



NATIONAL LIBRARY

THE FILM SOCIETY



1925 - 1939
a guide to collections

Introduction



The Film Society Logo

1995 WAS THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY of the founding of the Film Society, making it an appropriate choice as the subject of the first in an occasional series of *Guides to the Collections* to be published by the Library and Information Service of the British Film Institute; appropriate because so much of the film culture we take for granted today stems from the Society's innovative programming. A national movement was born which formed the basis of local film societies, independent regional cinemas and the National Film Theatre; many of its prints were donated to the National Film Archive in 1942, and the work which it began has been continued by the BFI, the British Federation of Film Societies, and the film festivals which have sprung up since all over the world.

Modelled on the Stage Society (which put on single performances of uncommercial or controversial plays for its members on Sundays) the Film Society aimed to screen films of artistic and technical interest which were not shown in commercial cinemas, encouraging a serious approach to film-making as an art. To understand the scope of its ambitions and the scale of its achievements, it is necessary to remember how things were in 1925. The medium of film itself was barely 30 years old, and as Ivor Montagu reminded us in a 50th anniversary article in *Sight and Sound* in 1975 (1), there were "no film institutes, no film archives, no Oscars, no film festivals, no film schools... no really functional educational cinema, scientific research cinema, historical record cinema, no specialised cinema theatres..."

Right: Sidney Bernstein

The Founders

WHO WERE THE PEOPLE who brought the Film Society into being? The first Council was notable for its youth.

SIDNEY BERNSTEIN was 26, a film exhibitor who had taken over the family chain of music halls on his father's death three years previously and transformed them into cinemas. By the end of the decade he was to build the first of the famous Granada super-cinemas. He formed the production company Transatlantic Pictures with Alfred Hitchcock after World War Two, producing *Rope*, *Under Capricorn* and *I Confess*, before going on to create one of the first four British independent television companies, Granada, in the 1950s.



Below left to right: Thorold Dickinson, Ivor Montagu, Lotte Reiniger, Hugh Miller and Sidney Cole meet up in 1975 - the 50th anniversary of the Film Society

IVOR MONTAGU was 20, not long down from Cambridge and already a member of the executive committee of the Holborn branch of the Labour Party. The youngest son a peer (Baron Montagu of the banking family) he was a zoologist and founder-president of the International Table Tennis Federation. He had been a film critic on the University magazine *Granta*, and became the first film critic of *The Observer* in 1926.

He was to work with Michael Balcon and Alfred Hitchcock in the next decade as associate producer on *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, *The 39 Steps*, *The Secret Agent* and *Sabotage*. He was also to become a founder member of the Association of Cine Technicians, join the Communist Party and become the close friend and champion of Sergei Eisenstein, collaborating on the screenplays of the unproduced

ADRIAN BRUNEL was 33. He had trained as an opera singer and worked in the booking office of Moss Empires Bioscope Company, before joining the film department of the Ministry of Information. Perhaps one of the 'forgotten men' of British film, he spent many years trying to get work after *Elstree Calling* in 1930, only to end up churning out 'quota quickies'. An indication of how the trade viewed the Society is shown by the fact that Brunel had to leave the Council before the end of the first season, as his employer insisted that his association with the Society would damage the prestige of the films he made for them (2).





Pudovkin's Mat screened in 1928

IRIS BARRY was 29 and film critic on *The Spectator*. She subsequently established the first US film archive at the New York Museum of Modern Art, becoming its first curator, and it is easy to forget how innovative it was at that time to treat cinema as another art. One of her first achievements was to gain the trust of DW Griffith, enabling MOMA to save his archive for posterity. Unlike some single-minded film critics, Barry brought to bear on her work not only a love of films but a literary catholicity of taste, and a love and knowledge of music and painting.

HUGH MILLER was a striking 36 year-old actor from Berwick upon Tweed whose film roles included Paganini and Charles I. **WALTER MYCROFT** another film critic, who was to turn his hand to filmmaking, first as a scriptwriter and adapter, and later as a prolific producer of such films as *Mister Cinders*, *Blossom Time* and *Invitation To The Waltz*. The final member of the first Council was the sculptor **FRANK DOBSON**.

The Context

IN HIS UNPUBLISHED HISTORY OF The Film Society (3) written in the early 1960s, critic and film historian David Robinson quotes the Hon. Mrs. Ewan Montagu: "There wasn't much to do on Sunday afternoons. Maybe a concert at the Albert Hall or the Queen's Hall. But generally you played golf or did nothing. That's why the Film Society was quite a social event. It was quite a thing to do, to have someone to lunch on Sunday and then to go off to the Film Society."



The Adventures of Prince Ahmed - the first full length animated feature

Though the popular press jeered, the Film Society became fashionable with the intelligentsia, the Bohemian 'beau monde' made up of 'young men with beards and young women in home-spun cloaks' (4). Founder members included Anthony Asquith, George Bernard Shaw and HG Wells. Montagu's own family were always loyal supporters of the Society, despite characterising its meetings as 'Ivor's Sunday afternoons of gloom' (5), but the Committee intended the programmes to be fun as well as informative and educational; animation, burlesques, and comedies from Lubitch, Chaplin and Keaton were screened. The venture was so successful that the venue had to be changed from the 1,400 seater New Gallery to the Tivoli which could accommodate between 2,000-3,000 people.

The Programmes

SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF CINEMA are documented in the programmes which the Society screened. There was an early focus on German Expressionism and films such as *das Cabinet des Dr. Calagari*, *Dr. Mabuse Der*

Spieler and *Orlacs Hande* were shown as revivals. This practice fostered an appreciation of the interest of old films, which flowered in the 1930s into the film archive movement. However, the membership were less impressed by Murnau's *Nosferatu* "noteworthy for the now discarded trick effects attempted...the general production combines the ridiculous and the horrid in about the same proportion as the play", than by the first Soviet film to be screened, Pudovkin's *Mat* during the fourth season in 1928.

