine of the time.

The Mark of Zorro features not only sweet, sentimental romance, tongue-in-cheek humour, sensitive drama and realistic historic atmosphere, but also quite astonishing athletic feats by the nimble and agile Fairbanks in some of the most exciting and surprising action sequences ever seen. It is perhaps made even more thrilling by the fact that there are no tricks or special effects

involved, and the viewer can clearly see that Fairbanks himself is in full control of the breathtaking action – and in fact, of the entire movie.

Apart from the breathtaking action sequences, another most appealing aspect of The Mark of Zorro is the masked crusader's alter-ego Don Diego, always bored and yawning, appearing weak, unmanly and even comical as he tries to impress the beautiful Lolita with childish magic tricks with his oversized handkerchief. Little does Lolita know that this lazy oaf is in fact the saviour of her family and indeed the entire community, who comes to woo her in his black disguise and makes her swoon!

Fairbanks chose his crew well, electing Fred Niblo to direct The Mark of Zorro, who went on to direct Fairbanks in The Three Musketeers a year later, then Rudolph Valentino in Blood and Sand, Ben Hur in 1925, and Greta Garbo in The Mysterious Lady, to mention only his most successful accomplishments.

Niblo had been successfully directing films before The Mark of Zorro, and had married an Australian actress named Enid Bennett. Born in York, near Perth WA in 1893, she began her acting career on stage in Sydney, before going to Hollywood in 1918 after starring in two Australian films – Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford and Officer 666 in 1916, both directed by Niblo who was visiting from America.



We acknowledge the invaluable and generous support from the renowned David Shepard, Film Preservation Associates and Blackhawk Films, Jeff Masino, Flicker Alley, Lobster Films, and the sublime flair and talents of Stephanie Khoo.

The Festival is grateful for the generous assistance of Scott O'Hara at the Sutherland Entertainment Centre.

Please visit and read about your favourite silent film with the superb reviews at Amazon by the Festival's tireless supporter, Barbara Burkowsky/Underwood, whose notes grace these pages.

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Phone 0419267318