

FRIENDS SCREENING

Thursday 21 February at 7.00pm at the Archive's Media Complex in Taranaki Street

The Film Archive in association with the Friends of the Film Archive present:

BIG MOMENTS - A programme of short films and television clips illustrating life in New Zealand from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Beginning with the glorious coloured trailer hailing Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953 through to David Lange's brilliant oratory declaration of New Zealand's Nuclear Free status in 1985 this is a 70-minute romp through pivotal moments in New Zealand's recent history.

The programme features music (including the Beatle's arrival in Wellington in 1963 and early television shows: C'Mon with the Chicks and Mr Lee Grant); comic and satirist Fred Dagg (John Clarke) making an appearance demonstrating a modification of the television aerial to enable us to get reception of the second television channel in 1972; political happenings and protest and individual "big moments" (the first day of school for a 5 year old from 1960)

It all adds up to give a picture of the culture that has shaped the Baby Boomer generation.

CHAPLINOPERAS

EVENT DATE: MARCH 15

VENUE: WELLINGTON TOWN HALL at 8.00pm

As part of the NZ International Arts Festival there is an event that will be of interest to Friends:

FROM PLAYFUL SILENCE TO THE SPONTANEITY OF SOUND

In an age of high-speed combat talkies, the action and dance, comedy and tragedy of Charlie Chaplin silent movies – the first accidental action hero – is often lost on modern day audiences. However British composer, Benedict Mason has composed a new soundtrack, **ChaplinOperas**, inspired by three films Charlie Chaplin made in 1917 – *Easy Street*, *The Adventurer* and *The Immigrant*.

In the spirit of Philip Glass, Mason wrote the music to be an additional character in the action of the film. The film together with Mason's music was first performed by the London Sinfonietta. The performance at the NZ International Arts Festival will be by New Zealand's own leading contemporary music group Stroma conducted by music director, Hamish McKeich.

Adding a new and sometimes surreal dimension to the films with his "semi-operatic filmspiel", Mason intends audiences to revisit the almost mythical Chaplin character of "The Little Tramp" through fresh eyes and ears. As a result performances have enticed large audiences with a vast range of ages: from oldies to youngsters, film-buffs to contemporary music aficionados.

ChaplinOperas invents its own brand of humour reaching into the stories, which feature Chaplin as a struggling policeman, a troublemaking immigrant and an escaped convict. The playfulness of Chaplin's comedy is enhanced



Charlie Chaplin - *The Immigrant*

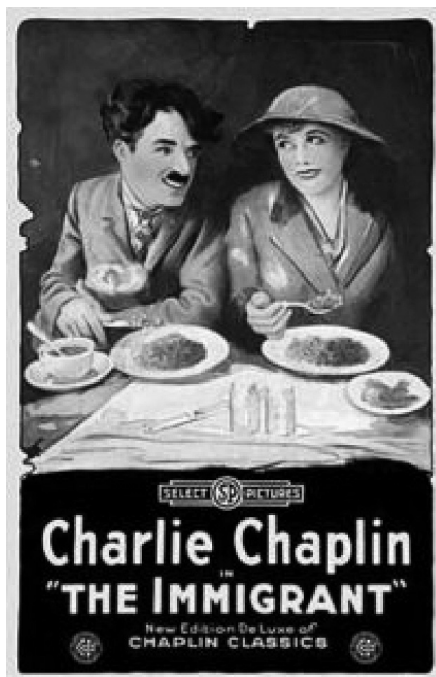
by the use of different percussion ranging from kazoos to sirens and megaphones, and some subtle electronic effects alongside traditional instruments with two singer/speakers.

"Film, now, is an entertainment industry offering the composer little beyond pocket money, usually at a cost to his spirit," says composer Benedict Mason. However, critics have commented how much the composer is able to demonstrate his affection and admiration for these films.

The Independent says, "The strength of these films is the wit of the absurd – the chases, the fights, the denouement. Mason superbly catches these moments adding complementary sonic activity but with exactly the right ironic twist."

The result: Old film meets modern music in this cinematic orchestral experience.

(NZ International Arts Festival Media release 01/11/07)



Charlie Chaplin

Charlie Chaplin had become the highest paid entertainer in the world, when he signed a contract with the Mutual Film Corporation in 1916 for a salary of \$670,000. Mutual built Chaplin his very own studio and allowed him total freedom to make twelve two-reel films during this fruitful twelve-month period. Chaplin subsequently recognised this period of film-making as the most inventive and liberating of his career.

