

<u>UCLA Festival of Preservation</u> celebrates moving image history April 5–7

The 21st edition of the biennial event is free to the public at the Hammer Museum's Billy Wilder Theater.



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LOS ANGELES (Feb. 22, 2024) – The UCLA Film & Television Archive is proud to announce the 2024 UCLA Festival of Preservation, a highly anticipated biennial event that showcases the Archive's latest preservation and restoration projects on the big screen at the Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum. From April 5th to 7th, now in its 21st edition, the diverse festival lineup from film and television history will feature beloved classics and seldom-seen titles ripe for rediscovery, along with special guests for introductions and Q&A conversations.

The festival's 35 titles, including 10 features, four television programs and over a dozen shorts, showcase the breadth of moving image history in the Archive's collections, which are second in size only to those held by the U.S. Library of Congress.

The opening night of the festival will celebrate the 80th birthday of renowned writer-director Charles Burnett. He will join film critic Elvis Mitchell, host of KCRW's *The Treatment* radio show, in conversation before the screening of the West Coast restoration premiere of *The Annihilation of Fish* (1999). Following this unsung film will be the groundbreaking *The Richard Pryor Special?* (1977), featuring a dramatic soliloquy by poet and activist Maya Angelou.

"I am thrilled to present this year's festival, highlighting treasures of the past that bring an exciting mix of documentary, animation, music, comedy, and drama to the Wilder, including *The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels: Innovations and Inventions* (1932-1967) collection, and the provocative horrortinged dramas presented in the *Atomic Television* program," said May Hong HaDuong, director of the Archive, a division of UCLA Library. "It's a pleasure to host an event where audiences can come together to experience the enduring impact of film and television through the Archive's dedication to preserving and making accessible the history of moving images."

Among the festival's highlights is the restoration world premiere of hilarious comedy duo Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy's *Pack Up Your Troubles* (1932) and the Los Angeles premiere with live musical accompaniment of the Archive's restoration of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Ein Sommernachtstraum, Germany, 1925). The latter is one of the last Shakespeare adaptations of the silent film era and was previously thought to be lost.

"One of the great loves of my professional life: UCLA Film & Television Archive's Festival of Preservation...not only showcases the restoration of classic films to pristine condition, it delights in shining a light on hidden gems and unexpected corners of the cinematic universe, items you had no idea existed, let alone expected to ever see on a big screen." Former *Los Angeles Times* film critic Kenneth Turan wrote of the flagship event in 2022.

The festival will also feature the Los Angeles restoration premiere of *Man and Wife* (1923), which has been inaccessible for most of a century. Following the screenings of UCLA student activist films, *Chicana* (1979) and *Requiem-29* (1971), filmmaker Sylvia Morales and film producer Moctesuma Esparza will join for a Q&A conversation; TCM host and film noir champion Eddie Muller will introduce the restoration of the Film Noir Foundation's latest discovery from Argentina, *Never Open That Door* (No abras nunca esa puerta, Argentina, 1952), and filmmaker Marc Levin will join the Archive for a conversation following the Los Angeles restoration premiere of *SLAM* (1998). The festival will conclude with the Los Angeles restoration premiere of director Franco Rossi's *Smog* (Italy, 1962), featuring 12 minutes unseen in the United States until this recent restoration. After opening the Venice Film Festival in 1962, *Smog* nearly disappeared until the Archive and Cineteca di Bologna collaborated to restore it to its original Italian release.

Among our collaborators that have made this festival possible are the esteemed FIAF archives and funding partners, including Academy Film Archive, ASIFA-Hollywood, The Film Foundation, Film Noir Foundation, Golden Globe Foundation, GRAMMY Foundation, Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation, John H. Mitchell Preservation Endowment, Library of Congress, The Louis B Mayer Foundation, National Film Preservation Foundation, The Packard Humanities Institute, David Stenn, and Sundance Institute.

We are also grateful to Tony Thomas Productions for generously supporting the 2024 UCLA Festival of Preservation. All of the Archive's public programs — including the UCLA Festival of Preservation — are free through June 2024, thanks to a gift from an anonymous donor.

Below are each program summaries with brief film or episode synopsis.

