

## **REDDING SILENT FILM FESTIVAL 2014**

***All films accompanied with live music by  
World-class pianist Frederick Hodges  
All shows presented with real film – no video***

Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 6:00

***A comedy short was part of every silent film program, and we've gathered three winners for this family-friendly show.***

### **THE PLAY HOUSE (1921)**

Buster Keaton is the whole show – at least in his dreams. He imagines that he is every member of the orchestra, the entire audience, and all the performers in a minstrel show. When he awakens, he's a stagehand in a vaudeville house who has to impersonate a trained monkey. Not only one of Buster's best shorts, but also among the best short comedies ever made.

### **Sequences from HOT WATER (1924)**

Harold Lloyd's comedies place him in domestic situations that defy his every attempt to deal with them like a reasonable man. In these hilarious sequences, he wins a live turkey in a raffle and has to get it home on a crowded streetcar, and buys a nifty new car for his wife with predictably disastrous results while his mother-in-law from hell looks on.

### **THE FINISHING TOUCH (1928)**

The beloved team of Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy undertake building a house in one day to win a bonus for their work. Although they know nothing whatever about construction, they actually complete the thing, after a fashion – until a tiny bird lands on the chimney and all comes tumbling down. It's one of their most memorable efforts.

Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 8:00

### **THE VAGABOND (1916)**

By 1916, just two years after appearing in his first motion picture, Charles Chaplin had become the most famous entertainer in the world.. For Mutual, Chaplin produced what many film historians believe to be his best works. *The Vagabond* features the Tramp as a street violinist who falls in love with and saves a gypsy girl forced into slavery by a cruel gypsy chief and his caravan. Chaplin's third Mutual production, *The Vagabond* clearly shows Chaplin's development of the film elements that he employed throughout his career, particularly the blending of comedy and pathos. We will show a rare, original tinted print.

## THE PATSY (1928)

Marion Davies was muse (among other things) to William Randolph Hearst, who presented her as a great dramatic star in a series of elaborate, money-losing pictures. Offscreen, however, Davies was known for her playfulness and mugging, entertaining friends at Hearst Castle house parties with imitations of fellow actors. With his gift for rhythm and gesture, director King Vidor drew out Davies's natural talent as a lighthearted comedienne. The actress's screwball energy dominates *The Patsy*, though the film's charm derives as well from its situational humor and ensemble cast including Marie Dressler and Dell Henderson.

*"It is a perfect film. There is not a scene, gesture, joke, intertitle, gag, bit of detail, or character out of place. Everything about it contributes. It is well paced and wonderfully acted. True to life and full of humanity, this energetic comedy of manners convinces—it's a sparkling Cinderella story for the Jazz Age."*

-- the San Francisco Silent Film Festival

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m.

## INTOLERANCE (1916)

Director D.W. Griffith's mammoth, ambitious silent film masterpiece *Intolerance* is a milestone, a landmark in cinema history; unwieldy yet arguably the greatest American film of the silent era. With a running time of three hours, it interweaves four loosely-related stories from different historical periods with bravura editing, monumental sets, lavish period costumes, and more than 3,000 extras. Our print is from the original negative, and Frederick Hodges will play the original 1916 score by Joseph Carl Breil. "Anyone concerned with film history has to see *Intolerance*, and pass on."

-- David Thomson

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 p.m.

## THE SPIELER (1928)

Hundreds of ordinary program pictures were produced every year during the silent era, yet an extraordinary number of them, now forgotten, were actually excellent. *The Spieler* (1928), is set in a seamy carnival in which the lovely Renee Adoree tries to clean up her graft-ridden sideshow alley where rubes are set upon right, left and center by grifters and pickpockets led by that ace of heavies, Fred Kohler. A remarkably handsome and presentable jailbird, Alan Hale, playing the title role with considerable charisma, comes to her rescue. Assisted by that lively stuntman-comedian Clyde Cook, Hale falls for adorable Renee (and who will blame him?) and decides to reform. Unfortunately, Killer Kohler has other plans. Tightly written and powerfully directed by Tay Garnett, *The Spieler* whips up plenty of suspense, presenting the viewer with three or four really terrifying moments in its short running time.

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 p.m.

### SPIES (1928)

In Fritz Lang's epic thriller, the criminal Haghi, besides being a spy, is also the president of a bank and, in his spare time, a music hall clown. Lang's editing virtuosity is in evidence from the very start, and through it he reveals that evil, like filmmaking, is an art. The setting, though not defined, is Weimar Berlin. "In the postwar city, everything is information, and information is all that matters. Haghi uses all the instruments of modern technology (the train, the telephone, photography) to gain possession of government secrets and assert his will to power. While keeping his enemies under strict surveillance, Haghi remains invisible, secluded in his modernist office and attended to by a mute nurse. As suspense is heightened through shots that fragment space and omit phases of the action, we witness the rise and fall of Haghi's delirious and yet rationally orchestrated plans. An unexpected, enduring love will break the clockwork precision of the system on which Haghi relies." --Domietta Torlasco

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.

### CHARLIE CHAPLIN: THE LITTLE TRAMP AT 100 YEARS

A two-hour survey with film and commentary by David Shepard of the actor-writer-director-producer who made more people laugh than anyone in history yet also behind the hilarity displayed the fears and sorrows of everyman. The program begins with Chaplin's first film, *Kid's Auto Race* and includes two other complete shorts, *Mabel's Married Life* and *Easy Street*, along with wonderful sequences from other Chaplin masterpieces including *The Tramp*, *A Dog's Life*, *Shoulder Arms*, *The Pilgrim*, *The Gold Rush*, *City Lights*, *Modern Times* and *The Great Dictator*.