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Contacts:

Shari Gasper | Director of Communications and Editorial Content | sgasper@overture.org | 608.443.1756

Mary Cait McManamon | Social Media and Editorial Content Manager | mmcmanamon@overture.org | 608.665.9367

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2024/25 Duck Soup Cinema silent film series explores the theme of illusion versus reality

TICKETS GO ON SALE FRIDAY, SEPT. 6 AT 11 A.M. AT OVERTURE.ORG

Madison, Wis. (Sept. 3, 2024) — Relive the magic of silent cinema and indulge in an evening of laughter, music and nostalgia at [Duck Soup Cinema](#). The three-show silent film series—starting with “[The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari](#)” on Saturday, Oct. 5—transports you back in time to the captivating world of silent film in the historic Capitol Theater.

Nationally known for providing an authentic silent film experience, Duck Soup Cinema includes local vaudeville entertainment with an emcee, door prizes and a classic feature film. A skilled organist

masterfully plays live organ accompaniment on Overture's original Grand Barton Organ, mirroring the actors' emotions, just as it was done in 1928.

This season, Duck Soup Cinema takes you on an adventure through the theme of illusion versus reality, highlighting how our perceptions can shape our understanding of the world. "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" uses striking visuals to reflect a distorted mind, creating an unsettling atmosphere of reality just in time for Halloween. "Yes or No" delves into the complexities of truth and deception, challenging viewers to consider the ambiguity of what they see. "The Dragon Painter" tells the story of an artist whose passion blurs reality and imagination, demonstrating the power of creativity. Together, these films offer a compelling look at how our minds shape our experiences, making this season a thought-provoking journey into the world of silent cinema.

Duck Soup Cinema is curated by James Kreul. Jelani Eddington and Clark Wilson are the featured organists, and Joe Thompson returns as emcee.

Tickets (\$12 for adults, \$4 for ages 12 and under) go on sale Friday, Sept. 6 at 11 a.m. at overture.org. Join the [Duck Soup Cinema Club](#) by purchasing a **package (\$30)**, which includes tickets to all three Duck Soup Cinema shows, priority seating and email newsletters with fun facts about each title.

2024/25 DUCK SOUP CINEMA LINEUP:

[The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari](#)

Saturday, Oct. 5, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Robert Weine | Germany | 1920 | 75 minutes

Print provided by Kino Lorber

It's spooky season, and what better way to celebrate than with "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari"? This film invites you into a creepy little German town where a string of murders has everyone on edge. Enter the mysterious Dr. Caligari and his hypnotic carnival act. Is he behind these grisly crimes? The film's twisted visuals match its psychological drama, making it a standout in the world of German Expressionist cinema. Roger Ebert called it "the first true horror film," and it's easy to see why. The eerie style influenced everything from art cinema to American film noir. You're in for a night of chills, thrills and, of course, incredible live music from organist Clark Wilson.

Organist: Clark Wilson

Emcee: Joe Thompson

Vaudeville: Wayne the Wizard

Lobby Act: Doc the Rube

Suggested for ages 13+

Costumes welcome.

[Yes or No](#)

Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Roy William Neill | USA | 1920 | 72 minutes

Print preserved by The Library of Congress

What's the truth, and what's just a clever illusion? "Yes or No" dives into that very question with a captivating story that'll keep you guessing. Starring the fabulous Norma Talmadge in not one, but two roles, this film is a hidden gem of the 1920s. Talmadge effortlessly shifts from a wealthy lady to a

humble country girl, showing off her versatility as one of the era's brightest stars. We're thrilled to have Professor Emerita Lea Jacobs from UW-Madison with us to introduce the film and lead a brief discussion afterward. Her knowledge and passion for silent cinema make this a must-see event for film buffs!

Organist: Clark Wilson
Emcee: Joe Thompson
Vaudeville: Stephanie Richards
Lobby Act: Wayne the Wizard

[The Dragon Painter](#)

Saturday, May 3, 2025, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

William Worthington | USA | 1919 | 53 minutes

Print provided by Kino Lorber and the San Francisco Silent Film Festival

Get swept away by the haunting beauty of "The Dragon Painter." Starring the incredible Sessue Hayakawa, this film tells the tale of Tatsu, a passionate artist who loses himself in his art—literally! Believing his beloved princess has been captured by a dragon, Tatsu's obsession blurs the lines between reality and fantasy. This is more than just a love story; it's a piece of cinematic history. Once thought lost, "The Dragon Painter" is a treasure of Asian-American film that you won't want to miss. Come see for yourself why Sessue Hayakawa was a true star of the silent era!

Organist: Jelani Eddington
Emcee: Joe Thompson
Vaudeville: Beni Daiko Taiko Drumming
Lobby Acts: Doc the Rube and Wayne the Wizard

NOTE: As these films were released nearly a century ago, some films may depict theatric and social conventions of the time related to race, gender, socio-economic status and identity which are unacceptable. In response to and in alignment with our justice, equity, diversity and inclusion commitments, we will be providing pre- and post-show resource material exploring key topics throughout the season.

OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS in Madison, Wis., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization that features seven state-of-the-art performance spaces and four galleries where national and international touring artists, nine resident companies and hundreds of local artists engage people in more than 500,000 educational and artistic experiences each year. Overture's mission is to support and elevate our community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts. overture.org

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