April 5, 7:30 p.m.

In-person: filmmaker Charles Burnett, film critic and KCRW's The Treatment radio show host, Elvis Mitchell, and Dennis Doros and Amy Heller of Milestone Films

The Annihilation of Fish (1999), West Coast restoration premiere

Previously unreleased and unavailable, *The Annihilation of Fish* lovingly tells the unlikely romance of Obadiah "Fish" Johnson (James Earl Jones) and Flower "Poinsettia" Cummings (Lynn Redgrave). Both tenants in a quiet Los Angeles boarding house, they begin a relationship despite their different backgrounds and mental health challenges. Ripe for rediscovery, this charming and poignant work in director Charles Burnett's oeuvre was restored from the original camera negative allowing for the release it has always deserved. The restoration premieres on an auspicious occasion, the evening is also a celebration of Burnett's 80th birthday.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #1: "Air" (1932-1950)

Our first newsreel segment covers some peculiar inventions in aviation, including a mechanical bird, a plane without propellers and a midget airplane. These are some truly wacky and inventive aerial creations that have to be seen to be believed.

Hot Chocolate (1942)

Precursors to the modern-day music video, Soundies were produced throughout the 1940s to be played on coin-operated film jukeboxes found in bars, restaurants, bus terminals or anywhere people might gather. Thousands were made capturing rare performances by some of the decade's biggest musical acts, making them extraordinary historical documents as well as toe-tapping entertainment. One of the jumpin'est is *Hot Chocolate*, featuring Duke Ellington and His Orchestra swinging "Cotton Tail" while the members of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers jitterbug in gravity-defying style. Bright and bold, this one's liable to have you dancing in the aisles, too!

April 5, 10:25 p.m.

The Richard Pryor Special? (1977)

In the 1960s, as a young comedian, Richard Pryor's humor was always concerned with race and racism and his experience as a Black man in America. However, it was during the 1970s that his comedy sharpened its critique of white supremacy throughout American society and political life. On display in *The Richard Pryor Special?* is Pryor's radical resistance that brings depth and contemplation to comedy with dramatic pause and joyous uplift — miraculously, within the confines of prime-time television.

April 6, 10 a.m.

Restored Animation Classics

French Fried (1930), world restoration premiere

Created in 1916 by animator Paul Terry (best known for Mighty Mouse), the character of Farmer Al Falfa was notable for Terry's animation design that employed separate cels for different body parts to lower production costs. Terry featured his Al Falfa character in numerous shorts for various production companies and distributors before starting his own studio, Terrytoons, in 1929. Distributed by Educational Pictures, this delightful Terrytoon revival of Farmer Al Falfa

finds the character on a wild adventure in Paris. Al Falfa continued to appear in animated shorts well into the 1950s (later christened as Farmer Gray).

Musical Memories (1935)

Familiar radio tunes such as "The Sidewalks of New York" and "Little Annie Rooney" inspire an older married couple to dust off their hand-held stereoscope device and bring the audience into a 3D reminiscence of their life. This is courtesy of producer/inventor Max Fleischer's patent-pending "Stereoptical"/"Setback" process, which placed animation cels in front of a rotating miniature set. As the final two-color system short from Fleischer Studios (Disney's exclusive rights to three-strip Technicolor expired that September), *Musical Memories* demonstrates an interest in formal exploration with color and beyond.

Japanese Lanterns (1935), world restoration premiere

In this whimsical cartoon, a family making Japanese lanterns is both helped and hindered by a friendly stork. When a storm comes up, in a moment of animation brilliance, the stork comes to the rescue, spearing runaway lanterns from an aviator's point of view. *Film Daily* reported: "To insure accuracy and add a touch of ... splendor, a special staff of Japanese artists has been engaged to work on [painted backgrounds for] 'Japanese Lanterns.'" This Cinecolor cartoon was part of the *Rainbow Parade* series created between 1934 and 1936 by Van Beuren Studios, which ceased production when RKO decided to distribute Walt Disney offerings instead.

