



The silent years album

A collector's edition of scenes from the distinguished series of silent motion pictures presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

The Golden Age of Motion Pictures returns in *The Silent Years*, a series of twelve classic silent films presented statewide by Great Western Savings on a special network of four California public television stations.

For the first time, today's audience may see these masterpieces as they were originally seen—each one complete and without interruption, each one carefully restored from the best of early prints.

To enhance their modern showing, the films have been reproduced with the color tints used in movie palaces of the 1920's. A striking yet typical example is found in Valentino's *Son of the Sheik*, where we see the desert in golden yellow, the night in deep blue, the thieves' den in sinister green, and the love tent in passionate pink. In addition, the films have been given musical scores composed in the style of the times and performed on piano or on the giant Wurlitzer organ of Radio City Music Hall.

Film historians advise that silent movies must be viewed as an art form totally different from talkies, not merely as primitive predecessors of today's big screen, glorious color and stereophonic sound. With simpler tools at their disposal, silent filmmakers never meant their work to be taken as dramatically or literally "real." Instead, they sought an effect, a completeness without sound, often with results of startling beauty and sophistication. The truly classic silent films would not benefit from sound. The films in this series, each in its own way, are among the greatest motion picture achievements of all time. Each is a monument to the virtuosity of the silent screen.

Great Western Savings is pleased to present this distinguished series commemorating the rich heritage of the film medium. We are also gratified to have an opportunity to further public broadcasting in California. We hope you enjoy *The Silent Years*.



Your host is Orson Welles, a creative genius of modern motion pictures. As a producer, director, writer and actor of tremendous accomplishment, he is more than qualified to speak authoritatively on these films. His introductions provide fascinating insights to the greatness of the individual films and the entire silent years.



Douglas Fairbanks in "The Thief of Bagdad" (1924)



"The Thief of Bagdad"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Douglas Fairbanks *The Thief*
Snitz Edwards *his Evil Associate*
Charles Belcher *Holy Man*
Julanne Johnston *Princess*
Anna May Wong *Mongol Slave*
Winter Blossom *Slave of the Lute*
Etta Lee *Slave of the Sand Board*
Brandon Hurst *Caliph*
Tote du Crow *his Soothsayer*
So-Jim *Mongol Prince*
K. Nambu *his Counselor*
Sadakichi Hartmann *his Court Magician*
Noble Johnson *Indian Prince*
M. Comont *Persian Prince*
Charles Stevens *his Awaker*
Sam Baker *Sworder*
Jess Weldon, Scott Matraw,
Charles Sylvester *eunuchs*

Directed by Raoul Walsh
for United Artists.

When Douglas Fairbanks decided to film an Arabian nights fantasy, he insisted that it be the biggest and best. *The Thief of Bagdad* was both. It was staged on a massive scale at a cost of \$2,000,000, the most expensive movie of the time. And it has since been named the crowning achievement of his career, one of the greatest films of all time.

The story tells of a notorious thief who reforms after falling in love with a beautiful Princess. To prove himself worthy of her affections, he goes from one hazardous adventure to another. He battles with fearsome monsters. He battles with the villainous Mongol Khan who has designs on the Princess. In fact, he battles with the entire Mongol army. Flashing the famous Fairbanks grin and performing the famous Fairbanks acrobatics, the ex-thief wins his battles and, of course, the eternal love of his Princess.

This is Douglas Fairbanks as he is best remembered, the flamboyant hero who swashbuckles his way to triumph over the staggering odds of evil—all performed with liberal helpings of humor.

Fairbanks did not always play the swashbuckler. It began four years earlier in 1920 with *The Mark of Zorro*, another classic film from *The Silent Years*. Zorro was meant to be a temporary change of pace from his earlier roles as an all-American boy of the period, typically rich and typically full of spunk.

Zorro, the famous Mexican "Robin Hood," changed all that. Playing the fop who springs into action as the daring masked crusader, Fairbanks mixed plenty of comedy with exciting duels and a marvelous chase—much to the delight of critics and the public. *The Mark of Zorro* was such a success that Fairbanks never went back to playing the all-American boy.



Charlie Chaplin in "The Gold Rush" (1925)



"The Gold Rush"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Charlie Chaplin *the Lone Prospector*
Mack Swain *Big Jim*
Tom Murray *Black Larsen*
Georgia Hale *Georgia*
Henry Bergman *Hank Curtis*
Malcolm Waite *Jack Cameron*

Directed by Charlie Chaplin
for United Artists.

Simply stated, Charlie Chaplin was the greatest and most creative of all motion picture comedy performers. *The Gold Rush*, filmed at the height of his popularity, is justly considered the height of his artistry. His masterpiece. He was the star, writer, director and producer.