The Society (and Montagu in particular) had long wanted to show the exciting and innovative work coming out of the Soviet Union, but when these screenings eventually took place they met with hostile reactions from both the censors and the popular press - indeed, the Society was accused of being an agent of Moscow. (In 1929, Montagu was moved to publish a pamphlet *The Political Censorship of Films*, explaining how the British Board of Film Censors came by its powers and urging that the censorship system be revised). Even so, the great

Below: Illustration from the pressbook of Maedchen in Uniform, 1931





The screening of *Alexander Nevsky* in April 1939 was to be the Society's last

Soviet films like *Potomok Chinglis-Khana* and *Staroye i Novoe* were shown for the first time in Britain by the Society, and Pudovkin and Eisenstein were invited to lecture to members on film technique.

Bronenosets Potyomkin was screened at the 33rd performance on 10 November 1929, sharing the programme with a short. *The Fall of the House of Usher*; a Mickey Mouse cartoon *The Barn Dance* - and John Grierson's *Drifters*, a documentary on the North Sea herring fisheries. This screening signalled the beginning of the relationship between the Film Society and the British documentary - from then on the Society showed nearly all the best work of the British documentarists as it appeared.

As the 1930s progressed, there was a notable decrease in the number of new German films available for screening, as the German film industry declined under the inexorable rise of Nazism. The development of experimental cinema, the advent of sound, the introduction of colour - all these landmarks can be traced through the programmes. The Film Society Council were the first people to show the work of Leni, Berger, Wiene,

Czinner, L'Hervier, Pabst, Reiniger, Renoir, Clair, Cavalcanti, Ivens, Lye and many others in this country, and the first to screen anything Japanese. One programme (no.38) consisted of films made or written by women, including the controversial study in surrealism, *La Coquille et le Clergyman* by Germaine Dulac, rejected by the BBFC as being "so cryptic as to be almost meaningless. If there is a meaning, it is doubtless objectionable."

The Society bowed out on 23 April 1939, the 108th performance, with Eisenstein's first sound film, *Alexander Nevski*, completed the previous year.

After the war, no-one felt the need to revive it - its work was done. As Montagu remembered in 1975, "there were fewer unshown worthwhile films to hunt. Already the last two seasons before the end had cut down the regular eight performances to six. What need of the Film Society when so many of its aims had been attained, so many reinforcements had arrived to take over?" The BFI, the NFA, the BFFS, the emerging film festivals had all taken up the banner.

Conclusion

THE FILM SOCIETY had been created initially because its originators wanted to see the films it presented themselves, and assumed there were other like-minded souls who would also be interested. It operated in a now vanished and almost unrecognisable world, which it did much to change - its work recorded for posterity in this Collection. The material in the Collection was donated to the Library and Information Service of the British Film Institute by Lord Bernstein. For other special collections which may be of interest, see Anthony Asquith, Thorold Dickinson and Ivor Montagu. The Special Materials Unit (LIS) incorporates the holdings of unpublished scripts, pressbooks and special collections which have been acquired gradually since the inception of the BFI in 1933. It aims to collect original material on British cinema and television history.

**Janet Moat, Special
Materials Librarian**

Endnotes

1. *Sight and Sound*, vol.44, no.4. Autumn 1975. p.220-224, 247.
2. *Nice work, the story of thirty years in British film production*, by Adrian Brunei. London: Forbes Robertson Ltd., 1949
3. *The Career and Times of The Film Society*, by David Robinson. Unpublished, c.1963
4. *Nice -work, the story of thirty years in British film production*, by Adrian Brunei. London: Forbes Robertson Ltd, 1949
5. *The Career and Times of The Film Society*, by David Robinson. Unpublished, c. 1963

THE FILM SOCIETY COLLECTION

ITEMS 1 – 4

Item 1

- a) Articles of Association of The Film Society Ltd.
- b) Certificate of Incorporation. 22 June 1925.

Item 2

Constitution and Rules of The Film Society Ltd.

Item 3

List of Members of 1927 - Listed as 'prominent' and 'ordinary' members.

Item 4 Council of The Film Society.

- a) Meeting notices and agendas 1926-1931. Council meeting agendas, bulletins, minutes. [INCOMPLETE].
 - b) 1934-1935.
 - c) 1938-1939.
 - d) Council film screening notices. 1931-1938.
 - e) Council correspondence. 1925-1939.
- Includes:

Letter from Heinrich Fraenkel accepting his election as an Honorary member of The Film Society in 1925.

Letter from Council to Adrian Brunei accepting his resignation from the Council. 7 January 1926.

Letter from Ivor Montagu to Council regarding his resignation as chairman of the Council. 29 November 1929.

Correspondence with Edmund Dulac regarding the future of The Film Society. 1931.

Letter from Basil Wright regarding proposal for post-screening parties. 1939.

Letter from E. McKnight Kauffer regarding his resignation from the Council. 18 November 1939.

ITEMS 5-7

Item 5

Programme Notes 1925-1939 (INCOMPLETE).

Note: A complete set of Film Society programmes can be found in the Library.

Item 6

Film Society Projects

- a) Correspondence on and invitations for Paul Leni exhibition of designs for film sets. 4 February 1926.
- b) Correspondence on and copy of speech from Pudovkin's address to The Film Society. 6 February 1929.
- c) Study Groups:-
 - Eisenstein Lecture. 19 November 1929.
 - Hans Richter Film Technique Seminar. 28 November 1929.
(See also. Item 37)
- d) Film scenario submissions. September 1932.
- e) Correspondence and film lists from film scout Harold Elvin. 1935.
- f) Correspondence regarding Anthony Asquith film project. 1939. A special film presentation to members on original films and remakes. *The INFORMER* (GB, 1926), and *The INFORMER* (US, 1935).

Item 7

La Sarraz Congress of International Independent Cinema.

6 September 1929.

- a) List of delegates.
- b) Schedule of events.
- c) Report on Assembly.
- d) Correspondence relating to conference. 1929-1930.

ITEMS 8-14

Item 8

100th Performance of Film Society 20 February 1938.

- a) Miscellaneous items relating to 100th performance including booklet, '*History of The Film Society, 1925-1938*', designed by E. McKnight Kauffer.
- b) Rough draft of background and a history of The Film Society, n.d.
- c) List of details relating to events to coincide with performance.
- d) Correspondence regarding the 100th performance. 1938.