Hold It (1938), world restoration premiere

Fleischer Studios had multiple "full color" projects under its belt (including a two-reel *Popeye* special) by the time work started on 1938's *Hold It!*, which presents a cozy bouquet of teal, lavender and caramel across its cool nighttime palette. The plot follows a scratchy-voiced feline crooner's performance of the title song for an audience of neighborhood cats. The accompanying action includes a full order of Fleischer-style surrealism and anarchy: hyper-fluid kitty choreography gives way to a neighborhood dog chase, while the song's refrain (*Hold it!*) generates a series of memorable, gravity-defying gags.

Anything to Please and Red Riding Hood (1946), world restoration premiere

One of the Archive's more curious donations came from chemist Lyne Trimble (1912-1992) and consisted of tests and prints in various obscure color processes. Trimble taught a class at UCLA about color film; previously, he had been instrumental in developing the short-lived 1940s subtractive three-color process Fullcolor. Among the few subjects released in Fullcolor were these animated theatrical advertisements for Coca-Cola produced for the Latin American market. The nitrate prints donated by Trimble are the sole copies known to be in existence; how many might have been made originally and by whom remain a mystery.

Superman Trailer (1941), world restoration premiere

Though studios rarely produced trailers for their short subjects, Paramount sold this teaser to exhibitors because — per an advertisement in the March 30, 1941, issue of *Film Daily* — their "new film star" already had "38,000,000 fans." Superman's regular appearance in Action Comics, widely syndicated newspaper strips and popular radio series meant that most audiences were already familiar with the Man of Steel. Still, the animation from Fleischer Studios would be audiences' first glimpse of the hero in motion, and the first time he would

take flight rather than merely "leap tall buildings in a single bound."

A Kick in Time (1940), world restoration premiere

After their well-received debut in *Hunky and Spunky* (1938), the titular mother-son donkey duo joined Fleischer's stable of regular characters, eventually starring in the final four *Color Classics*. The first of these is *A Kick in Time*, which departs from the studio's usual song-centric, reality-bending, slapstick-laden bag of tricks for a more straightforward adventure plot about Spunky's abduction and Hunky's journey to rescue her son. Plenty of minor comedic gags soften the short's melodrama and embellish its action sequences, but Kick's overall earnestness is a valuable reminder of the studio's broader artistic ambition.

April 6, 11:00 a.m.

Pack Up Your Troubles (1932), world restoration premiere

Stan and Ollie get drafted into the Great War! Boot camp brings both calamity and camaraderie to the duo. There they are befriended by a bloke named Eddie Smith. Eddie is tragically killed in the trenches in France, while our dynamic duo survive in spite of themselves. Once stateside, the Boys discover their true mission in the film: caring for the late Eddie's three-year-old daughter, who will end up in an orphanage if they fail to locate the child's grandparents. Like Eddie, they have the most common surname in the phonebook: Smith. Hijinks ensue.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #2: "Land" (1932-1967)

We move from the sky to terra firma and take a look at some interesting creations in land transportation. From wind-driven cars to the bike of the future, sit back and enjoy these unique vehicular innovations.

Supper at Six (1933), Los Angeles restoration premiere

An alimony check provides cause for celebration in this musical short whose title plays off *Dinner at Eight* of the same year. Featuring stage actress Maude Odell as a stern but sympathetic landlady with a collection of colorful boarding house tenants, many of whom contribute to the evening's entertainment — music, acrobatics and even magic — this was one in a series of 13 musical shorts produced by Mentone Productions for Universal Pictures. It showcases stars of radio fame including the Ponce Sisters, whose estate assisted with supporting the preservation of this film.

April 6, 1:30 p.m.

Live musical accompaniment by Cliff Retallick.

A Midsummer Night's Dream (Ein Sommernachtstraum, Germany, 1925), *Los Angeles restoration premiere*

Long considered a lost film, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was discovered in 2010 buried under a cellar floor and coated in machine oil. As the Athenians prepare for the marriage between Duke Theseus of Athens and the Amazon queen, Hippolyta, mischievousness abounds in the nearby woods. A band of thespians rehearse their first play and lovers rendezvous while the elf king, Oberon, his queen, Titania, and the impish Puck wreak havoc. The skillful use of light, shadow and

superimposition serves to confuse: what is real and what is imagined is the question being asked of the players and the audience.

April 6, 2:45 p.m.

