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Glasgow Film Theatre

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DIRECTOR: **KEN INGLES**

DEANNA DURBIN AND SHIRLEY TEMPLE AT GFT?

BT have sponsored a special season at GFT featuring the popular films of the Thirties.

"Going to the pictures" was one of the favourite pastimes of the 1930s: over two-thirds of Britain's population went to the cinema once a week or more. Filmgoing played a key role in the lives of many young people. Most films on our screens were from Hollywood, and British fans had strong preferences of their own among Hollywood stars and pictures. British films, however, enjoyed far greater popularity than their smaller numbers suggest.

Popular Cinema in the 1930s season sponsored by BT will feature films from Britain and Hollywood which were tremendously popular in their day but which are now rarely seen on the large screen.

GFT will bring back on screen stars such as: Deanna Durbin, Britain's biggest box office draw who became a role model for many youthful cinemagoers in the late 30s; Jessie Matthews, one of Britain's most popular home-grown stars who displays her gamine charms, breathtaking high kicks and diaphanous costumes in **Evergreen**; and a six year old Shirley Temple in **The Littlest Rebel**.

The season should be of particular interest to reminiscence groups, though the films will be popular with a wide audience. This season has been inspired by the collaboration of Annette Kuhn, Reader in Film and Television Studies, at Glasgow University. Funded by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, Annette Kuhn has been researching popular cinema in the 1930s, and trying to discover what audiences really thought about the films they saw.

gft

Popular Cinema in the 1930s

A short season of films
October - December 1992

"Going to the pictures" was one of the favourite pastimes of the 1930s: over two-thirds of Britain's population went to the cinema once a week or more; and filmgoing played a particularly key part in the lives of young people. Most films on our screens were from Hollywood, and British fans had strong preferences of their own among Hollywood stars and pictures.

But British made films enjoyed far greater popularity than their smaller numbers suggest.

This season comprises six films - from Britain and Hollywood - which enjoyed tremendous popularity in their day, but which are now rarely shown on the large screen.

The season is part of a research project funded by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland.
Annette Kuhn, Reader in Film and Television Studies, University of Glasgow.

FILMS

6 7 8 October *100 MEN AND A GIRL* (US 1937)

Deanna Durbin, Britain's biggest box office draw in the late 30s, charms Leopold Stokowski into helping her find sponsorship for the orchestra she has formed.

20 21 22 October *CAVALCADE* (US 1933)

Academy award winning adaptation of a Noel Coward play, tracing the life of a British family from the Boer War to 1933.

3 4 5 November *SUNSHINE SUSIE* (UK 1932)

Voted Best British Film of 1932 by readers of *Film Weekly*, this cheerful Viennese musical stars Renate Muller in a Cinderella tale of mistaken identity.

17 18 19 November *THE LITTLEST REBEL* (US 1935)

Tremendously popular with British audiences, Shirley Temple stars here as a six-year-old Southern belle in this American Civil War melodrama.

1 2 3 December *EVERGREEN* (UK 1934)

Gaumont's reply to the extravagant Hollywood musical, starring Jessie Matthews, who shared with Gracie Fields the title of Britain's most popular home grown star throughout the 30s.

15 16 17 December *THE GHOST GOES WEST* (US 1936)

Voted Best British Film of 1936 by *Film Weekly* readers, and starring the much loved Robert Donat as an impoverished Scottish aristocrat who sells the ancestral castle, complete with ghost, to an American millionaire.

Each film will be screened on three consecutive days: Tuesdays main evening, Wednesdays early evening and Thursdays matinée. Check GFT brochure for exact times.

SHARE YOUR MEMORIES

On Thursday 3 December, after the matinée screening of *EVERGREEN*, there will be an open workshop in cinema 2 where filmgoers of the 30s are invited to come along and share their memories. If you are unable to be there, but have memories you would like to share, please contact:

Annette Kuhn, Department of Film and Television Studies, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8QQ
Tel. 041 330 5162

TICKET OFFERS

Senior citizens: £1.80 all performances

Season Tickets: Full Price £16.80/Concession £13.80

Group Bookings: For details of special deals on group bookings call the box office, Tel. 041 332 6535.