Item 9

Membership information and leaflets for members

- a) Information regarding tickets and subscriptions, reduced subscription information, ticket stubs to Tivoli, New Gallery and a few guest ticket receipts, and correspondence regarding tickets. 1935.
- b) Press list and correspondence relating to press tickets. 1934-1935.
- c) Member notices 1934-1939.

Item 10

Member Survey 1939

Survey sent to former members in an attempt to find out why they have lost interest in The Film Society.

- a) Correspondence regarding survey.
- b) Draft of survey and results.

Item 11

Press clippings relating to The Film Society 1925-1995

Includes 1995 obituary for William D'Arcy Hart, solicitor for The Film Society.

Item 12

Theatres: New Gallery Kinema and the Tivoli, Strand

- a) Correspondence regarding the use of theatres for performances. 1929-1939.
- b) Invoices for New Scala Theatre. 1926. New Gallery. 1925-1927 (Programmes 1-32).

Tivoli. 1934- 1935
(Programmes 33-80).
New Gallery. 1936-1937
(Programmes 81-108).

Item 13

Music for performances of The Film Society

a) Correspondence regarding orchestras
and other music for performances.
1925-1934.

b) Invoices and receipts from
DeWolfe's regarding hire of orches-
tra. 1925-1935.

Item 14

Film Lists 1929-1932

a) Lists of films held by the Film
Society, correspondence regarding film
vault, 1929-1931, and other, miscella-
neous, correspondence 1925-1975.

b) Other film lists relating to the
Society.

ITEM 15

Item 15

Film Society Performances

Correspondence and other materials
related to films shown in the Film
Society's 108 Programmes during the
14 seasons from 1925-1939.

Performances 1-16
Seasons 1-2
1925-1927.

Performances 17-48
Seasons 3-6
1927-1931.

Performances 49-88
Seasons 7-11
1931-1936.

Performances 89-108
Seasons 12-14
1936-1939.

**The following list is of films shown by
the Film Society for which there is
related correspondence or other docu-
mentation (for example, a pressbook),
available.**

FIRST SEASON 1925-1926

- 1 **25 Oct**
OPUS II, III, IV (GE, 1922-1925)
HOW BRONCHO BILLY LEFT
BEAR COUNTY (US, 1912)
- 2 **22 Nov**
WHEN THE PRESS SPEAKS
(US, 1913)
the FATAL MALLET
(US, 1914)

der VERLORENE SCHUH
(GE, 1923)

- 3 **20 Dec**
MUGGINS, VC. (GB, 1909)
SECRETS OF NATURE: ANI-
MAL PROGRESSION (GB, 1922)
RASKOLNIKOV (GE, 1923)

- 4 **17 Jan**
the VALSE MEPHISTOPHILIS
OF LISTZ (FR, 1925)
PATHE FRERES SCIENTIFIC
SERIES: THE DYTISCUS AND
ITS LARVA (FR, 1910)
ENTR'ACTE (FR, 1924)

- 5 **14 Feb**
the WESTERN FRONT
(FR, 1919)
the LIFE OF A PLANT
(GB, 1926)
NJU (GE, 1924)

- 5 **14 Mar**
Williamson's Animated Gazette
la CIRCULATION DU SANG
(FR, 1912)
BALLETT MECANIQUE
(FR, 1924)
the SHERIFF'S BABY
(US, 1913)
the CABINET DES DR.
GALIGARI (GE, 1919)

- 7 **11 Apr**
Selections from the Gaumont
Graphic
FEU MATHIAS PASCAL
(FR.1925)

- 8 **30 May**
SECRETS OF NATURE: SEED
TIME (GB, 1926)
MACHI NO TEJINASHI
(JP, 1925)

SECOND SEASON 1926-1927

- 9 **24 Oct**
ORLACS HÄNDE (AT, 1925)
- 10 **28 Nov**
DR. MABUSE, DER SPIELER
(GE, 1922)
- 11 **19 Dec**
MARIA MARTEN, OR THE
MYSTERY OF THE RED BARN
(GB, 1913)
GREED (US, 1925)
- 12 **16 Jan**
HIGH JUMP (US)
the SPRINT (US)
EMAK BAKIA (FR, 1926)
die FREUDLOSE GASSE
(GE, 1925)

- 13 **13 Feb**
the COMMA BUTTERFLY
l' INHUMAINE (FR, 1924)

- 14 **13 Mar**
an X-RAY FILM
TILLIE'S PUNCTURED
ROMANCE (US, 1914)
SYLVESTER (GE, 1923)

- 15 **10 Apr**
POLIKUSHKA (SU, 1919)
CROSSING THE GREAT
SAGRADA (GB, 1924)
the TOWER OF LIES (US, 1925)

- 16 **8 May**
die ABENTEUER DES PRINZEN
ACHMED (GE, 1926)

THIRD SEASON 1926-1927

- 17 **16 Oct**
SYMPHONIE DIAGONALE
(GE, 1924)
RHYTHMUS (GE, 1922)

- 18 **13 Nov**
TECHNIQUE (GE)

- 22 **4 Mar**
BERLIN: DIE SINFONIE DER
GROSSTADT (GE, 1927)

- 24 **29Apr**
CHARLESTON (FR, 1927)

FOURTH SEASON 1928-1929

- 28 **13 Jan**
WEGE ZU KRAFT UND
SCHONHEIT (GE, 1925)
RIEN (FR, 1926)

- 31 **7Apr**
TOUR AU LARGE (FR, 1926)
SCARLETT RUNNER & CO

FIFTH SEASON 1929-1930

- 33 **10 Nov**
la CHUTE DE LA MAISON
USHER (FR, 1928)
BRONENOSETS POTYOMKIN
(SU, 1925)
OKTYABAR (SU, 1928)
(Also shown in Ninth Season)

- 34 1 Dec**
NURI THE ELEPHANT
(GE, 1928)
- 35 5 Jan**
HANDE (GE, 1929)
le VOYAGE DANS LA LUNE
(FR, 1902)
- 36 26 Jan**
JUJIRO (JP, 1928)
- 37 23Feb**
DIVERTISSEMENT VISUEL
(FR, 1929)
ROBERT BENCHLEY IN THE
SEX LIFE OF THE POLYP
(US, 1928)
POTOMOK CHINGIS-KHANA
(SU, 1928)
- 38 16 Mar**
SECRETS OF NATURE: DOWN
UNDER (GB, 1930)
- 39 6 Apr**
SPRINGTIME (US, 1930)
(See Item 30)
- 40 4 May**
MARKT IN BERLIN (GE, 1929)
SUMMER (US, 1930)
(See Item 30)

