BAMcinémathek presents the New York premiere of *The Hitchcock 9*, a monumental series of stunning new restorations of the nine surviving silent films by Alfred Hitchcock, Jun 29—Jul 3

With live scores by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra and acclaimed silent film accompanists Stephen Horne and Steve Sterner

Opening weekend screenings on the new Steinberg Screen at the BAM Harvey Theater

*The Wall Street Journal* is the title sponsor for BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinémathek.

Brooklyn, NY/Apr 25, 2013—From Saturday, June 29 through Wednesday, July 3, BAMcinémathek is proud to kick off the national tour of *The Hitchcock 9*, a series featuring groundbreaking, all-new restorations of the nine surviving silent films directed by the master of suspense. Like the Chicago Seven or the Hollywood Ten, the Hitchcock 9 were victims of injustice—available for decades only on murky public domain cassettes and discs. Beginning in 2010, the British Film Institute undertook its most ambitious restoration project to date: to rescue these vital works, which entailed scouring archives across seven countries to compile definitive versions of each. All of the films will be shown in new restorations on DCP, with newly commissioned scores. The opening weekend’s screenings will be presented on the new Steinberg Screen at the 834-seat BAM Harvey Theater, a restored movie palace that now boasts state-of-the-art film projection and sound. Live accompaniment will be provided by the Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra, a chamber quintet dedicated to reviving the silent film music tradition, as well as acclaimed silent film accompanist Stephen Horne. Renowned pianist Steve Sterner will provide accompaniment for screenings in BAM Rose Cinemas. The *Hitchcock 9* touring festival is a joint venture of the BFI (British Film Institute), Park Circus Films, and Rialto Pictures.

Though revered foremost for his dark, sexually charged postwar suspense (*Rear Window*, *Vertigo*) and horror films (*Psycho*, *The Birds*), Hitchcock developed the blueprint for his trademark thrillers as early as 1926 with *The Lodger* (Jun 30) and a few years later with *Blackmail* (1929—Jun 29). He also explored genres to which he would rarely return, making uncharacteristic forays into comedy, romantic melodrama, even sports—films that nevertheless amply display the nascent “Hitchcock touch.” More obviously influenced by German expressionism and Soviet editing than his later films, the Hitchcock 9 are suffused with striking montages, compositions, and camera moves that place them among the most accessible and most ambitious of silent movies.

Like many aspiring filmmakers of his generation, Hitchcock entered the industry in his teens, first as an illustrator of title cards, then as an art director and an assistant director. As an apprentice to director Graham Cutts, he wandered the sets of Fritz Lang’s epic *Die Nibelungen* and sought advice from F. W. Murnau. It was in Munich and Italy that Hitch filmed his first two films, beginning with *The Pleasure Garden* (1926—Jul 3), a torrid chronicle of the stormy, violent romantic lives of a showgirl and her less worldly friend. Returning to England after *The Mountain Eagle* (1926), which remains lost, Hitchcock recalled his childhood fascination with
true crime and crafted *The Lodger*, the story of a Jack the Ripper-like serial killer who stalks blondes through the London fog. Hitch, who made the first of his amusing on-screen cameos here, called it “the first true Hitchcock film.” The kooky, atmospheric *The Lodger* was hailed by critics but tooarty for studio execs, who steered Hitch toward more commercial fare.

*Downhill* (1927—Jul 1) reunited the director with Ivor Novello, who plays a disgraced public school rugby star turned taxi driver in Paris. Hitchcock undermined the hand-wringing with humor, nightmarish dream sequences, and early feints at his signature transference-of-guilt and “wrong man” themes. In *Easy Virtue* (1927—Jul 2), based on the Noël Coward play, Hitchcock again worked out a series of dazzling trick shots, even taking over the camera when his own cinematographer fell ill.

Unhappy at Gainsborough, his home studio, Hitchcock moved to British International Pictures, which gave him greater latitude but allowed him to retain his creative brain trust (chiefly writer Eliot Stannard, cameraman John J. Cox, and all-purpose advisor Alma Reville, who was also his wife). A sports enthusiast, Hitchcock undertook a boxing story with a fairground backdrop as his first original screenplay. “As dark and velvety as a Fritz Lang epic,” according to his biographer Pat McGilligan, *The Ring* (1927—Jun 29) has been cited by many (including Michel Hazanavicius, director of *The Artist*) as Hitchcock’s finest silent. Iris Barry called it “the greatest production ever made” in England.