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CAVALCADE (US, Fox, 1933, 109 mins)

Jane Marryot.....	Diana Wynyard
Robert Marryot.....	Clive Brook
Alfred Bridges.....	Herbert Mundin
Ellen Bridges.....	Una O'Connor
Fanny Bridges.....	Ursula Jeans
Joey Marryot.....	Frank Lawton
Edward Marryot.....	John Warburton

Director.....	Frank Lloyd
Original play.....	Noel Coward
Scenarist.....	Reginald Berkeley
Assistant director.....	William Tummel
Director of symbolism.....	William Cameron Menzies
Musical director.....	Louis de Francesco
Art director.....	William Darling

Noel Coward's play tracing the fortunes of a middle-class English family from the Boer War to the early 1930s stirred springs of memory and emotion in those who had lived through two wars. As a film, *Cavalcade* became one of the most successful Hollywood productions of the 1930s, critically acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic, and receiving Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Art Direction. Second only to *I'm No Angel* as the biggest US box-office draw of the season, the picture proved immensely popular with American as well as with British audiences. In Britain, it came out top in a 1934 nationwide poll among patrons of cinemas in the Odeon chain, while Clive Brook and the then unknown Diana Wynyard were highly rated in the *Picturegoer* readers' vote for best acting performances in films of 1933.

If present-day audiences might find *Cavalcade*'s nationalistic tone a little hard to take, there was certainly no such feeling among contemporary film critics, whose sole quibble, to the contrary, was that Coward's quintessentially British play had been passed over by the film industry. *Observer* critic Caroline Lejeune's response is characteristic:

"...I cannot think of any way in which the stage spectacle could have been better transferred to the screen. You miss colour, perhaps, and the screen seems at moments too small to hold the thrusting crowd of images. But on the whole, the sense of space and movement is wonderfully contrived. Close-ups are used not to interrupt, but to correlate the action. Crowd scenes, where a single American voice might break the illusion, are played silent against a fanfare of music. *Cavalcade* is the best British film that has ever been made, and it was made in America. It is a film that ought to make our producers go into corners and kick themselves. Why in the world couldn't we have

produced it in our own studios? Why must a couple of dozen British artists go half across the world to make a film of British life under a British director from a play by a British dramatist? There is all the difference in the world between a British film and a film made in Britain, and every day that we waste in trivialities makes it easier for America to cash in on that difference with all the resources at her command." (Observer, 19 February 1933)

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CAVALCADE (US, 1933, 109 mins)

Jane Marryot..... Jane Marryot
 Robert Marryot..... Robert Marryot
 Alfred Bridges..... Alfred Bridges
 Ellen Bridges..... Ellen Bridges
 Fanny Bridges..... Fanny Bridges
 Joey Marryot..... Joey Marryot
 Edward Marryot..... Edward Marryot

Director.....
 Original play.....
 Scenario.....
 Assistant director.....
 Director of symbolism.....
 Musical director.....
 Art director.....

Not Covert's play tracing the fortunes of a middle class English family from the First War to the early 1930s stands among the most successful half-century old productions of the 1930s, critically acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic, and receiving Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director and Best Art Director. Second only to 'In His Arms' as the biggest US box-office draw of the season, the picture proved immensely popular with American as well as with British audiences. In Britain, it came out top in 1934 nationwide box office figures of the Covert chain while 'Clive Brook' and the then unknown 'Diana Wynyard' were highly rated in the Pittsburgh market, vote for best acting performance in films of 1933.

If present-day audiences might find Covert's a nationalistic war a little hard to take, there was certainly no such feeling among contemporary film critics whose vote helped to the contrary, was that Covert's internationally British play had been passed over by the film industry. However critic Caroline L. Crane's response is characteristic:

"I cannot think of any way in which the stage spectacle could have been better translated to the screen. You see color, beauty, and the screen scene is moment to moment so well told the first time you see it. But on the whole the scene and movement is wonderfully conveyed. Popular Cinema in the 1930s is sponsored by BT 

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SUNSHINE SUSIE (UK, Gainsborough, 1932, 87 mins)

Susie.....	Renate Muller
Herr Hasel.....	Jack Hulbert
Klapper.....	Morris Harvey
Herr Arvay.....	Owen Nares
The Secretary.....	Sybil Grove

Director.....	Victor Saville
Photography.....	Mutz Greenbaum

Susie, a young woman with a mind of her own, goes to Vienna in search of a job. She succeeds in securing a post at a bank, by enlisting the friendship of door porter Herr Hasel, with whom she shares an interest in music. Having determinedly rejected the unsolicited advances of Klapper, the bank's manager, Susie makes the acquaintance of Arvay, one of the directors, believing he is no more than an office boy. Their romance blossoms in a beer garden, as Hasel conducts a party of glee singers. All misunderstandings are eventually ironed out, and Susie's ambitions to make her mark in life are achieved.

