



## PROJECTING THE ARCHIVE

# Carnival

### Carnival

Director: Herbert Wilcox  
Production Company:  
British and Dominions Film Corporation  
Producer: Herbert Wilcox \*  
Assistant Director: James G. Kelly  
Adaptation: Donald Macardle  
Dialogue: Donald Macardle  
Based on the play by: Matheson Lang,  
C.M. Hardinge \*  
Photography: F.A. Young  
Editor: P.M. Rogers  
Settings and Decor: Doris Zinkeisen  
Art Director: L.P. Williams  
Theatrical Costumes: Doris Zinkeisen  
Modern Dresses: Lady Victor Paget Ltd  
Music Performers on Soundtrack: Alfred Rode and  
His Royal Tzigane Band \*  
Recording: L.E. Overton  
Cast:  
Matheson Lang (*Silvio Steno*)  
Dorothy Bouchier (*Simonetta Steno*)  
Joseph Schildkraut (*Count Andrea Scipio*)  
Lilian Braithwaite (*Italia*)  
Kay Hammond (*Nella*)  
Brian Buchel (*Lelio*)  
Dickie Edwards (*Nino*)  
Brember Wills (*stage manager*)  
Alfred Rode and His Royal Tzigane Band  
(*performers at carnival*)  
Joan Pereira  
Edith Savile  
UK 1932  
87 mins  
35mm

\* Uncredited

A BFI National Archive print

+ intro by Josephine Botting, Curator, BFI National Archive

To mark 25 years since the death of British screen superstar Dorothy 'Chili' Bouchier, we present a rare outing of this archive print with beautiful stencil colour sequences. This Venice-set drama revels in the lavish spectacle of the carnival, enhanced by stunning sets and costumes by renowned artist and theatrical designer Doris Zinkeisen. Matheson Lang plays a celebrated actor convinced of his wife's infidelity and so consumed with jealousy that he plots her murder during a performance of *Othello*. Bouchier's affecting performance as a woman trapped in a stifling marriage saw her labelled the 'British Garbo'.

[bfi.org.uk](http://bfi.org.uk)

Carnival time in Venice!

Time of romance, laughter and song, everyone is carefree and happy and the happiest of all perhaps are Silvio Steno and his wife Simonetta, they are actors and are about to present *Othello* in Venice during Carnival time.

Silvio's sister, jealous of Simonetta, warns Silvio that she is attracting the attentions of young Count Andrea. On the night of the Carnival ball, Silvio is called away to a dying friend. Simonetta is disappointed and accepts Andrea as an escort. The intrigue that follows is most exciting.

Press notes

A sound remake of the 1921 silent original (d. Harley Knoles), this also stars Matheson Lang as jealous actor Silvio Steno, but with a different supporting cast and director, this time Herbert Wilcox. And while the first film was entirely shot on location in Venice, the remake is much more studio-bound, using stock footage of Venice and the Carnival (including some hand-tinted firework displays in the BFI National Archive print) intercut with the main action.

There's also a marked difference in style – whereas the first film was staged almost entirely in long shot (the better to show off the locations), the remake relies much more on medium shots and especially close-ups, meaning that what it lacks in visual splendour it makes up for in terms of intimacy: we get to know the characters in a way that we never quite managed with the silent version, especially when it comes to the crucial central relationship between Silvio and Simonetta.

Since the remake has a virtually identical plot to the 1921 original, it's worth noting some key differences. The sound version has a somewhat Hitchcockian opening whereby Simonetta appears to be strangled in close-up before we're informed that it's only a rehearsal; there's rather more emphasis on Simonetta's eagerness to spruce herself up before Andrea's visit; Lelio has an unnamed girlfriend that he's trying to impress; there's no previous reference to Silvio's master Donati before his telegram arrives (making his excuse for missing the Carnival seem rather perfunctory); there's a recurring motif of Silvio looking across the canal at a neon sign announcing his stage appearance; as he is contemplating hitting Andrea backstage, Silvio recalls his earlier dismissal of *Othello*'s jealousy as being psychologically implausible, which stays his hand; the final reconciliation between Silvio and Simonetta is much more emphatic.