SIXTH SEASON 1930 -1931

- 41 19 Oct**
H20 (US, 1929)
FINDING HIS VOICE (US, 1930)
- 42 16 Nov**
SPELLBINDER (US, 1929)
DON DOUGIO (GB, 1930)
la PASSION DE JEANNE D'ARC
(FR, 1927)
- 43 14 Dec**
MEKHANIKA GOLOVNOVO
MOZGA (SU, 1925)
- 45 8 Feb**
IMAGES D'OSTENDE (BE, 1929)
the VILLAGE BARBER
(US, 1930)
Also, FLIP THE FROG (not shown)
- 46 8 Mar**
die FLEDERMAUS (GE, 1923)
- 47 12Apr**
RAIN (NL, 1929)
*Also, de BRUG (NL, 1928),
shown Programme 48*

- 48 3 May**
VELOCITA (IT, 1931)
NEGATIF (BE, 1930)
de BRUG *(See Programme 47)*
die DREI GROSCHEN OPER
(GE/US, 1931)
- SEVENTH SEASON 1931-1932
- 49 15 Nov**
AUTUMN (US, 1930),
(See Item 47)
ENTUZIAZM (SU, 1931)
- 50 6 Dec**
SHOULDER ARMS (US, 1918)
IN DER NACHT (GE, 1931)
WESTFRONT, 1918 (GE, 1930)
- 51 10 Jan**
MUSICAL ABSTRACT
(GE, 1932)
WINTER (US, 1930),
(See Item 47)
die ABENTEUER DES PRINZEN
ACHMED (GE, 1926),
(See Programme 16)
- 52 31 Jan**
BLUEBOTTLES (GB, 1928),
Note: Invoice dated 1935.
- 53 28 Feb**
BIRDS OF A FEATHER
(US, 1931), *See Item 47.*
MAEDCHEN IN UNIFORM
(GE, 1931)
- 55 17Apr**
LITTLE PEST (US, 1931)
der MORDER DIMITRI KARASOFF
(GE, 1931)

EIGHTH SEASON 1932-1933

- 57 30 Oct**
PIONEER DAYS (US, 31),
See Item 47

NINTH SEASON 1933-1934

- 66 19 Nov**
ANNA UND ELISABETH
GE, 1933)
- 69 11 Feb**
REIFENDE JUGEND (GE, 1933)
- 70 11 Mar**
OKTYABR (SU, 1928),
See material at Programme 33

TENTH SEASON 1934-1935

- 73 28 Oct**
JOIE DE VIVRE (FR, 1934)
der ZEBROCHENE KRUG
(AT, 1934)
WEATHER FORECAST
(GB, 1934)
DEUTSCHLAND ZWISCHEN
GESTERN UND HEUTE
(GE, 1934)
- 74 25 Nov**
das ROLLENDE RAD (GE, 1934)
une NUIT SUR LE MONT
CHAUVE (FR, 1933)
ZERO DE CONDUITE
(FR, 1933)
- 75 16 Dec**
la LEGENDE DU FANTOME
(PR, 1908)
ALL QUIET IN THE EAST
(FR, 1934)
the OIL SYMPHONY (SU, 1934)
the SONG OF CEYLON
(GB, 1934)
l'IDEE (FR, 1934)
- 76 13 Jan**
a DRESS AFFAIR (FR, 1908)
MY HAT (FR, 1909)
FATHER BUYS A CHIMNEY
POT (FR, 1910)
HOW TALKIES TALK (FR, 1934)
NACHTLICHE RUHSTORUNG
(AT, 1934)
SABRA (PL, 1934)
- 77 10 Feb**
AVE MARIA (FR, 1934)
CHAPAYEV (SU, 1934)
- 78 10 Mar**
WORKERS AND JOBS
(GB, 1935)
das GESTOHIENE HERZ
(GE, 1934)
DOOD WASSER (NL, 1934)
- 79 7Apr**
PECHEURS D'OISEAUX
(FR, 1934)
KIPHO (GE, 1926)
ITTO (FR, 1934)
- 80 12 May**
un TOUR DE LA LUNE
(FR, 1935)
ARABIE ET ISLAM (FR, 1934)
DOURO, FAINA FLUVIAL
(PT, 1931)
SHIPYARD (GB, 1935)
CROSSED PATHS (PL, 1935)

ELEVENTH SEASON 1935-1936

- 81 27 Oct**
COAL FACE (GB 1935)
TRI PESNI O LENINE
(SU, 1934)
- 82 24 Nov**
CRIME ET CHATIMENT
(FR, 1935)
- 83 15 Dec**
MAGIE DU FER BLANC
(FR, 1935)
l'ATALANTE (FR, 1934)
- 86 8 Mar**
GENTLEMEN IN TOP HATS
AND GENTLEMEN IN
CROWNS (SE, 1935)
GALATHEA (GE, 1935)
JOFROI (FR, 1933)
- 88 26 Apr**
KLEINES TIER GROSS
GESEHENI (GE, 1934)
TERRE D'AMOUR (FR, 1935)
MARCHAND D'AMOUR
(FR, 1936)

TWELFTH SEASON 1936-1937

- 89 22 Nov**
the PLOW THAT BROKE THE
PLAINS (US, 1936)
the EQUATION $X + X = 0$
(GB, 1936)
NOVYI GULLIVER (SU, 1935)
- 90 13 Dec**
MYEST KINEMATOGRAFICH
YEESKOVO OPERATOR
(RE, 1911)
Also, WHAT THE DAISY SAID
(US, 1910)
As screened in Programme 91
- 91 10 Jan**
WHAT THE DAISY SAID
(US, 1910), *See Programme 90*
la TOUR (FR, 1928)
la TENDRE ENNEMIE
(FR, 1936)
- 92 31 Jan**
HELENE (FR, 1936)
- 93 21 Feb**
HYAS, STENORINQUE,
SPIROGRAPHE
(FR, 1929) MY IZ KRON-
SHTADTA
(SU, 1938)