More ambitious in its production than earlier Chaplin films, *The Gold Rush* finds Charlie the Tramp adrift in the Klondike—actually in Nevada where the outdoor scenes were filmed—searching for his illusory mountain of gold. It is a situation that provides several of the truly memorable scenes in all film comedy.

We see Charlie, nearly starving to death, prepare an elegant dinner of boiled boot, savoring everything from laces to nails with the relish of a true gourmet. We see Charlie, facing the pathetic prospect of unrequited love, perform the famous

dance of the rolls as he dreams adoringly of the beautiful saloon girl. And in the hilarious climactic scene, we see Charlie and his begrudging partner struggle to survive as their cabin, blown by the wind, teeters on the edge of a giant precipice.

The Gold Rush is marvelous entertainment. It demonstrates most clearly the talent of Chaplin as an amazing actor, his slapstick comedy mixed with touches of genuine pathos and drama. As adept as his own performance is his splendid direction of a fine supporting cast headed by Mack Swain, Georgia Hale, Tom Murray and Henry Bergman.

Where the greatness of others stops at comedy, the greatness of Chaplin went far deeper. His humor and his sense of perspective in viewing the human condition was unique, for all people and for all time.



Buster Keaton in "The General" (1927)



"The General"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Buster Keaton *Johnnie Gray*
Marion Mack *Annabelle Lee*
Charles Smith *her Father*
Frank Barnes *her Brother*
Glen Cavender *Captain Anderson*
Jim Farley *General Thatcher*
Frederick Vroom *Southern General*
Frank Hagney *Recruiting Officer*

Directed by Buster Keaton and
Clyde Bruckman for United Artists.

Film historians call *The General* the last classic comedy of the silent era and among the greatest films ever made. It is Buster Keaton's masterpiece, a virtuoso accomplishment as both star and co-director.

Highly successful as a vehicle for Keaton's celebrated dry wit, *The General* featured virtually every sight gag known to modern comedy. Yet this spoof of Civil War espionage was staged on a scale customarily found only in extravagant epics. Consider the scene where a locomotive plunges to destruction through a burning trestle. It's a disaster that comes off as one of the funniest moments in screen history, and a perfect example of how the total absence of sound can heighten comic effect.

The General is based loosely—very loosely—on fact. It tells the story of Johnnie Gray, who is refused enlistment

in the Confederate Army because he is essential to the cause as a civilian railroad engineer. He almost wins the war for the South when his beloved locomotive, *The General*, is kidnapped in a spy raid and he invades the North to get it back. The film is one big chase, Johnnie chasing the spies and then the spies chasing Johnnie.

Though pride in his engine is the main reason for Johnnie's ambitious military undertaking, he is also anxious to impress a girl who becomes more of a nuisance than an inspiration. Marion Mack is a marvelous foil.

This is Buster Keaton at his deadpan best, playing the eternal pessimist with brilliant imagination and magnificent timing. Some say his style was far ahead of its time, which just might explain why *The General* remains so incredibly fresh for today's audience.



Rudolph Valentino in "Blood and Sand" (1922)



"Blood and Sand"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Rudolph Valentino *Juan Gallardo*
Lila Lee *Carmen*
Nita Naldi *Dona Sol*
Charles Belcher *Don Joselito*
Walter Long *Plumitas*
George Field *El Nacional*
Rose Rosanova *Senora Augustias*
Leo White *Antonio*

Directed by Fred Niblo for Paramount.

As Chaplin was laughter and Fairbanks was adventure, Rodolfo Alfonso Raffaello Pierre Filibert Guglielmi di Valentino d'Antonguolla was the silent era's greatest lover. This legendary Valentino appeal is very much on display in *Blood and Sand*, one of his earlier films.

Blood and Sand is an exotic story set against the romance of Spain, the passion of the tango and the drama of the bullring. It tells of Juan Gallardo, an awkward country youth who becomes Spain's most celebrated matador. He marries his childhood sweetheart, Carmen, but soon falls under the spell of the alluring and aristocratic Dona Sol. He's drawn into a reckless affair that humiliates his wife. Remorseful at having betrayed Carmen, Juan and his bandit friend, Plumitas, face death

together at the arena. Plumitas, at the hands of the police. And Juan, conscience stricken, as a willing victim of his dangerous profession.

The movie is based on a novel by Belasco Ibanez, *Sangre y Arena*, written as an indictment of bullfighting. It was also an indictment of predatory women, and few could portray the predator better than Nita Naldi. As Dona Sol, she demonstrates why she rivaled Theda Bara as queen of silent screen vamps. Lila Lee as Carmen and Walter Long as Plumitas are equally effective in their supporting roles.

It is said that Valentino predicted his own early death. Perhaps that is why he played the death scene in *Blood and Sand* with such startling conviction. He died in 1926, at the age of 31.