Adapted by Victor Saville from a stage musical success, *The Private Secretary*, *Sunshine Susie* is in fact a remake of a German film, *Die Privatsekretarin*, also starring Renate Muller. "Viennese musicals" were much favoured by British cinemagoers of the early 1930s, and the entertainment value of the unremittingly optimistic *Sunshine Susie* made it a tremendous box office success. It played for as long as a year in some cinemas, and the bright, catchy theme song, "Today I feel So Happy", became one of the best-known tunes of the day. Readers of the fan magazine *Film Weekly* voted *Sunshine Susie* the Best British Film of 1932.

It was also something of a breakthrough for British cinema. One of the earliest British-made sound films, it appeared at a time when the majority of local productions were highly uncinematic screen versions of West End plays. While the essentially "Continental" feel of this musical did not escape critical notice (Saville's debt to Lubitsch is mentioned more than once), it was almost as enthusiastically received by the critics as it was by the paying public.

"Like all stories of the musical comedy order, this one counts for little, but it is put over with a rhythm and a spontaneous gaiety which makes the story but a trifling consideration. It is purely in the treatment that the film scores so heavily. With obvious similarities to the Continental school it yet has much that is original. The music, for the first time in a British film, becomes an essential part of the action and has been applied with the utmost success, carrying the spectator along on a wave of sheer pleasure in the spirit of happiness and delicious nonsense which it imparts".

(*The Bioscope*, 9 December 1931)

"*Sunshine Susie* has come to Glasgow, and a British talkie has been produced which not only bears comparison with any foreign picture, but stands head and shoulders above the majority of them". (*Glasgow Daily Express*, 16 December 1931)

contd

Also:

PAISLEY CHILDREN'S HAPPY HUNTING GROUND (1929, 3 mins, silent, Scottish Film Archive)

A short film showing children enjoying a matinée show at the Alex Cinema, Paisley.

EVE'S FILM REVIEW, No. 503 (1931, 7 mins, silent, National Film Archive)

Eve's Film Review was a "cinema magazine" aimed especially at women, which featured regularly on programmes in British cinemas before the coming of talkies. This issue comprises five items, including a fashion piece on furs, and a review of women's sporting achievements.

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Photography.....
Director.....
Music.....
Cast.....

It was also something of a breakthrough for British cinema. One of the earliest British-made sound films, it appeared at a time when the majority of local productions were highly experimental sound versions of well-established silent film. The success of *Warning* led to a series of similar films, and the industry began to see the benefits of sound. The film was directed by Frank Rowland, and starred James Murray and Virginia Murray. It was a comedy, and featured a number of songs and dances. The film was well-received, and led to a number of similar productions. It was a significant step towards sound cinema in Britain.

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THE LITTLEST REBEL (US, Twentieth Century Fox, 1935, 70 mins)

Virgie Cary.....	Shirley Temple
Captain Herbert Cary.....	John Boles
Colonel Morrison.....	Jack Holt
Mrs. Cary.....	Karen Morley
Uncle Billy.....	Bill Robinson
Sergeant Dudley.....	Guinn Williams
James Henry.....	Willie Best
Abraham Lincoln.....	Frank McGlynn Sr.
Mammy.....	Bessie Lyle
Sally Ann.....	Hannah Washington

Captain Cary is called to the Civil War, leaving his wife and child, Miss Virgie, at home. The plantation falls into Yankee hands, Mrs. Cary's health fails, and the Captain risks passing back through enemy lines in order to be present at his wife's death and burial. He is discovered by a Northern officer, Colonel Morrison, who takes pity on Cary and helps him escape to safety with Miss Virgie. But the fugitives are caught, and Cary and Morrison sentenced to death. Miss Virgie, assisted by the devoted slave Uncle Billy, collect enough money from busking to travel to the nation's capital to make a personal appeal to Abraham Lincoln, whom the little girl persuades to grant a pardon.

Shirley Temple was tremendously popular with British cinema goers during the middle and late 1930s, topping the ratings at the British box office in 1936, 1937 and 1938. She was only seven years old on the release of *The Littlest Rebel*, a "reconciliation melodrama" in which the child star appears in a characteristic role as mediator - resolving adult disputes and bringing antagonists together. Her largest following in Britain seems to have been among women over twenty-one - suggesting that the innocent, cute and charming Shirley was the little girl every mother would have wanted: family snapshots of the time indicate just how widely imitated were the famous Temple corkscrew curls.