- 94 14 Mar**
le ROMAN D'UN TRICHEUR
(FR, 1936)
- 95 18 Apr**
HOW TO TRAIN A DOG
(US, 1936)
den HAAG (NL, 1936)
la VIE EST A NOUS (FR, 1936)

- 96 2 May**
POKOLENIE POBEDITELEIJ
(SU, 1936)

THIRTEENTH SEASON 1936 - 1937

- 99 23 Jan**
le MOT DE CAMBRONNE (FR,
1937)
- 101 13 Mar**
RAMUNTCHO (FR, 1937)

FOURTEENTH SEASON 1938 -1939

- 104 18 Dec**
the FACE OF SCOTLAND
(GB, 1938)
IGNACE (FR, 1937)
*Also, la FEMME DU
BOULANGER (FR, 1938),
Shown in Programme 106*
- 106 19 Feb**
la FEMME DU BOULANGER
(FR, 1938), *See Programme 104*
- 107 26 Mar**
PROFESSOR MAMLOCK
(SU, 1938)
- 108 23 Apr**
ALEKSANDR NEVSKI
(SU, 1938)

ITEMS 16-19

Item 16

Russian Films

- a) Correspondence regarding Russian films. 1926-1928. Including, J. S. Reynell correspondence regarding Russian films for Japan. 1928.
- b) List of Russian films and disclaimer by Film Society regarding political motives. n.d. [1930?]
- c) Soviet Film Propaganda memo issued by British Conservative Party Headquarters. n.d. [1930?]
- d) *Daily Express* article, 'Propaganda by Banned Films', includes letter of response defending The Film Society written by Edmund Dulac. 22 October 1930. With draft of letter by Ivor Montagu to *Daily Telegraph* regarding Russian films. n.d. [Never Sent.]
- e) Correspondence. 1930-1931.
- f) Correspondence. 1934-1937.
- g) Correspondence regarding Jay Leyda. 1935.
- h) Correspondence regarding a letter from Eisenstein to members of The Film Society about the war. 1941.

Item 17

Films from other countries.

- Correspondence regarding attempts to acquire films. Listed alphabetically as follows:
- a) Ceylon
b) China
c) France
d) Germany
e) India
f) Japan
g) Sweden
h) Turkey

Item 18

Miscellaneous correspondence:

- a) War films. 1925.
- b) Films for evacuated children. 1939-1940.
- c) French films for Polish sailors stationed in Britain. 1940.

Item 19

Films considered but not shown by the Film Society

- Correspondence. 1925-1939. (Listed alphabetically by film title).
- a CANCAO DA TERRA (PT, 1938)
- 1939**
ARABESQUE (FR, 1929)
- 1929**
BBC - DROITWICH (GB, 1935)
- 1936**
la BRIERE (FR, 1924)
- 1929**
CELOVEK IZ RESTORANA (SU, 1927)

1929

DON JUAN ET FAUST (FR.1922)

1925-1929

ERWACHEN DES WEIBES (GE, 1927)

1932

les FILMES EXOTIQUES (FR.1938)

les FLAGELLEES (BE 1938)

FRAGMENTS OF AN EMPIRE (SU 1930)

FRAULEIN ESE (GE, 1929)

1930

der GOLEM WIE ER IN DIE WELT

KAM (GE, 1920)

1926

un GRAND AMOUR DE BEETHOVEN (FR, 1936)

1937

the HOUSE IN DRAGONERSTRASSE (GE 1926)

L'IMAGE (FR, 1923)

1927

KRONIKA (PL, 1935)

LAJLA (FI.1938)

LIEBELEI (GE,1933)

1934

MAKA BIADA (PL, 1935)

the MILLERS DAUGHTER (CZ 1929)

MISERE AU BORINAGE (BE, 1933)

1936

NAHUMSOKOLOW (PL, 1935)

NOCTURNO (AT, 1934)

1935

QUAND ON A VINGT ANS (BE 1935)

ROMANCE SENTIMENTALE

(FR, 1930)

1931

SEASCAPE (STOCK FOOTAGE)

(GB, 1929)

a SHE DEVIL (GE, 1926)

la TAVOEA DEI POVERI (IT, 1932)

1936

TONENDE WELLE (GE, 1929)

TOTES WASSER (GE, 1935)

ITEMS 20-25

Item 20

London County Council

a) Correspondence regarding Sunday Entertainments Act, press shows for uncensored films, safety concerns with flammable film stock. 1925-1939

b) Correspondence regarding import duties on private societies. 1939.

Item 21

British Board of Film Censors (BBFC)

Correspondence, including details of Entertainment duty and Import duties on foreign films. 1925-1939. *Also*, STORM OVER ASIA (1930). • *See Items 16-19.*

Item 22

Board of Trade

a) Correspondence, including the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927. 1927-1939.

b) Tax receipts. 1934-1937.

Item 23

Taxes

a) Customs & Excise correspondence and receipts. 1925 - 1927.

b) Entertainment Duty on New Gallery Kinema performance returns. 1925-1927.

c) Income Tax correspondence and receipts. 1927-1939.

d) Entertainment Duty invoices and receipts. 1934-1935.

Item 24

Accounts

a) General meeting and annual financial reports for Annual reports. 1927-1939. (Incomplete.)

b) Account notices for members. 1929-1938. (Incomplete.)

c) Performance profit and loss reports. 1930 - 34. (Incomplete).

d) Profit and loss reports on Lotte Reiniger films.

e) Balance sheets. 1931-1934.

f) Miscellaneous financial summaries. 1930-1932.

Item 25

Accountants

a) Invoices and receipts from Evan Smith, Boothroyd & Co. 1926-1937.

b) Correspondence. 1930-1938.

c) Correspondence regarding research into accountants for The Film Society. 1975.

ITEMS 26-27

Item 26

Legal.

a) Correspondence with William D'Arcy Hart regarding the founding of the Film Society. September 1925.

b) Correspondence regarding the Company's Act of 1929.

c) Apology to The Film Society from *Sunday Express* for an inflammatory article printed 6 October 1925.

d) Lawsuit against *Sunday Pictorial* (1929).

e) Correspondence with Horace Samuel, a member of the Film Society, regarding questions about the finances of The Film Society. 1934-1935.