In-person: Introduction by filmmaker Joe Dante

Atomic Television

As a sub-genre, "atomic television" dates back to the medium's formative years, as the small screen attempted to reckon with the escalating existential dangers posed by the Cold War throughout the 1950s and '60s. Outré anthology TV programs of the era, such as *Lights Out* (1951) and *Way Out* (1961), offered an unexpected platform for the meaningful exploration of questions wrought by life under the Bomb, dramatizing all-too-plausible doomsday scenarios within horror, science fiction and fantasy contexts.

Lights Out: "The House of Dust" (1951)

In this kinescope recording of a live episode, future Academy Award winner Anthony Quinn (*Viva Zapata!*) stars as one of the last survivors of a global nuclear war. While a chance encounter with another survivor (Nina Foch) points to a new tomorrow, the pair must first fight for their lives against a terrifying scourge created in the bomb's aftermath. The low-budget production features expressionistic sets and innovative sound design that illuminate early television's artistic and technical ingenuity while simultaneously adhering to stylistic elements of radio. *Presented with original commercials*.

Way Out: "Button, Button" (1961)

Produced on black-and-white videotape, the macabre series *Way Out* achieved cult status for its darkly off-kilter sensibilities and relative scarcity (it is only known to survive on 16mm kinescopes and was never released to home video). In this nightmarish episode, a military captain (Tim O'Connor) in command of a missile silo faces the grim possibility of a nuclear launch by an unstable sergeant (Warren Finnerty, star of Shirley Clarke's *The Connection*). Hosted by author Roald Dahl, the mid-season replacement series served briefly as the leadin for *The Twilight Zone* on CBS before cancellation after only 14 episodes. *Presented with original commercials*.

April 6, 4:15 p.m.

In-person: Film preservationist Ross Lipman

Time of the Heathen (1961), Los Angeles restoration premiere

Famous theater actor, director and acting coach Peter Kass' sole feature won the grand prize at the 1962 Bergamo International Film Festival, but has mostly been lost to the public since its initial debut. The film follows emotionally unstable drifter Gaunt (played by the expressive character actor John Heffernan) who stumbles into a violent backwoods incident that sets in motion a series of events that explore racism, guilt, the casualties of war and, ultimately, redemption. Celebrated avant-garde filmmaker Ed Emshwiller's beautiful black-and-white and color photography works perfectly to set a neorealistic and psychedelic tone, as does Lejaren Hiller's modern score.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #3: "Water" (1936-1966)

Our third newsreel segment demonstrates what results from combining ingenuity and H20. Highlights include a one-person submarine for hunting gold, a "leaping" lifeboat, some elastic water and an automated fishing rod. Let us see if these inventions are the wave of the future or just all wet.

Tall Tales (1940), world restoration premiere

Co-directed by William Watts and Willard Van Dyke (who would become director of film at The Museum of Modern Art), this charming musical short stars Burl Ives in his first on-screen performance. Ives, Will Geer (later known as TV's Grandpa Walton) and Winston O'Keefe are joined by the prodigious African American folksinger Josh White (a 2023 Blues Hall of Fame inductee). Jazz historian Mark Cantor notes that the film was "the first (and ultimately only) short subject from Brandon Films in what was supposed to be a series intended to support progressive thought [in relation to racial integration]."

April 6, 7:00 p.m.

In-person: Director Marc Levin in conversation moderated by Eugene Hernandez, Director, Sundance Film Festival

SLAM (1998), Los Angeles restoration premiere

Actor/poets Saul Williams and Sonja Sohn make their feature film debuts in *SLAM*, a "drama-vérité" directed by documentarian Marc Levin. After being charged with drug possession, small-time marijuana dealer and rapper Ray Joshua (Williams) must navigate the Washington, D.C., criminal justice system. Though he faces imprisonment, his dreams for his future are ignited by a writing instructor, Lauren Bell (Sohn), who introduces him to the slam poetry world. Their powerful poetry and the film itself tackle the hard issues of criminal justice reform, institutional racism, societal expectations and violence — as well as imagination and freedom.

April 6, 9:30 p.m.