Contemporary critics, rarely evincing enthusiasm for Temple's films, nevertheless acknowledged her popularity with the ordinary cinemagoer - to the extent at times of offering explanations for the child star's appeal. As one writer loftily observed:

"Those who are given to the study of such things may have wondered why it is that, at a time when so much is being talked about the value of sex-appeal and glamour in the cinema, an extensive popularity contest should yet reveal a little girl of seven to be top of a list in which Miss Mae West finds herself eleventh and Miss Greta Garbo forty-fourth. Actually, this is not so surprising as it would at first seem, for Miss Shirley Temple is doing no more than maintain a phase which depends for its success on the very simplicity of its appeal and one which shows that the film-going public are by no means as sophisticated as they would have us believe" (*The Times*, 25 May 1936)

Also:

LAUNCH OF THE QUEEN MARY (UK, Universal News, 1932, 4 mins))
A newsreel item on the liner's launch from the Clyde shipyards.

A THOUSAND HAPPY DAYS (c1935, 6 mins)
An advertising short, featuring Tommy Handley and Mabel Constanduros, promoting laundry services.

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Miss Mary	Miss Mary
Colonel Morrison	Colonel Morrison
Captain Herbert Gray	Captain Herbert Gray
John Jones	John Jones
Jack Hob	Jack Hob
Kevin Morley	Kevin Morley
Bill Robinson	Bill Robinson
Carmel Williams	Carmel Williams
Sergeant Dudgey	Sergeant Dudgey
James Henry	James Henry
Arthur Lincoln	Arthur Lincoln
James Lyell	James Lyell
William Wainwright	William Wainwright
Miss Mary	Miss Mary
Colonel Morrison	Colonel Morrison
Captain Herbert Gray	Captain Herbert Gray
John Jones	John Jones
Jack Hob	Jack Hob
Kevin Morley	Kevin Morley
Bill Robinson	Bill Robinson
Carmel Williams	Carmel Williams
Sergeant Dudgey	Sergeant Dudgey
James Henry	James Henry
Arthur Lincoln	Arthur Lincoln
James Lyell	James Lyell
William Wainwright	William Wainwright

It is a very interesting and amusing film to watch. The plot is simple but it is well told. The film is a comedy and it is very funny. The film is a very good example of the type of film that was made in the 1930s. The film is a very good example of the type of film that was made in the 1930s.

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Comments by critics have often been enthusiastic for the film's light-hearted and humorous content. In the words of film critic James Berardinelli, the film is "a very good example of the type of film that was made in the 1930s."

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EVERGREEN (UK, Gaumont-British, 1934 90 mins)

Harriet Green.....	Jessie Matthews
Leslie Benn.....	Sonnie Hale
Maudie.....	Betty Balfour
Tommy Thompson.....	Barry MacKay
Marquis of Staines.....	Ivor MacLaren
Treadwell.....	Hartley Power
Lord Shropshire.....	Patrick Ludlow
Mrs. Hawkes.....	Betty Shale
Marjorie Moore.....	Marjorie Brookes

Director.....	Victor Saville
Art Director.....	Alfred Junge
Dance Director.....	Buddy Bradley

Harriet Green, having reached the pinnacle of popularity and fame on the stage, is about to marry the Marquis of Staines, when the father of her daughter emerges from oblivion to shatter her one big romance. Seeking refuge from shame by fleeing to a distant country, Harriet leaves the child with her loyal servant, Mrs. Hawkes. In seeking a stage career, the resemblance between adult daughter and her mother inspires press agent Tommy Thompson to have the one impersonate the other to delude the public into believing this is really an ageless Harriet Green. But the same sinister shadow that wrecked the mother's life soon threatens the daughter. In despair, she reveals the truth. But all ends happily: the unmasking of the deception frees her to accept Tommy's love.

For a good part of the 1930s, Jessie Matthews was high on the list of Britain's most popular homegrown stars. Her appeal was very much of its time - a blend of insouciance, sauciness, sentimentality, and coltish innocence: and *Evergreen* exploits these qualities to the full advantage. Based on the C. B. Cochrane stage production of the the same name, the film was produced by Gaumont-British, who promoted it on the strength of its extravagant production values ("exceptional expenditure and lavishness"; "rising and falling stages in the most modern fashion, turntables and other novelty devices, hundreds of gorgeous costumes and scenic effects conceived on a scale of exceptional grandeur").

The stunning production numbers were devised by Buddy Bradley, the American choreographer whose dance ideas were well ahead of his times, and the knowing performers of the musical comedy stage "flocked to the black teacher...He predated and may have influenced Busby Berkeley" (Marshall Stearns and Jean Stearns, *Jazz Dance*. New York: MacMillan, 1968). *Evergreen* was runner up in Film Weekly's Best British Film Awards for 1934, and remains Jessie Matthew's best-loved film.

