

# Treasures from the Yale Film Archive



## ***Class Pictures: Student Archivist Screening Night***

Tuesday, April 30, 7 p.m.

Humanities Quadrangle Alice Cinema

With Introductions by students in

**FILM & MEDIA STUDIES 604: THE FILM ARCHIVE**, Spring 2024

**Annie Berman, Sergio Deludicibus, Aris Katafygiotis, Lora  
Maslenitsyna, Natalie Semmel, Aidan Thomas, and Zijing Yu**



# Treasures from the Yale Film Archive

A SERIES OF CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY FILMS PRESENTED ON FILM BY THE YALE FILM ARCHIVE



## **Colour in Clay** (Dir. Darrel Catling, 1941, 11 min)

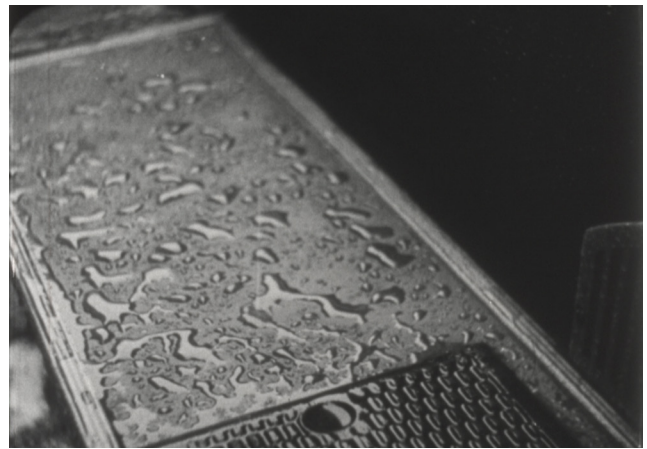
*Colour in Clay* is a British educational film, in lush Technicolor, documenting the process of English pottery production in the Wedgwood factories near Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. This snapshot of modern ceramics manufacturing during World War II showcases the detailed artistry demanded of the craftspeople, both men and women, at each phase of production. From molding, casting, and firing, to painting, stamping, and engraving, the skilled hands of the potter work in tandem with the industrial efficiency of the machine. Elaborate hand-drawn patterns, richly colored floral prints, and organic designs, inspired by the surrounding pastoral English landscape, spring to life—contrasted against the pleasing mechanical rhythms. *Colour in Clay* features exquisite cinematography by Jack Cardiff, one of the most accomplished Technicolor masters of the twentieth century, known for his collaborations with Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger (*A Matter of Life and Death*, *Black Narcissus*, *The Red Shoes*), John Huston (*The African Queen*) and Alfred Hitchcock (*Under Capricorn*). Who knew a factory film could look so pleasing?

*Notes by Annie Berman, second year Ph.D. student in Film and Media Studies and American Studies*

## **Regen** (Dir. Joris Ivens, 1929, 14 min)

The 1920s represent for film history not only the successful commercialization of synchronized sound but a larger consolidation of narrative approaches to filmmaking. Experimental artists, also concerned about finding a new rhythm to their work, congeal to form a transnational movement which today we recognize as “the City Symphony phenomenon”: a constellation of avant-garde texts which, formally inspired by musical forms, foreground and glorify the (modern) city. For these filmmakers, the city is their protagonist; foregrounded are the increasingly mechanized rhythms of urban spaces as ultimate metaphors

for “modernity.” *Regen* is Joris Ivens’ third city film. Though concerned with the shapes and rhythms of Amsterdam, the title itself suggests something of a historical rupture in both the Symphony genre and the director’s own filmography: the rhythmic, catalytic force for the text’s narration is rain, a natural phenomenon which bears surprising consonance with the otherwise manmade, modern, motorized city. It is thanks to the rain – affecting both “characters” in the film as well as the camera itself – that we may go as far as to call Ivens’ text an ecocritical if not impressionistic film-poem. Originally shot in silent speed on a portable 35mm Zeiss Ikon Kinamo, *Regen* exists in different sound releases: a 1932 release with music by Lou Lichtveld, commissioned by Ivens



himself and edited to accord with sound speed by Helen van Dongen; a 1941 release with twelve-tone music by Hanns Eisler; and several contemporary re-releases. We are pleased to present *Regen* in its earliest rhythmical form: a 16mm print made from the 1932 release.

