


HIPPODROME
silent film festival
celebrating film with live music
WEDNESDAY 16 - SUNDAY 20 MARCH 2022
BOX OFFICE: 01324 506850 | HIPPFEST.CO.UK



The Unknown © 1927 WBEI

Gender Rebels (Double Bill)

The Night Rider (1920) and Rowdy Ann (1919)

Friday 18 March 2022

Performing Live: Meg Morley

Introduction: Pamela Hutchison

Cinema's First Nasty Women is a brand-new 4-disc DVD/Blu-ray set from Kino Lorber (May 2022) featuring rarely-seen silent films about feminist protest, anarchic slapstick destruction, and suggestive gender play. The collection includes 99 silent films from 13 international film archives. Though made over a hundred years ago, the films in this collection speak vividly to contemporary feminist politics.

To be a #NastyWoman means refusing to be silenced while embracing the messiness of gender and engaging as an energetic participant in feminist political life. The term was popularised when a certain US presidential candidate called his opponent a “nasty woman” at a televised debate in 2016, but then quickly went viral, resonating with the furious ethos of twenty-first century feminist movements. We have prioritised films that have for too long remained inaccessible, unpreserved, unscored, untranslated, and widely unseen. Co-curators Maggie Hennefeld and Laura Horak have selected two of their favourites, about gender hijinks in the Wild West, for us to showcase.

***The Night Rider* (US, 1920)**

Unable to apprehend the rustlers stealing her cattle, gun-toting ranch owner Texas Blake (played by famous film actress and Broadway star Texas Guinan) takes the advice of local cowboys. They implore her to marry a man to run the ranch instead of taking the reins herself. “I never met a man yet fit for a husband, but I’m going to take your advice and get married,” she declares before chasing down an unwilling groom and forcing him to marry her at gunpoint. It’s clear from the outset who will be wearing the pants in this relationship. But a brawl breaks out when Texas learns that she has inadvertently married one of the cattle thieves. Luckily the man who performed the marriage is also a thief, so she gives them both the heave-ho and sets her sights on someone new. Guinan played heroic cowgirls in films throughout the 1910s, and in 1921 formed her own production company. She later became New York’s legendary Prohibition-era “Queen of the Nightclubs”.



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Rowdy Ann (US, 1919)

Played by lesbian actress Fay Tincher, cowgirl “Rowdy Ann” lassos her dad from the saloon, beats her suitor “Handsome Hank” in boxing, and shows off her gunmanship whenever she gets a chance. Her parents send her to a women’s college “to learn to be a lady!” On the train there, she terrorises a Black porter who mistakes her sleeping cabin for his wife’s. At the college, she shows up to Isabela Duncan-style barefoot dancing classes wearing cowboy boots and a gun slung around her waist, but she soon makes friends. Her lasso skills come in handy once more as she saves a classmate from a dire fate. No heterosexual coupling here--the film ends with a three-way girls pillow fight! Tincher worked continuously from 1912 to 1928, appearing in more than 160 films. She ran her own company for a year-and-a-half starting in 1918 and lived to the age of 99.

Event Co-curated by **Laura Horak** (Director of the Transgender Media Lab, Associate Professor of Film Studies, Carleton University; author of *Girls Will Be Boys: Cross-Dressed Women, Lesbians, and American Cinema*) and **Maggie Hennefeld** (Associate Professor, Cultural Studies & Comparative Literature, University of Minnesota; author of *Specters of Slapstick* and *Silent Film Comediennes*).

With an introduction by **Pamela Hutchinson** - a freelance writer, critic and historian, specialising in silent and classic cinema. Pamela is the founder of silentlondon.co.uk and the author of the BFI Classic: *Pandora's Box*.

The Night Rider:

Director. Jay Hunt | Photography. E.G. Dyer. | Production Company. Reelcraft Pictures Corporation | USA | 1920 | N/C U | English intertitles | 25m Digitised in 2K from a tinted 16mm reduction print held by Lobster Films.

With Cast: Texas Guinan (*Texas Blake*), T. N. T. Harvey (*Dick Carlton*).

Rowdy Ann:

Director. Al E. Christie | Scenario. Scott Darling | Production Company. Christie Film Co. | Premiere: May 12, 1919 | USA | 1919 | N/C U | English intertitles | 24m | Digitized in 2K from a tinted 35mm nitrate print held by the Library of Congress.



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With: Fay Tincher (*Rowdy Ann*), Katherine Lewis (*The Heiress*), Margaret Gibson [Patricia Palmer] (*Ann's Roommate*), Eddie Barry (*Professor Leavitt*), Al Haynes (*Handsome Hank*), Edgar Blue [Blue Washington] (*The Porter*).

Screening material courtesy of **Kino Lorber**

BSL-English supported event

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