Item 27

Non-film related expenses

a) Invoices and correspondence 1925-1937.

b) Miscellaneous non-film expenses. 1926 -1936. Invoices and receipts listed alphabetically as follows:

Chelsea Copying Office. 1926-1936.

Durrants Press Cuttings. 1925-1937.

George Pulman & Sons Ltd. 1925-1937.

J. M. Harvey. 1925-1935.

The Jackson Press. 1925-1937.

John Waddington Ltd. 1925-1937.

The Kinematograph Equipment Co. Ltd. 1926-1936.

Roneo Limited. 1926-1936.

H. J. Ryman Ltd. 1925-1936.

W. H. Christian. 1925-1936.

c) Moving office and closing office. 1939.

d) Correspondence regarding a new account at Barclays. 1939-1975 and an overdraft at the Westminster Bank. 1938-1948.

ITEMS 28-30

Item 28

Film related expenses

Correspondence regarding subscriptions to film-related publications. 1928-1936.

Item 29

- a) Miscellaneous film-related invoices and receipts. 1925-1937.
b) Invoices and receipts for transport, titling and other film-related expenses for films shown by the Film Society.
Listed alphabetically as follows:-
Academy Cinema Ltd. 1939.
Air Union. 1925.
Alfred Imhof Ltd. 1934.
The American Company (London) Ltd. 1925-1927.
Arcos Ltd. 1934-1936.
Automatic Film Printers. 1926-1927.
Bonded Film Stores Ltd. 1926-1936.
Adrian Brunel. 1925-1927.
British Broadcasting Corporation. 1936.
Gale Printing Works. 1925-1927.
George Humphries & Co. 1926.
Harcourt Hammett & Co. 1925.
Holders Press Ltd. 1926.
Imperial Airways Ltd. 1925.
Northern Transport Agency (London) Ltd. 1927-1937.
Pathe Freres Cinema, Ltd. 1927.
The Strand Film Co. Ltd. 1937.
Transoceanic Forwarding Co. Ltd. 1926-1935.
Wm. H. Muller & Co. (London) Ltd. 1935-1937.

Item 30

Miscellaneous correspondence of the Film Society

- a) 1925-1929.
b) 1930-1934. Items include:-
Reduced Subscriptions. 1931.
Atlas Films. 1931.
Tatler Theatre. 1931.
Cinematograph Benevolent Fund. 1931.
c) 1935-1945. Items include:-
Correspondence regarding Paramount. 1935.
Correspondence with Academy Cinema, Unity Films and Elsie Cohen. 1939.
d) Secretaries to The Film Society. 1932-1935.
e) Programme suggestions, including correspondence with Jenny Brown in 1932. 1931-1934.

ITEMS 31-33

Item 31

Correspondence with and regarding

the following individuals:

- a) Pierre Braunberger. 1929-1931.
See also Item 15, Programme 24
b) Alberto Cavalcanti. 1929-1931.
c) Harry Lachman. 1929-1930.
See also Item 15, Programme 29
d) Hugh Miller. 1926-1977.
e) W.C. Mycroft. 1938-1939.
f) Lotte Reiniger. 1930-1940.
g) Paul Rotha.
h) B. G. D. Salt. 1938.
See also Item 15, Programme 89
i) Ralph Steiner. 1927.
Other material can be found at
Item 30e - Jenny Brown
Item 35c - Sidney Cole
Item 19 and Item 35g - Heinrich Fraenkel
Item 17d - Max Goldschmidt
Item 33 a - Symon Gould
Item 16h - Jay Leyda
Items 16a and 17f - J. S. Reynell
Item 6c and Item 37 - Hans Richter
Item 19 - James Simon

Item 32

Correspondence with other film societies and film-related organisations.

- Listed chronologically as follows:-
a) Commission on Educational and Cultural Films booklet on appeal for funds. 1930.
b) Leicester Film Society. 1931-1938.
c) Conference of Film Societies. 1932.
d) British Film Institute (BFI). 1934 - 1946. including booklet on aims and objectives of the BFI and correspondence regarding Advisory Council.
e) London Film Institute Society. 1935.
f) Scientific Films Committee. 1937-1940.
g) Society for Cultural Relations (S.C.R.) and Anglo-French Society. 1938.
h) Progressive Film Institute. Including correspondence with Eileen Montagu. 1938.
i) Phonographic Performance Ltd. including Sound rights for film societies. 1938.
j) Federation of Film Societies Conference. Including letter from Michael Balcon. 1939
k) The Children's Film Society, membership information, n.d.

Item 33

Correspondence with New York film organizations.

- a) Film Arts Guild, correspondence with Symon Gould. 1925-1931.
b) The Theatre Guild, Inc. 1925.
c) Film Associates, Inc. 1925.

ITEM 34

Item 34

Film Bookings for other film societies

- Invoices and receipts from distributors. 1926-1939.
Listed alphabetically as follows:-
Associated British Film Distributors Ltd. 1936-1937.
Beacon Film Distributing Co. Ltd. 1934-1935.
British Lion Film Corporation Ltd. 1934.
Butcher's Film Service Ltd. 1935.
Cecil Cattermoul Ltd. 1935-1937.
Celluloid Despatch Services. 1937.
Clifford Collinson. 1936.
Denning Films Ltd. 1936-1937.
Electra Films Ltd. 1934.
Equity British Films Ltd. 1936.
The Everyman Cinema Theatre. 1934.
Exclusive Films Ltd. 1936-1937.
Film-Kurier. 1936.
Filmophone Renters Ltd. 1934-1935.
Film Sales Ltd. 1937.
G.B.E. Equipments Ltd. 1935-1937.
Gasparcolor Ltd. 1936-1937.
Gaumont-British Distributors Ltd. 1937.
General Film Distributors Ltd. 1937.
Anthony Gross. 1935.
International Productions Ltd. 1936.
Kinograph Distributors Ltd. 1936-1937.
League of Nations Union. 1936.
Metro Goldwyn Mayer Pictures Ltd. 1935.
National Provincial Film Distributors Ltd. 1937.
Pathe Pictures Ltd. 1935.
Pathescope Ltd. 1934-1937.
Pioneer Exclusives. 1936-1937.
Radio Pictures Ltd. 1934-1937.
Reunion Films Ltd. 1935-1937.
Richmond Towers. 1937.
Studio Film Labs. Correspondence. 1938-1940. Invoices. 1934-1937.
Tobias Film Distribution Ltd. 1934-1940.
United Artists Corporation Ltd. 1936-1937.
Universal Pictures Ltd. 1934-1935.
Universe Film Services Ltd. 1937.
Wardour Films Ltd. 1934-1935.
Zeni Films. 1935-1936.