John Barrymore in "The Beloved Rogue" (1927)



"The Beloved Rogue"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

John Barrymore.....*Francois Villon*
Conrad Veidt.....*King Louis XI*
Slim Summerville.....*Jehan*
Mack Swain.....*Nicholas*
Henry Victor.....*Thibault d'Aussigny*
Marceline Day.. *Charlotte de Vauxcelles*
Dick Sutherland.....*Tristan l'Hermite,*
the King's Executioner
Nigel de Brulier.....*Astrologer*
Lawson Butt.....*John, the*
Duke of Burgundy
Otto Matieson.. *Oliver, the King's Barber*
Rose Dione.....*Margot*
Bertram Grasby.....*Duke of Orleans*
Lucy Beaumont.....*Villon's Mother*
Angelo Rositto.....*Beppo, the Dwarf*

Directed by Alan Crosland
for United Artists.

If ever the American stage and screen boasted a true matinee idol, it was "The Great Profile." John Barrymore, most famous of the illustrious acting family, has been called the finest actor on the silent screen. *The Beloved Rogue* was made at the height of his career.

It is the story of Francois Villon, the legendary vagabond poet of 15th century France. In the film, Villon becomes a confidant of King Louis XI, only to be exiled when he falls in love with Charlotte, a court beauty the King had planned using as his political pawn through marriage to a nobleman. All is well in the end as Villon regains the King's favor by saving Paris and the throne from the treacherous Duke of Burgundy.

Villon is a role tailor-made for the unequalled skill and versatility of John

Barrymore. He plays scenes of high romance and deep pathos. And he plays scenes of heroic acrobatics, climbing walls and catapulting through the air. The film has a reputation for swashbuckling derring-do challenged only by the best of Fairbanks.

The excellent cast features Conrad Veidt as the crafty and superstitious Louis XI, Marceline Day as the lovely heroine, and Slim Summerville and Mack Swain as Villon's unsavory cohorts of bottle and battle.

The Beloved Rogue is considered a perfect example of the art of the silent era, a monument to its techniques and virtuosity. Directed with great flair and flamboyance by Alan Crosland, magnificently designed and photographed, this is truly a delightful film.



Lion Chaney in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1923)



"The Hunchback of Notre Dame"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Lon Chaney.....*Quasimodo*
Patsy Ruth Miller.....*Esmerelda*
Norman Kerry.....*Phoebus*
Ernest Torrence.....*Clopin*
Kate Lester...*Madame de Gondelaurier*
Brandon Hurst.....*Jehan*
Raymond Hatton.....*Gringoire*
Tully Marshall.....*King Louis XI*
Nigel de Brulier.....*Dom Claude*
Edwin Wallack.....*King's Chamberlain*
John Cossar.....*Justice of the Court*
Harry L. Van Meter *Monsieur Neufchatel*
Gladys Brockwell.....*Godule*
Eulalie Jensen.....*Marie*
Winifred Bryson.....*Fleur de Lys*
Nick de Ruiz.....*Monsieur le Torteru*

Directed by Wallace Worsley
for Universal.

Of the half-dozen films adapted from Victor Hugo's immortal novel, the original silent version is still considered the best—as stunning today as when it was first presented in 1923. *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* rocketed Lon Chaney to overnight stardom.

Chaney was called "the man of a thousand faces," a well-deserved tribute to his genius with make-up. He was a master of the macabre. He was also an actor of rare strength and sensitivity, capable of making his audiences draw back in revulsion one moment and reach out in sympathy the next. No more perfect vehicle could be found for him than this intensely moving story of Quasimodo, the horribly deformed bellringer of Notre Dame, of his hopeless love for the Gypsy dancing girl, and of their involvement in

a rebellion against the King led by the ruler of street beggars.

The Hunchback of Notre Dame was produced on a lavish scale. The vast sets and mob scenes are breathtaking, easily reflecting the \$1,500,000 that went into its production. The superb direction of Wallace Worsley and his assistants, among them the young William Wyler, is very much in evidence. So too are the fine supporting performances of Patsy Ruth Miller, Norman Kerry, Raymond Hatton, Ernest Torrence and Brandon Hurst.

Yet *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* remains the personal masterpiece of Chaney, one of his most amazing feats of make-up and one of the truly great screen portrayals. In spite of the hugeness of the spectacle, it emerges as a film in which the star dominates all else.



Rudolph Valentino in "Son of the Sheik" (1926)



"Son of the Sheik"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

Rudolph Valentino..... *Ahmed and
his father, Ahmed Ben Hassan*
Vilma Banky *Yasmin*
George Fawcett..... *Andre*
Montague Love..... *Ghaba*
Karl Dane..... *Ramadan*
William Donovan..... *S'rir*
Agnes Ayres..... *Diana*
Bull Montana *Albi*
Erwin Connelly..... *the Zouave*
Bynynsky Hyman..... *the Pincher*
Charles Requa..... *Pierre*

Directed by George Fitzmaurice
for United Artists.