Next came the delightful rustic comedy *The Farmer’s Wife* (1928—Jul 2), in which a widower’s bumbling search for a new mate refracts Hitchcock’s own timidity around women. Given just the title *Champagne* (1928—Jul 3) and his star, light comedienne Betty Balfour, Hitchcock wrote a bubbly shipboard romance “on the backs of envelopes,” then set about devising ways to film scenes through wine glasses. Perhaps the pinnacle of Hitchcock’s silent oeuvre, *The Manxman* (1929—Jun 30), an adaptation of the bestselling novel, is a moody love triangle set on the remote, windswept Isle of Man (but filmed on the Cornwall coast).

With *Blackmail*, his final silent film, Hitchcock assembled many of his enduring obsessions—sexual predation, the fear of false accusation, the dehumanizing processes of law enforcement—into a prototypical thriller that would serve as a template for many of his masterpieces. A new collaborator, 23-year-old Michael Powell (*Peeping Tom*), hit upon the idea of a climactic chase across a famous monument (the British Museum), an iconic Hitchcock motif that appeared in *Saboteur* and *North by Northwest*. Although Hitchcock saw the handwriting on the wall and shot *Blackmail* so that it could be quickly converted to a part-talkie, it is the less widely seen, fully silent version that screens in this series.

Due to the haphazard nature of silent film preservation, the BFI began the process with wildly varying elements of each of the Hitchcock 9 and faced a diverse set of challenges with each restoration. The original camera negative survives for three of the films—*Champagne*, *The Manxman*, and *Blackmail*—but each required complex repairs; a missing scene from *The Manxman*, for instance, was located in a print and reinserted. For *The Lodger*, several nitrate prints were sourced, and improvements were made to the intertitles and color tinting. *Downhill*, taken from a black-and-white nitrate print at the Dutch EYE Film Institute, had its original color tinting completely recreated. For *Easy Virtue*, the most damaged of the nine films, the only surviving pieces were various 16mm elements that were consulted and subjected to digital cleanup. *The Ring* was restored from a 1959 fine-grain positive, while *The Farmer’s Wife* was reassembled from the best sections of two preservation intermediates. *The Pleasure Garden*, Hitchcock’s first film, has undergone the most extensive and exciting restoration: nearly 20 minutes of footage, found in five different prints, have been reintegrated for the first time since 1926. For most of the films, the intertitles were recreated with an effort to match the original fonts and artwork; in some cases Hitchcock’s elegant dissolves were recreated using new digital techniques.

The Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra creates new scores for silent films using the same repertoire used by movie theater orchestras in the 1920s. They have been performing and recording silent film music since 1994, and are considered one of the finest groups reviving this tradition today. Stephen Horne, based at London’s BFI Southbank, and Steve Sterner, based in New York, are considered two of the leading silent film accompanists working today.
In addition to the BAM screenings, The Hitchcock 9 will travel to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, and other cities throughout the country.

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The Hitchcock 9 Schedule

HT = Steinberg Screen at the Harvey Theater (651 Fulton St)
BRC = BAM Rose Cinemas (30 Lafayette Ave)

Sat, Jun 29
3pm: The Ring (HT) – with Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra
7:30pm: Blackmail (HT) – with Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

Sun, Jun 30
3pm: The Manxman (HT) – with Stephen Horne
7:30pm: The Lodger (HT) – with Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

Mon, Jul 1
7pm: Downhill (BRC) – with Stephen Horne

Tue, Jul 2
7pm: The Farmer's Wife (BRC) – with Stephen Horne
9:15pm: Easy Virtue (BRC) – with Stephen Horne

Wed, Jul 3
7pm: The Pleasure Garden (BRC) – with Steve Sterner
9:15pm: Champagne (BRC) – with Steve Sterner

Film Descriptions

Blackmail (1929) 75min
With Anny Ondra, John Longden.
Both Hitchcock’s last silent and first talkie (two versions were made), this masterful thriller represents the culmination of the director’s 1920s output. During an attempted rape, blonde heroine Alice (Ondra) kills her would-be attacker, only to find herself the victim of a shady blackmailer. The dazzling location shooting (landmarks like the London Underground and Whitehall) culminates in the director’s first great suspense set-piece: a chase through and atop the British Museum.
Sat, Jun 29 at 7:30pm With live accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