Easy Street (from Wikipedia)

<i>Directed by</i>	Charles Chaplin Edward Brewer (technical director)
<i>Produced by</i>	Henry P. Caulfield
<i>Written by</i>	Charles Chaplin Vincent Bryan Maverick Terrell
<i>Starring</i>	Charles Chaplin Edna Purviance Eric Campbell
<i>Cinematography</i>	Roland H. Totheroh George C. Zalibra
<i>Editing by</i>	Charles Chaplin
<i>Distributed by</i>	Mutual Film Corporation
<i>Release date(s)</i>	22 January 1917 (USA) February 5, 1917 (UK)
<i>Running time</i>	2 Reels (full length unknown)
<i>Country</i>	United States
<i>Language</i>	Silent film English intertitles

The Adventurer (from Wikipedia)

<i>Directed by</i>	Charles Chaplin Edward Brewer (technical director)
<i>Produced by</i>	John Jasper
<i>Written by</i>	Charles Chaplin (scenario) Vincent Bryan (scenario) Maverick Terrell (scenario)
<i>Starring</i>	Charles Chaplin Edna Purviance Eric Campbell
<i>Cinematography</i>	Roland H. Totheroh George C. Zalibra
<i>Editing by</i>	Charles Chaplin
<i>Distributed by</i>	Mutual Film Corporation
<i>Release date(s)</i>	October 22, 1917
<i>Running time</i>	31 minutes
<i>Country</i>	United States
<i>Language</i>	Silent

This was the final film of co-star Eric Campbell who died before the end of the year in a drunken driving accident.

The Immigrant (also called *Broke*) (from Wikipedia)

<i>Directed by</i>	Charles Chaplin Edward Brewer (technical director)
<i>Produced by</i>	John Jasper
<i>Written by</i>	Charles Chaplin (scenario) Vincent Bryan (scenario) Maverick Terrell (scenario)
<i>Starring</i>	Charles Chaplin Edna Purviance Eric Campbell
<i>Cinematography</i>	Roland H. Totheroh George C. Zalibra
<i>Editing by</i>	Charles Chaplin
<i>Distributed by</i>	Mutual Film Corporation
<i>Release date(s)</i>	June 17, 1917
<i>Running time</i>	20 minutes
<i>Country</i>	United States
<i>Language</i>	Silent film English intertitles

Episode I of the 1983 documentary series *Unknown Chaplin* reveals that Chaplin developed the storyline for *The Immigrant* as filming progressed. Initially, the movie began as a comedy set in an artists cafe, with Purviance as a brightly dressed patron. This plot was abandoned almost immediately, before Chaplin's character was introduced, the documentary states, and Chaplin began again, with a story, still set in a cafe, about a man who has never been in a restaurant before displaying terrible table manners before meeting a lovely girl (Purviance) and shaping up. Initially, Henry Bergman played the bully-ish head waiter, but Chaplin eventually replaced him with Eric Campbell. According to *Unknown Chaplin*, Chaplin developed the idea of the tramp and Purviance's character being immigrants when he realized he needed more plot to justify the restaurant scenes. After filming the film's opening sequences of the arrival in America, he reshot parts of the restaurant scene to be consistent with the new plot (bringing Bergman back in a new role as an artist who resolves the subplot of Charlie being unable to pay for dinner), and added the epilogue in which the Tramp and Purviance are married.

Alfred Eric Campbell

Alfred Eric Campbell (26 April 1878, Dunoon - 20 December 1917, Hollywood) was a Scottish silent film star who was featured in eleven films starring Charlie Chaplin. He began his career as a stage actor in Scotland and Wales before being discovered by Fred Karno.

Campbell followed Chaplin to New York where Chaplin remembered him from Karno's Fun Factory. His first film with Chaplin was the "Floorwalker" (1916) in which he achieved some recognition for the escalator scene.

A towering figure of almost 136 kg he became the villain and comic foil to the little tramp. His most famous appearance is probably in "Easy Street" (1917) in which as a local bully he demonstrates his strength to timid policeman Chaplin by bending a gas lamp-post. (edt. from Wikipedia).