*Notes by Sergio De Iudicibus, first year Ph.D. student in Italian Studies and Film and Media Studies*

## **Old Russian Jubilee** (Castle Films, 1943, 7 min)

Repackaged and released for home distribution by Castle Films as *Old Russian Jubilee*, the songs in this film were originally presented in a two-reel short called *Russian Revels*. This film appeared as a part of Castle Films’ push in the 1940s and 1950s to release a series of 16mm musical shorts that typically combined three songs into approximately nine-minute subjects. *Old Russian Jubilee* shows two songs: “Protchay,” which means “farewell” in Russian, and the “Flaming Sword Dance” – which resembles an exaggerated version of a type of traditional dance performed using the Cossack saber. The reel likely included a third song originally, but we might conclude from the numerous splices that it has been removed by a previous owner. The main performer of the songs, Gertrude Niesen, was a popular American singer, actress, and comedian. She was born to a





Swedish father and Russian mother, and earned her fame as a child performer in vaudeville and later as a torch singer. Gregory Stone was born in Odesa, Ukraine, in 1900 (then a part of the Russian empire) and later moved to the United States after the Russian Revolution. An accomplished musician, he scored and arranged music for movie studios which likely led to his collaboration with Niesen on this film. While both performers have connections to Russian culture, they were not necessarily known for popularizing Russian folk music, and this film seems to be a singular instance of the theme in Niesen's career.

*Notes by Lora Maslenitsyna, second-year Ph.D. student in Film and Media Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures.*

***Cry of the China Seas* (Dir. Jan Sadlo, 1958, 25 min)**

Made at the height of the Cold War, *Cry of the China Seas* not only promises a temporal portal to the ideologically panic-stricken 1950s characterized by the enduring aftermath of the Korean War, but transports the audience to multiple locales on the geopolitical front line, whose fertile uncertainty – for the missionary-filmmaker – inadvertently testifies to the fuzzy fault line between propaganda and documentary filmmaking. Shot on location in South Korea, Formosa (Taiwan), Hong Kong, and the Philippines, the 25-minute-long film begins with a dramatized scene of



religious persecution and paints, with the help of map animation and recycled military footage from the Korean War, a grand picture of the spread of communism, a violently secular threat to the emerging and expanding Christianity on Asian soil. The threat, in return, could only be quenched by steadfast missionary work epitomized by charity, which formed the bulk of the film. *Cry of the China Seas* was produced by Mission Films in conjunction with Cathedral Films, the latter of which was a leading gospel film production company founded by Minnesota Episcopalian minister James Friedrich with \$100,000 from his inheritance, after his religious filmmaking ambitions found no sponsor from Hollywood. The director Jan Sadlo would go on to produce and direct more evangelical films, both fiction and documentary, in the following decades. Three of his fiction short films, *No Greater Love* (1960), *A Christian in Communist China* (1961), and *Africa and Schweitzer* (1961), were collected in a 2014 DVD called *The Missions Collection*, published by Gospel Film Archive.

*Notes by Zijing Yu, first-year Ph.D. student in Film and Media Studies*



***Spills and Chills* (Dir. Robert Youngson, 1949, 10 min)**

One- and two-reel subjects were a specialty of director Robert Youngson at the beginning of his career in the late 1940s and '50s. After graduating from Harvard Business School, he was hired at what was then called RKO-Pathé to write newsreel scripts. After a brief stint producing training videos for the Navy during World War II, he returned to RKO-Pathé, who had rebranded as Warner-Pathé after being acquired by Warner Bros. Through collaboration with the studio, Youngson was hired to create a series of short subject films drawn from both current events and archival newsreel footage accrued from Pathé. He gained momentum at the studio, taking on longer series of historical short subject films. His first major venture, *Spills and Chills*, earned him his first Academy Award nomination for Best Live Action Short Film (one reel) in 1949. Starting in the '20s and '30s, movie trailers weren't all that was shown before (or, as was also common, after) the main film. Audiences were entertained with newsreels,

public service announcements, and short animated films as part of the pre-picture rotation, with *Spills and Chills* as a prime example. Youngson's fascination with the world of the 1920s shines brightly in his portrayal of the period's daredevils; catastrophe is not only embraced but celebrated, and fear is altogether forgotten in this thrilling homage to the era's audacious and uncurbed spirit.