Champagne (1928) 105min
With Betty Balfour.
Opening with a shot filmed through a glass of the titular drink, this stylishly frothy comedy concerns a bratty flapper (ebullient silent superstar Balfour) whose millionaire father decides to teach her a lesson by pretending he’s broke. As our heroine plunges into a shabby working-class subsistence, Hitchcock locates the sinister undercurrents in this riches-to-rags reverse fairytale. Among the stylistic innovations: cinema history's first freeze-frame.
Wed, Jul 3 at 9:15pm With live accompaniment by Steve Sterner

Downhill (1927) 105min
With Ivor Novello, Isabel Jeans.
That’s the direction things go for star rugby player Roddy (Novello) who goes from golden boy to public disgrace and bottoms out as Parisian gigolo when he takes the blame for a school chum who impregnates a girl. Hitchcock characteristically injects surprising humor into the proceedings while laying
forth the earliest expressions of what would become pet themes: the “wrong man” and the transference of guilt.

**Mon, Jul 1 at 7pm With live accompaniment by Stephen Horne**

**Easy Virtue** (1927) 70min  
*With Isabel Jeans, Franklyn Dyall.*  
Falsely accused of infidelity by her loutish husband, a society woman’s name is dragged through the courts and the mud in this adaptation of a Noël Coward play. Among the Hitchcockian flourishes is a telephone marriage proposal communicated solely through the facial expressions of the switchboard operator. “Pure Hitchcock, its combination of conciseness and idiosyncrasy demonstrate his mastery of silent narration” (*Time Out London*).

**Tue, Jul 2 at 9:15pm With live accompaniment by Stephen Horne**

**The Farmer’s Wife** (1929) 107min  
*With Jameson Thomas, Lilian Hall-Davis.*  
Aided by his devoted housekeeper, a widowed middle-aged farmer sets out to find a new wife among the local womenfolk—but finds each candidate more unsuitable than the next. With its continually inventive camerawork, Truffaut finds that Hitchcock shot this breezy bucolic comedy of manners “like a thriller.” “Contains a great deal of subtle slapstick and witty caricature, especially in a marvelously sustained sequence at a tea-party” (*Time Out London*).

**Tue, Jul 2 at 7pm With live accompaniment by Stephen Horne**

**The Lodger** (1926) 90min  
*With Ivor Novello, Marie Ault.*  
In “the first true Hitchcock movie” as The Master himself dubbed it, matinee idol Ivor Novello (marvelously creepy) was cast against type as a Jack the Ripper-type serial killer who stalks the fog-shrouded London alleyways for his blonde victims. Filmed with an appropriately expressionist eye, in one particularly inventive scene, Hitchcock films the killer’s nervously pacing footsteps through a plate-glass floor. “Thanks to the BFI’s pristine restoration it’s never looked better. A glorious renewal” (*Time Out London*).

**Sun, Jun 30 at 7:30pm With live accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra**

**The Manxman** (1929) 100min  
*With Carl Brisson, Malcolm Keen, Anny Ondra.*  
On the Isle of Man a stormy love triangle wrenches apart two boyhood friends—one a lawyer, the other a fisherman—in love with the same woman (Ondra, smolderingly sensual). Shot on location in Cornwall, the film makes striking use of the dramatic natural surroundings and vertiginous seaside cliffs in “one of the best and most mature works of his early career” (Byrony Dixon).

**Sun, Jun 30 at 3pm With live accompaniment by Stephen Horne**

**The Pleasure Garden** (1926) 90min  
*With Virginia Valli, Carmelita Geraghty.*  
Hitchcock’s directorial debut opens strikingly as a torrent of leggy chorines skitters down a spiral staircase. The delirious melodrama that ensues charts the romantic ups and downs of supposedly sophisticated showgirl Patsy (she ends up on a tropical island married to a psychopath, the first of Hitch’s many “menaced brides”) and her provincial friend Jill (she ends up sleeping with half of London). This restoration restores 20 minutes of footage not seen since 1926.