In-person: Television host, film historian Eddie Muller

Never Open That Door (No abras nunca esa puerta, Argentina, 1952), *Los Angeles restoration premiere*

No abras nunca esa puerta (Never Open That Door) follows two upper-class Argentine families facing desperate familial conflicts. The original stories adapted for the two-part film noir, "Somebody on the Phone" and "Hummingbird Comes Home," were written by American crime author Cornell Woolrich and directed by respected, yet exiled, Argentine director Carlos Hugo Christensen. Featuring an iconic cast of Argentine stars (Roberto Escalada, Renée Dumas), Christensen's maze of shadows and gut-wrenching confusion marks *No abras nunca esa puerta* as one of the most celebrated noir thrillers to come out of Argentina's golden era of cinema.

April 7, 11:00 a.m.

In-person: Introduced by director of The Packard Humanities Institute Stoa Film Archive, Santa Clarita CA, Patrick Loughney

Topper Takes a Trip (1938), world restoration premiere

Cosmo Topper (Roland Young) is back in this first sequel to 1937's hit *Topper*. Now he's in trouble with his wife, Clara (Billie Burke), for the shenanigans caused by ghostly Marion Kerby (Constance Bennett). When Clara ships off for the French Riviera, Marion appears (and disappears and reappears) to prod Topper and reunite the couple, using supernatural tricks to ward off Clara's would-be suitor, Baron de Rossi (Alexander D'Arcy). Swap out *Topper* breakout Cary Grant for "ectoplasmic pup" Mr. Atlas, played by Asta of *The Thin Man* (1934) fame, and you have all the ingredients for this ribald martini.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #4: "Home" (1936-1959)

Delightful inventions that one might use at home! A solar oven (demonstrated on Venice Beach) and an ex-marine's self-feeding baby bottle are among these creations meant to improve domestic life.

Lucky Millinder and His Orchestra (1946), world restoration premiere

This jazzy gem is an early example of a mainstream multiracial band led by the charismatic Lucky Millinder. Around the time of this production, Millinder had deliberately decided that it was time to integrate his band, which was extremely popular with African American audiences. The bandleader introduces three numbers that include tenor saxophonists Sam "The Man" Taylor, Clarence "Bull Moose" Jackson (also a singer), and Annisteen Allen. Blues vocalist Allen is presented as the "Hot Tamale" from close to the Mexican border (Champaign, Illinois, was her actual home); her rendition of the hit "I Want a Man" is a highlight.

April 7, 1:30 p.m.

Man and Wife (1923), Los Angeles restoration premiere

Living on the family farm, the Perkins sisters are a study in contrasts — Dolly thrives in the rural setting, while Dora restlessly dreams of a move to the big city. Following an argument with her father, Dora leaves for the beckoning metropolis, sparking a storyline replete with deception, bigamy, madness, and finally, reconciliation. A melodrama shot in Fort Lee, New Jersey, *Man and Wife* features a strong cast: Maurice Costello, Gladys Leslie, and Robert Elliott, plus a pre-fame appearance by future MGM superstar Norma Shearer.

April 7, 2:35 p.m.

In-person: Q&A with filmmakers, Sylvia Morales and Moctesuma Esparza

Chicana (1979), Los Angeles restoration premiere

Inducted into the National Film Registry of the Library of Congress, *Chicana* is considered the first major feminist Chicana documentary. Period artifacts, artwork and contemporary scenes of women working are woven together with narration from renowned actor Carmen Zapata. Telling the matriarchal histories of the Americas using historical female figures, *Chicana* becomes less about history and more about how these movements are connected to the greater narrative of women fighting for space and equality, and combatting exploitation.

Requiem-29 (1970), world restoration premiere

Filmed by students from UCLA's Ethno-Communications Program as a class project, *Requiem-29* was meant to be a documentary about the National Chicano Moratorium Movement demonstration on August 29, 1970. But it is more: combining footage from the march, interviews, the wake of a deceased attendee, and incredible courtroom testimony, *Requiem-29* exposes the brutal racial biases against the Latinx community at the hands of law enforcement, from the perspective of those experiencing it.

April 7, 4:20 p.m.

In-person: Introduction by professor, USC School of Cinematic Arts and past president of the Writers Guild of America, West, Howard Rodman Jr.