*Notes by Aidan Thomas, a junior Humanities major in Davenport College*



***The Applicant* (Dir. Dan Kleinman, 1967, 20 min)**

In *The Applicant*, John Cannatella stars as a downtrodden city man desperate for employment, while renowned Irish actor and playwright Joseph Maher portrays a discerning hiring manager. Kleinman, initially a mathematics major at Princeton University, discovered his passion for filmmaking during his senior year of college. Despite acceptance into both mathematics and film graduate programs, he chose to pursue film at NYU. Over three decades, Kleinman has shared his expertise, teaching film at renowned institutions like NYU and Columbia University, where he held positions as head of the film department and dean of the school of arts. *The Applicant*, a product of Kleinman's time at NYU as an MFA student, garnered accolades including the Gold Medal of the Photographic Society of America, the Cine Golden Eagle, and Best Narrative Short Film at the Melbourne Film Festival. Tonight, you will be watching a 16mm print that now belongs to the Yale Film Archive. The print itself is in good condition with only a few scratches and light wear; the soundtrack is near perfect, and a search of archive databases yielded no copies of the film in other collections. The film is a masterclass in short comedy writing and acting, utilizing every facet of filmmaking to

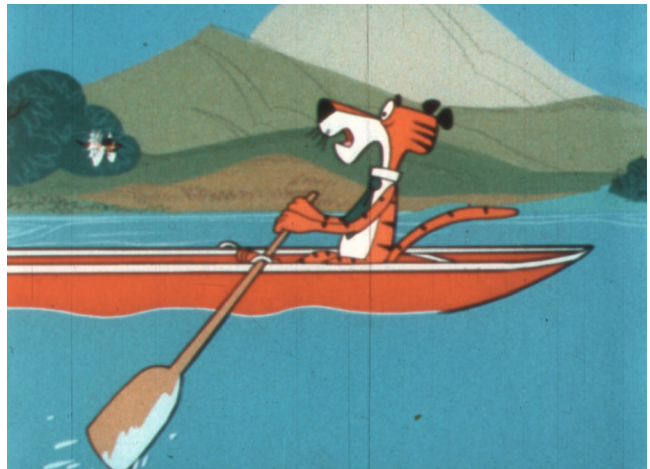
create a fully realized world of characters and situations, both beautiful and hilarious.

*Notes by Aris Katafygiotis, a senior Film and Media Studies Major in Berkeley College*

***Bugged By a Bee* (Dir. Robert McKimson, 1969, 6 min)**

Cool Cat may be less well-remembered than other Looney Tunes characters, but his place in Looney Tunes history is cemented by this 1969 cartoon. *Bugged by a Bee* was directed by the prolific Robert McKimson, who wrote and directed many Looney Tunes classics, and developed Bugs Bunny's design. Because of the date of the film's release, the short-lived Warner Bros.-Seven Arts Animation logo can be seen in this print. When the two year period of Warner Bros.-Seven Arts, which lasted from 1967 to 1969, ended, so did the "Golden Age" of Looney Tunes. This makes *Bugged by a Bee* the final cartoon from Looney Tunes' golden age, which began in 1930. Cool Cat himself was only introduced to the series in 1967, and unlike popular characters like Bugs Bunny or Daffy Duck, is grounded in this time period. Cool Cat is a beatnik-like student at Disco Tech, who uses contemporary slang, and embodies the stereotypical laid-back nature of a young student. In this print, Cool Cat's shenanigans are shown on vibrant Technicolor film. Although not all Looney Tunes cartoons were made on Technicolor, this print of *Bugged by a Bee* is a Technicolor print. It joins only a few other Technicolor prints in the more than 8,000 prints in the Yale Film Archive's collection.

*Notes by Natalie Semmel, a junior Film and Media Studies Major in Davenport College*



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**Yale UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**  
*Film Archive*

**NEXT UP** Our spring season closes with Amy Heckerling's coming-of-age comedy *Clueless*, with Alicia Silverstone, Brittany Murphy, and Paul Rudd, screening on 35mm at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 2.