**Wed, Jul 3 at 7pm With live accompaniment by Steve Sterner**

**The Ring** (1927) 108min  
*With Carl Brisson, Lilian Hall-Davis, Ian Hunter.*  
Hitchcock’s only original screenplay yielded one of his finest silent films. Amid the backdrop of a traveling carnival, an uneasy love triangle forms when a boxer’s wife takes a fancy to the new heavyweight champ. “The most visually sophisticated of Hitchcock’s silent pictures” (Jonathan Rosenbaum) is replete with psychologically-charged camera movements and montages, evoking one character’s drunken stupor with a shot that seems to melt off the screen.

**Sat, Jun 29 at 3pm With live accompaniment by Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra**
About Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra

The Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra creates new scores for silent films using the same repertoire used by movie theater orchestras in the 1920s. They have been performing and recording silent film music since 1994, and are considered one of the finest groups reviving this tradition today. A chamber quintet typical of those heard in medium-sized theaters in the heyday of silent film, Mont Alto consists of Brian Collins on clarinet, David Short on cello, Britt Swenson on violin, Rodney Sauer on piano, and Dawn Kramer on trumpet. Mont Alto’s music director, Rodney Sauer, has compiled new scores for three of the films in the Hitchcock 9 silent film project, currently being distributed by Rialto Films: a modal, ambient score for The Lodger; an emotional and dramatic score with sections of lively jazz-era dance music for The Ring; and a more traditional movie soundtrack-style score with dramatic tension for Blackmail.

About Stephen Horne

Stephen has long been considered one of the leading silent film accompanists. Based at London’s BFI Southbank, but playing at all the major UK venues such as the Barbican Centre and the Imperial War Museum, he has recorded music for DVD releases, BBC TV screenings and museum installations of silent films. Although principally a pianist, he often incorporates flute, accordion and keyboards into his performances, sometimes simultaneously. He regularly performs internationally and in recent years his accompaniments have met with acclaim at film festivals in Pordenone, Telluride, San Francisco, Cannes, Bologna and Berlin. He has performed his score for A Cottage on Dartmoor at many venues, including New York’s Lincoln Center and Washington’s National Gallery of Art.

About BAMcinématek

The four-screen BAM Rose Cinemas (BRC) opened in 1998 to offer Brooklyn audiences alternative and independent films that might not play in the borough otherwise, making BAM the only performing arts center in the country with two mainstage theaters and a multiplex cinema. In July 1999, beginning with a series celebrating the work of Spike Lee, BAMcinématek was born as Brooklyn’s only daily, year-round repertory film program. BAMcinématek presents new and rarely seen contemporary films, classics, work by local artists, and festivals of films from around the world, often with special appearances by directors, actors, and other guests. BAMcinématek has not only presented major retrospectives by major filmmakers such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Manoel de Oliveira, Shohei Imamura, Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics’ Circle Award prize for the retrospective), Kaneto Shindo, Luchino Visconti, , but it has also introduced New York audiences to contemporary artists such as Pedro Costa and Apichatpong Weerasethakul. In addition, BAMcinématek programmed the first US retrospectives of directors Arnaud Desplechin, Nicolas Winding Refn, Hong Sang-soo, and, most recently, Andrzej Zulawski. From 2006 to 2008, BAMcinématek partnered with the Sundance Institute and in June 2009 launched BAMcinemaFest, a 16-day festival of new independent films and repertory favorites with 15 NY feature film premieres; the fifth annual BAMcinemaFest will run from June 19—28, 2013.

Credits

*The Wall Street Journal* is the title sponsor of BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinématek.

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Pepsi is the official beverage of BAM.

Brooklyn Brewery is the preferred beer of BAMcinématek.

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BAMcinematek is programmed by Florence Almozini with the assistance of Nellie Killian and David Reilly.

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General Information
Tickets:  
General Admission: $13  
BAM Cinema Club Members: $8, BAM Cinema Club Movie Moguls: Free  
Seniors & Students (25 and under with a valid ID, Mon—Thu): $9  
Bargain matinees (Mon—Thu before 5pm & Fri—Sun before 3pm no holidays): $9

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn’s only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, is open for dining prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of spoken word and live music for BAMcafé Live on select Friday and Saturday nights with a special BAMcafé Live menu available starting at 8pm.

Subway:  
2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater)  
D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train:  
Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus:  
B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM
Car:  
Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

For ticket and BAMbus information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.