**PART II: MATERIAL FROM THE
SIDNEY BERNSTEIN COLLEC-
TION RELATING TO THE FILM
SOCIETY.**

ITEM 35

Item 35

**50th Anniversary of the Film Society
(October 1975)**

- a) Transcript of conversation between Ivor Montagu and Sidney Bernstein regarding planning of 50th Anniversary. 11 June 1975.
- b) Correspondence regarding planning events for anniversary, including letters between Sidney Bernstein and Ivor Montagu, Asa Briggs and British Federation of Film Societies. June 1974 - August 1975.
- c) Correspondence with Sidney Cole regarding planning 50th Anniversary. June 1975-October 1975.
- d) Correspondence regarding films to be shown. June-July 1975.
- e) Correspondence regarding photographs for 50th Anniversary display at the National Film Theatre. June 1971.
- f) Reception at the NFT for screening of *RASKOLNIKOV*, with planning information, costs and guest lists. 20 October 1975.
- g) Acceptance letters for reception, including correspondence from the following: Sidney Cole, Thorold Dickinson, Mary Dobson, Denis Forman, Heinrich Fraenkel, Paul Rotha and Basil Wright.
- h) Letters from those unable to attend reception.
- i) House of Lords Banquet Guest List. 21 October 1975.
- j) Correspondence and notes of overseas greetings for 50th Anniversary, including letters from the following: Rene Clair, Norman MacLaren and Len Lye. September-October 1975.
- k) Correspondence regarding proposal for television programme to coincide with 50th Anniversary of the Film Society. August -November 1975.
- l) Correspondence regarding article by Sidney Bernstein for *FILM*. July - September 1975.

ITEMS 36-37

Item 36

**Press clippings related to 50th
Anniversary**

- a) *FILM*. October-November 1975. Special issue devoted to the 50th Anniversary.
- b) *FILM*. December 1975, Issue 32. Article and photos from 50th Anniversary.
- c) *SIGHT & SOUND*. Autumn 1975. Article by Ivor Montagu about the Film Society.
- d) *THE LADY*. 20 November 1975. Article on the 50th Anniversary.
- e) Miscellaneous press clippings about the 50th Anniversary events.
- f) NFT Programme and information on screenings associated with 50th Anniversary. October 1975.
- g) British Federation of Film Societies (B.F.F.S.) Programme notes from a special programme devoted to the Film Society. 24 October 1975.
- h) Institute of Contemporary Arts (I.C.A) List of special screenings. October 1975.

Item 37

Hans Richter Film

Proposal for film based on a Richter film *EVERYDAY done* as part of a film society study group in 1929 thought to have been lost. Correspondence as follows:
a) 1975
b) 1976
c) 1977

See related material in Item 6c.

ITEMS 38-43

Item 38

**60th Anniversary of the Film Society
25 October 1985**

- a) Correspondence regarding Sidney Bernstein's speech at the National Film Theatre. September and October 1985.
- b) National Film Archive Programme of Film Society performances. October and November 1985.
- c) National Film Theatre (NFT) Programme with related film screenings from October and November 1985.
- d) *VARIETY* article about the 60th Anniversary of the Film Society. 30 October 1985.

Item 39

Transcript from radio programme

'The Running of Film Societies'. 24 March 1959.

Item 40

Book Proposal

Correspondence regarding idea for a book about the Film Society. 1970.

Item 41

Researchers

Correspondence regarding individuals doing research on the Film Society. 1977-1978.

Item 42

**Depositing films and record of the
Film Society with the BFI and the
National Film Archive**

Correspondence. 1946-1981.

Item 43

References to the Film Society

Copies of information from books relating to the Film Society.

ITEM 44

Item 44

Arno Press unauthorised book of programmes. 'The Film Society Programmes'

Correspondence.

- a) 1972
- b) 1974
- c) 1975
- d) 1976
- e) 1977-1978

NOTE: A copy of the book may be found in the Book Section of the Library

ITEM 45

Item 45

David Robinson manuscript.

'The Career and Times of the Film Society'

- a) Correspondence regarding commission to write a history of the Film Society. 1959 - 1963.
- b) Original manuscript complete in three leather binders.
- c) Copy of Robinson's manuscript, loose pages divided into 5 parts.
- d) Film research notes from Robinson manuscript, listed alphabetically by film title.

ITEM 46

Item 46

Publicity materials for films not shown

by the Film Society. 1925 -1939

Listed alphabetically by film title:

FILM TITLE (COUNTRY, DATE) **ITEM (bold)**

AIRPORT (GB, 1934)

Pressbook

BASSETSBURY MANOR (GB, 1936)

Pressbook

BESIDE THE SEASIDE (GB, 1935)

Press material

das BLAUE LIGHT (GE, 1932)

Synopsis of film from Rialto Theatre

BONNE CHANCE (FR, 1935)

Press material

BBC THE VOICE OF BRITAIN
(GB, 1935)

Pressbook

BUDAPEST SYMPHONY (Unknown)

Press release

BURGTHEATER (AT, 1936)

Academy Cinema press release

the CHANGING YEAR (GB, 1932)

B I P Films Brochure

CHAPTER AND VERSE (GB, 1936)

Booklet by Paul Rotha & publicity leaflet

Ie DERNIER MILLIARDIARE (FR, 1934)

Press release

Disney Productions (US, various)

Campaign book & press releases

the DRAGON OF WALES (GB, 1936)

Press release

ERISKAY(GB, 1935)

Press booklets

ENOUGH TO EAT (GB, 1936)

Press release

FREDLOS (DK, 1935)