On December 20 (1917), Campbell attended a Christmas party at the Vernon Country Club, and drove back to L.A. in a drunken stupor. Approaching the intersection of Wilshire Blvd. and Vermont Ave. at over 60 m.p.h., he lost control of his car, crossed Wilshire and hit another car head-on. He was killed instantly, his massive body locked in the crumpled wreckage for over five hours. Heartbreak never left Campbell, even in death. After his remains were cremated, his ashes were sent to the Rosedale Cemetery, where they remained for six months while the cemetery waited in vain for someone to pay for his funeral. When the bill remained unpaid, the urn was returned to the Handley Mortuary, where it sat unnoticed in a closet from 1917 until late 1938. When the mortuary closed the urn was sent back to Rosedale, where it sat in another closet for still another 13 years. In 1952 a kindhearted office worker arranged for Campbell's remains to finally be buried. But, unfortunately, he forgot to record exactly where Campbell was buried, so the burly Scotsman is lost among the markers and statues in the quiet cemetery. In conjunction with a Scottish film about Campbell's life, a memorial plaque was laid in 1996. Campbell's death had a profound effect on Chaplin, and a quieter effect on movie history. After that time, Chaplin's movies lost some of their comic mystery; that certain something that his Mutual films had but subsequent films did not. His later works were much more self-centered and missing the comic give-and-take of his work with Campbell. There's no telling how famous Eric Campbell would have become, or what different films Chaplin may have done with his burly best friend.

(Edt. from IMDb Mini Biography By: E.J. Fleming)



Edna Purviance in *The Adventurer* (1917)

Edna Purviance

Edna Purviance (October 21, 1895 – January 11, 1958)

In 1915 Chaplin was looking for a leading lady for *A Night Out* when one of his associates noticed her in a café. Although when Chaplin met her he was concerned that she might be too serious for comedic roles she won the job.

Chaplin and Purviance were romantically involved & she appeared in 33 of his productions including the 1921 classic "The Kid". Her last film with him, *A Woman of Paris*, was also her first lead role. She went onto appear in two more films *The Sea Gull* aka "A Woman of the Sea"* – which Chaplin never released – and *Education de Prince* (France 1927) before retiring as an actress. Chaplin kept her on the payroll until her death.

(edt. from Wikipedia).

*A Woman of the Sea** (1926)

Chaplin produced the film as a starring vehicle for his former leading lady Purviance, and to help establish Von Sternberg. This was the only time Chaplin produced a film in which he neither starred nor directed. His involvement in the production was minimal, as he was concurrently working on his problem-plagued film *The Circus*. Chaplin did not approve the completed film for release, and it was never publicly screened. The few Chaplin associates who saw the film agreed in later years that it was not a commercially viable film. Under pressure from the U.S Internal Revenue Service, the production company burned the negatives in June 1933 for tax purposes. Some evidence suggests a copy of the film survived at the Chaplin studio until at least the late 1930s, but no copy exists in the current Chaplin film archives. Around 40 previously unknown production stills were recently discovered in the private collection of Purviance's relatives. Except for a few images in print and a few words in books over the years, nearly nothing has been known about the film.



Frame enlargement from *Views of Modern Grassland Farming - John Cooper's Topiary Garden at Newman, Eketahuna* [1934] screened as part of 'GROWING DAHLIAS: gardens, garden fetes and stately homes on film' in October last year.

SCHEDULED FRIEND'S SCREENING FOR 2008

February 21 *BIG MOMENTS* - A programme of short films and television clips illustrating life in New Zealand from the 1950s to the 1980s.

April 24

June 19

Aug 21

Oct 23

Nov 13 (90th Anniversary of Armistice "After the War Was Over")

Dec 18 Xmas function

FOR THE RECORD

- **FRIENDS AGM** – was held in August at which all office bearers were re-elected – revenue was up thanks to donations and proceeds from the sales of the new digital transfer of *Goodbye Pork Pie* donated by its producer (and our president) Nigel Hutchinson.
- Following the AGM there was a screening of a compilation programme "Artists at Work" exploring the artistic practice

of some of New Zealand's leading visual artists. The screening was attended by a fellow Friends organisation (Friends of the City Gallery). Your Committee has where appropriate invited other Friends organisations to screenings in an effort to boost attendances and increase awareness of the Film Archive.

- As part of the "HERITAGE GARDENS – A SPRING FESTIVAL" the Film Archive in association with the Friends presented a live cinema screening in October entitled: "Growing Dahlias: Gardens, garden fetes and stately homes on film".
- The Friend's Xmas function commenced with a slide show as an acknowledgement to our founding Friend Ron Ritchie who passed away in October. Steve Russell's tribute to Ron can be found in "Newsreel" issue #58.

Thanks to Unity Books Wellington for generously donating a prize for the evening: Duncan Petrie's *Shot in New Zealand: the Art & Craft of the Kiwi Cinematographer*. The prize was awarded to the winner of a quiz on New Zealand feature films, Alan Collins.

The main part of the evening was entitled "Bonnie Babies & Beauties by Biograph" a presentation screening by film historian Clive Sowry. Clive shared the results of his research into aspects of the Archive's collection of early baby contests, beauty competitions, and screen tests.

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