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AND  
SOUND**

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Tue 10 Sep 18:15

**Film Wallahs: Preview: Girls Will Be Girls + intro**  
Thu 12 Sep 18:00

**Silent Cinema: Poil de carotte + intro by Bryony Dixon, curator, BFI National Archive**  
Sun 15 Sep 15:00

**Woman with a Movie Camera: SNAPSHOT: Short films + Q&A**  
Tue 24 Sep 18:10

**Restored: Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid + intro by Jason Wood, BFI Executive Director of Public Programmes & Audiences**  
Tue 24 Sep 19:30

**Experimenta: Film Repatriation and New Relational Possibilities: An Illustrated Talk by Xavier Pillai**  
Wed 25 Sep 18:15

**African Odysseys: Claude McKay, from Harlem to Marseille + intro and panel discussion (guests tbc) hosted by actor-director Burt Caesar**  
Sat 28 Sep 14:00

**Relaxed Screening: This Is Going to Be Big + discussion**  
Mon 30 Sep 18:10

Another difference is that there's rather less Shakespeare on offer here – while the 1921 version made use of several scenes from the earlier part of the play, chosen for the resonance of their lines in the context of the backstage drama, in the remake this has almost entirely been replaced by Desdemona's Willow Song, presumably because of the opportunities it provided for a musical interlude. This comes at the price, though, of losing a greater level of integration between play and film.

Michael Brooke, BFI Screenonline, [screenonline.org.uk](http://screenonline.org.uk)

Born Dorothy Bouchier in London in 1909, Chili Bouchier took the name under which she generally appeared from the song 'I Love My Chili Bom-Bom', had the good fortune to live long enough to become a legend of British cinema, with the publicity and the claims in her 1996 autobiography *Shooting Star* far out-stretching her minor importance in films and on stage. However, she did exude a vibrant personality that kept her career alive.

Husband 1 of 3 was actor Harry Milton (b.London, 1900 - d.1965), who appeared in a few 30s films, including *The King's Cup* (1933), with Bouchier, and her second was actor Peter de Greef, who played Jean Kent's boyfriend in *Champagne Charlie* (d. Alberto Cavalcanti, 1944). She died in 1999.

Brian McFarlane, *Encyclopedia of British Film*, quoted on BFI Screenonline, [screenonline.org.uk](http://screenonline.org.uk)

## MARTIN SCORSESE SELECTS HIDDEN GEMS OF BRITISH CINEMA

### Shooting Stars

Sun 1 Sep 11:30; Mon 9 Sep 20:40

### Brief Ecstasy

Tue 3 Sep 18:30; Wed 11 Sep 20:35

### The Man in Grey

Fri 6 Sep 18:10; Tue 17 Sep 20:40

### This Happy Breed

Fri 6 Sep 20:40; Tue 24 Sep 18:00

### The Seventh Veil

Sat 7 Sep 15:10; Wed 25 Sep 20:40

### Green for Danger

Sun 8 Sep 15:40; Thu 26 Sep 20:55

### It Always Rains on Sunday

Sun 8 Sep 18:10; Fri 27 Sep 20:50

### Hue and Cry

Sat 14 Sep 20:30; Mon 30 Sep 18:15 (+ intro by Josephine Botting, Curator, BFI National Archive)

### Uncle Silas

Sat 14 Sep 18:20

### Terence Fisher Double Bill: To the Public

#### Danger + Stolen Face

Sun 15 Sep 18:10; Tue 1 Oct 20:30

#### Mandy

Mon 16 Sep 18:35; Sat 28 Sep 12:20

#### Yield to the Night

Fri 20 Sep 18:00; Sat 28 Sep 15:10

### The Flesh and the Fiends

Sat 21 Sep 14:50; Wed 2 Oct 20:40

### The Damned

Sat 21 Sep 20:40; Fri 4 Oct 18:30

### Station Six Sahara

Sun 22 Sep 12:30; Sat 5 Oct 16:00

### The Mind Benders

Sun 22 Sep 18:00; Wed 2 Oct 18:20

**Went the Day Well?** + intro by James Bell, Senior Curator, BFI National Archive

### Mon 23 Sep 18:20

### The Pumpkin Eater

Fri 27 Sep 18:00; Sun 6 Oct 15:00

### Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde

Sat 28 Sep 18:10; Thu 3 Oct 18:15 + intro by Sam Clemens, son of Brian Clemens

### The Legend of Hell House

Sat 28 Sep 20:40; Mon 7 Oct 18:20

### Guns at Batasi

Sun 29 Sep 18:20; Sat 5 Oct 18:20

### With thanks to

Martin Scorsese and Edgar Wright