Academy Cinema press release

FROM THE MANGER TO THE CROSS
(US, 1913)

Small poster, pressbook & press release

die GANZE WELT DREHT SICH UM LIEBE (AT, 1935)

Pressbook

GAS COUNCIL FILMS (GB, various)

Part of a school programme

GAUMONT BRITISH DISTRIBUTORS (GB, various)
Guide for exhibitors
 HEJRUP! (CS, 1934)
Synopsis, press releases and Czech pressbook
 HOW THE HIGHEST ALPINE ROAD WAS CONSTRUCTED (GB, C.I 1930)
Publicity booklet
 the IMMORTAL SWAN (GB, 1935)
Press book
 IN THE LAND OF THE SOVIETS (SU, 1935)
Press leaflet
 JUHA (FI, 1937)
Finnish pressbook
 Die JULIKA (AT, 1936)
Academy Cinema press release
 der KAISER VON KALIFORNIEN (GE, 1936)
German pressbook
 KAMET CONQUERED (GB, 1932)
Press material
 the KEY TO SCOTLAND (GB, 1935)
Press releases
 KING'S ENGLISH (GB, 1933)
See the CHANGING YEAR
 KLEIN DORRIT (GE, 1934)
Pressbook & synopsis
 KONFETTI (AT, 1936)
Press releases
 LEISE FLEHEN MEINE LIEDER (AT/GE, 1933)
Press release
 LEONTINES EHEMANNER (GE, c.1920)
Press leaflet
 das LIED DER SONNE (GE, 1933)
Press material
 LORNA DOONE (Unknown)
Exhibitor's campaign book
 LOT IN SODOM (US, 1932)
Clippings
 LUISE (GE, 1931)
Pressbook
 la MATERNELLE (FR, 1933)
55th Street Playhouse programme
 MEN AGAINST THE SEA (GB, 1936)
Press releases
 le MILLION (FR, 1931)
Synopsis
 MOSCOW NIGHTS (GB, 1935)
World premiere booklet. 6 November 1935
 MUSIC MYSTERIES SERIES (GB, c. 1930)
Press booklet

en NATT(SE, 1931)
Academy Cinema press release
 NIGHT MAIL (GB, 1936)
Pressbook
 l'ORDONNANCE (FR, 1933)
French synopsis
 OSTERREICHS ALPENSTRAND - DER SEMMERING (AT, 1936)
Press leaflet
 OUR DAILY BREAD (Unknown)
Press release
 PESNIOOSCAST'E (SU)
Synopsis
 POUR VOUS (FR/BE, c.1930)
French Press clippings
 PRAIRIE WINTER (GB/CA, 1935)
Press releases
 REMOUS (FR, 1934)
Synopsis & Press release
 REINEKE FUCHS (GE, 1937)
Synopsis & German press release
 R.EKA (CS, 1933)
Pressbook
 the RUGGED ISLAND (GB, 1934)
Press booklet
 RUSSIA TODAY (GB, c.1930)
Press release
 SARDINIA (GB, 1936)
Press releases
 der SCHIMMELREITER (GE, 1934)
Academy Cinema press release
 the SEA GOES BACK (GB, 1938)
Press release
 SECRETS OF LIFE (Series 1 & 2) (GB, 1934-1950)
Press booklet
 SECRETS OF NATURE (GB, 1922-1933)
Press booklet
 SICILY (GB, 1935)
Press releases
 SIGENDE JUGEND (Unknown)
Academy Cinema press release
 SNOW HOUNDS (GB)
Press release
 SO ENDETE EINE LIEBE (GE, 1934)
Press release
 SONG OF THE SKI (SE, c.1930)
Press release
 SO THIS IS LANCASHIRE (GB, 1935)
Press release
 SO THIS IS LONDON! (GB, 1936)
Press release & press notice
 the SPANISH EARTH (US, 1937)
Campaign booklet

STEEL (GB, 1936)
Pressbook
 der STUDENT VON PRAG (GE, 1935)
Synopsis
 a SYMPHONY OF THE SEA (GB, 1933)
See the CHANGING YEAR
 THUNDER OVER MEXICO (US, 1934)
Press material
 THY SERVANT THE HORSE (FR)
Press release
 TIANLUN (CN, 1935)
Pressbook
 TIERE SEHEN DICH AN! (GE, c.1930)
Poster & pressbook
 TONI (FR, 1935)
55th Street Playhouse Programme
 la TOUR (FR, 1928)
French press clippings
 TRENCK (GE/AT, 1932)
Pressbook & director's card
 TURKSIB (SU, 1929)
Synopsis
 UNDER THE WATER (GB, 1936)
Press release
 VANISHING SAILS (GB, 1935)
Press releases
 VERSPRICH MIR NICHTS (GE, 1937)
Berkeley Cinema Press Release
 VESYOLYE REBYATA (SU, 1934)
Pressbook
 VOM FEES ZUM MEER DER ELBESTROM (GE, c.1930)
Pressbook & press releases
 VOSTANIYE RYBAKOV (SU, 1935)
Pressbook
 ein WALZER UM DEN STEPHANSTRUM (AT, 1935)
Academy Cinema pressbook
 WHARVES AND STRAYS (GB, 1935)
Press release
 YOUNG THINGS (GB, 1934)
Press release

Note: Tape of radio interview with Sidney Bernstein discussing Film Societies, December 1975, has been placed in the Tape Store.
 Photographs used in the display at the National Film Theatre during the 50th Anniversary of the Film Society have been passed to BFI Stills, Posters and Designs, as have photographs, including negatives, taken during the 50th Anniversary reception at the National Film Theatre.

The following periodicals have been passed to the Periodicals Library:-

Film, October/November 1975

National Film Theatre Programme,
October 1975

National Film Archive Folders,
October/

November 1985

National Film Theatre Programme,
October/November 1985.

Related material can be found in the IVOR MONTAGU Collection.

Some of the publicity material in Item 15 and 46 was transferred from the Film Society Related Materials Sequence. Cards Related to these items have been removed from the Related Materials Index and are held in the Special Materials Unit. August 1995.

This list was compiled in April 1995 by Anna Fogg and revised in January 1996 by Saffron Parker. Scanned and corrected by Ian O'Sullivan (June 2007).