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100 MEN AND A GIRL (US, Universal, 1937, 85 mins)

Patricia Cardwell.....	Deanna Durbin
John Cardwell.....	Adolphe Menjou
Mrs Frost.....	Alice Brady
John G Frost.....	Eugene Palette
Michael.....	Micha Auer
Leopold Stokowski.....	Himself

Director.....	Henry Koster
Story.....	Hans Kraly
Screenplay.....	Bruce Manning
	Charles Kenyon
	James Mulhauser
Assistant director.....	Frank Shaw
Musical director.....	Charles Previn

The "100 men" of the title are a group of unemployed musicians organised into an orchestra and managed by the girl, sixteen-year-old Patricia Cardwell (Deanna Durbin). In order to secure sponsorship for a radio contract, the orchestra must obtain the services of a well known conductor, and Patricia resolves to persuade Leopold Stokowski to step into the breach. After numerous setbacks, she finally succeeds in winning the great man's support. Deanna's four songs include Mozart's "Exultate Jubilate" and "Libiamo" from *La Traviata*; while Stokowski contributes such popular classics as Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody, Tschaiakowsky's Fifth Symphony, and Wagner's *Lohengrin*.

Following on the success of the Canadian soprano's first film, *Three Smart Girls* (1937), *100 Men and a Girl* was promoted on the "golden charm" of its star's youth. It proved a huge hit with British audiences, among whom Durbin was a firm favourite in the late 1930s: in 1939 she became Britain's biggest box-office draw, and a role model for the thousands of fans who idolised and identified with her. When, in the early 1940s, sociologist J P Mayer asked readers of *Picturegoer* to send him their "motion picture autobiographies", many of the replies spontaneously mentioned Deanna, and always in the most glowing terms (Mayer, *British Cinemas and their Audiences* (1948); *Sociology of Film* (1948):

"Deanna Durbin...not only inspires both young and old with the melody of her voice, but also has the power to stimulate and sustain me....When Deanna sings she seems to sing to me alone". (male, age 39)

"It was Deanna whom I have to thank for initiating me into my first attempt at curling my hair....Of course my mother had to be consulted, but she agreed with me that if it was all right for Deanna, then it should be all right for me...". (female, age 22)

"I wanted to be as much like her as possible, both in my manners and clothes....If I found myself in any annoying or aggravating situation..I found myself wondering what Deanna

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THE GHOST GOES WEST (UK, London Films, 1935 90 mins)

Murdoch Glourie/Donald Glourie.....	Robert Donat
Mr. Martin.....	Eugene Pallette
Peggy Martin.....	Jean Parker
Lady Shepperton.....	Elsa Lanchester
The MacGlaggan.....	Hay Petrie
Old Glourie.....	Morton Selten

Director.....	Rene Clair
Producer.....	Alexander Korda
Screenplay.....	Robert E Sherwood
Art director.....	Vincent Korda
Lighting.....	Harold Rosson
Music.....	Muir Matheson

Besieged by creditors, Donald Glourie, an impoverished young Scottish nobleman, sells his haunted ancestral castle to an American millionaire, Martin - whose daughter, Peggy, falls in love at first sight with both castle and owner. The ghost of Donald's ancestor, who closely resembles Donald, has been haunting the castle for centuries in search of a member of the hated MacLaggan clan upon whom to avenge the Glourie family honour. Martin has the castle taken apart and shipped, stone by stone, to the USA. Donald goes along, to supervise the reconstruction and to be close to Peggy - and so does the ghost....

This, Rene Clair's first English language film, stars popular romantic lead Robert Donat as "the ghost who had a way with the ladies". Voted Best British Film of 1936 by readers of *Film Weekly*, and nominated Most Popular British Film of 1936 by the film trade paper *Kine Weekly*, *The Ghost Goes West* was rated highly by critics and public alike. One of its attractions was clearly the international flavour of the Korda/Clair collaboration, which intrigued more than one commentator:

"The fusion of Rene Clair's particularly French gift for irony, wit and caustic perceptiveness with Korda's talent for diagnosing the international market, his courage in defying tradition and the rules of the trade has accomplished a film of irresistible merit....For once in a long while we see Scotland sunkissed and pastoral. The misty and rugged landscapes, such as Hollywood would have insisted on, are for once quite banished from a Scottish film".

(Sunday Times, 28 December 1935)

contd. over/