Released shortly after his death, Rudolph Valentino's last film is widely acknowledged to be his finest. Ironically, it was a sequel to *The Sheik*, the 1921 hit that launched his brief career as an idol of silent films.

Son of the Sheik is not meant to be taken too seriously. Presented very much tongue-in-cheek, it's a romantic melodrama complete with torrid love scenes, furious fights, desert chases, and last-minute rescues. The film combines a delightful humor and polished showmanship that keep it marvelously fresh for today's audience.

In the story, Ahmed, a desert sheik, believes himself betrayed by a lovely

dancing girl. He abducts her and exacts his revenge, only to discover she is innocent. The hero thereupon sets about bringing to justice the band of renegades who had exploited her.

Valentino plays two roles in the film, both the sheik and the son of the sheik. Agnes Ayres, heroine of the earlier film, appears as the mother. The new heroine is Vilma Banky, the classically beautiful Hungarian discovery of Samuel Goldwyn. The desert scenes, incidentally, were filmed near Yuma, Arizona.

Escapist entertainment on an extravagant scale is common to many popular films of the silent era. *Son of the Sheik* is a perfect example, perhaps the best.



W.C. Fields in D.W. Griffith's "Sally of the Sawdust" (1925)



"Sally of the Sawdust"

One of the classic silent motion pictures from "The Silent Years"
presented on public television by Great Western Savings.

CAST:

W. C. Fields *Eustace McGargle*
Carol Dempster *Sally*
Alfred Lunt *Peyton Lennox*
Erville Alderson *Judge Henry Foster*
Effie Shannon *Mrs. Foster*
Charles Hammond *Lennox, Sr.*
Roy Applegate *Detective*
Florence Fair *Miss Vinton*
Marie Shotwell *Society Leader*
Glenn Anders *Leon, the Acrobat*

Directed by D. W. Griffith
for United Artists.

S*ally of the Sawdust* is one of the important films of the silent era, in at least two ways. It was the first and most famous silent feature starring W. C. Fields. And it was the only full-fledged comedy of producer and director D. W. Griffith. Thought to be lost for many years, it has just recently been re-discovered for posterity.

This is indeed early Fields, filmed while he was starring on stage in the Ziegfeld Follies. He plays the role of Eustace McGargle, a carnival barker who adopts an orphaned circus girl. The great fun, of course, in any Fields movie is watching his marvelous "character" at work. Here, as might be expected, he spends a good part of the time superbly conning the carnival customers out of all

they are worth. The picture is climaxed by one of those wild automobile chases that were to become traditional in later Fields films.

Extremely able support is provided by one of Griffith's favorite leading ladies, Carol Dempster, delightfully portraying the title role. The romantic hero is played by an up-and-coming young Broadway actor of the day, Alfred Lunt.

In *Sally of the Sawdust*, film audiences really saw for the first time the basic character that Fields had been developing through his vaudeville and stage careers...the lovable but anti-social charlatan who enjoys an occasional nip—and is none too fond of children or dogs.

It's a character that lives on, and *Sally of the Sawdust* was the beginning.

The silent years

Presented on public television by Great Western Savings.
DECEMBER 14, 1971 THROUGH MARCH 4, 1972

San Francisco KQED/Channel 9 • Los Angeles KCET/Channel 28 • Sacramento KVIE/Channel 6 • San Diego KPBS/Channel 15

	Initial telecast All stations Tuesdays at 10:00 P.M.	Repeat telecast KPBS and KVIE Thursdays at 6:00 P.M.	Repeat telecast KCET and KQED Saturdays at 9:00 P.M.
THE GOLD RUSH Charlie Chaplin	December 14	December 16	December 18
SON OF THE SHEIK Rudolph Valentino	December 21	December 23	December 25 (KQED, Dec. 26 at 4:00 P.M.)
INTOLERANCE D. W. Griffith, director	December 28	December 30	January 1 (KQED, Jan. 2 at 4:00 P.M.)
THE MARK OF ZORRO Douglas Fairbanks	January 4	January 6	January 8
THE GENERAL Buster Keaton	January 11	January 13	January 15
THE BELOVED ROGUE John Barrymore	January 18	January 20	January 22
THE EXTRA GIRL Mabel Normand Mack Sennett, director	January 25	January 27	January 29
THE THIEF OF BAGDAD Douglas Fairbanks	February 1	February 3	February 5
ORPHANS OF THE STORM Lillian and Dorothy Gish D. W. Griffith, director	February 8	February 10	February 12
SALLY OF THE SAWDUST W. C. Fields	February 15	February 17	February 19
BLOOD AND SAND Rudolph Valentino	February 22	February 24	February 26
THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME Lon Chaney	February 29	March 2	March 4