Westinghouse Studio One: "Walk Down the Hill" (1957)

Set in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp during World War II, "Walk Down the Hill" concerns a Jewish G.I. (William Smithers) imperiled when his captors question the American P.O.W.s about their religious affiliation. Based on screenwriter Ernest Kinoy's (*Roots*) own harrowing experiences during the war, the tense morality drama explores universal humanist themes of faith and conscience that extends beyond the parameters of religion. Produced by future Television Academy Hall of Fame inductee Herbert Brodkin (Holocaust) and featuring a gifted ensemble cast including Don Gordon, Ivan Dixon, Clu Gulager and John Fielder. *Presented with original commercials*.

April 7, 5:40 p.m.

In-person: television writer-producer and biographer David Stenn

The Wages of Sin (1938), world restoration premiere

After the Production Code imposed rigid self-censorship on the Hollywood film industry in 1934, independent producers began to shoot lurid and shocking pictures — a genre now known as exploitation films — including the trafficked woman drama *The Wages of Sin*. The plot revolves around young Marjorie Benton, who works hard to support her unappreciative family, and fatefully is enticed to spend an evening at a seedy nightclub. After being plied with drinks and marijuana, she catches the eye of a pimp who callously begins to coerce her into the "Sisterhood of Sorrow," leading her to commit a heinous crime.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #5: "Variety" (1939-1947)

Our fifth newsreel segment covers a variety of inventions that defy easy categorization. From an early version of synthetic speech to a fence that listens and foils saboteurs, let us continue to explore the curious creations from times gone by.

Sweet Shoe (1937), world restoration premiere

Rita Rio — later known to film audiences as Dona Drake (*Kansas City Confidential*) — led one of the most commercially successful all-woman swing bands of the 1930s (after Ina Ray Hutton). Showcasing her vivacious stage presence, this breezy musical short accurately reflects why Rio was known as the "Mexican tornado of rhythm" (though born Eunice Westmoreland to a family of mainly African American heritage). In addition to highlighting Rio's very efficacious stage brand with a

"sweet and hot" version of "La Cucaracha," the film showcases the entertaining acrobatic tap dancer Anita Jakobi as well as The Norsemen and The Four Specs.

April 7, 8:30 p.m.

Smog (Italy, 1962), Los Angeles restoration premiere

Director Franco Rossi offers an atmospheric meditation on the pervasive alienation of American life as seen through the outsider perspectives of an Italian attorney (Enrico Maria Salerno) and the small circle of Italian expats he meets in Los Angeles while on layover. From his polyglot exchanges at Los Angeles International Airport to cocktails at the Pierre Koenig-designed Stahl Residence — and all the anonymous car lots, oil fields, off ramps and diners in between — Rossi offers a unique, street-level view of the mid-century city, adding a touch of hometown pride and nostalgia to all the modernist ennui.

Preceded by

The Lighter Side of Hearst Newsreels #6: "Grab Bag" (1933-1945)

We conclude this wonderful collection of human creativity and imagination with a real grab bag of inventions. Highlights include a French inventor electrifying violins, a new design for a beer glass, and the premiere of the latest glamor boy, the robot Elektro.

For details, registration information and the latest health guidelines, please visit cinema.ucla.edu.

About the UCLA Film & Television Archive

A division of UCLA Library, the Archive is internationally renowned for rescuing, preserving and showcasing moving image media and is dedicated to ensuring that the visual achievements of our time are available for information, education and enjoyment. The Archive has over 450,000 film and television holdings conserved in a state-of-the-art facility at The Packard Humanities Institute Stoa in Santa Clarita, CA, that is designed to hold materials ranging from nitrate film to digital video at all preservation standards. Many of the Archive's projects are screened at prestigious film events around the globe.

The Billy Wilder Theater at the Hammer Museum is the home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's public programs. The theater is among a handful of venues nationwide able to exhibit an entire century's worth of moving images in their original formats. From the earliest silent films requiring variable speed projection all the way up to cutting-edge digital cinema, the Wilder can accommodate an array of screen technologies.

For more information, please contact Marisa Soto at (310) 206-8588 or msoto@cinema.ucla.edu.