

Thanhouser Company



Trademark

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Thanhouser Releases 12 Silent Films on DVD

Historic Silent Films Restored and Updated with New Music

PORTLAND, OR – Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc. announced today the release on DVD of 12 newly restored silent films that have been out of public circulation for nearly 100 years. The films were produced by the pioneering Thanhouser film enterprise in New Rochelle, New York between 1910 and 1917. This latest three-disc Collectors Set brings to 38 the number of films that have been restored and re-released by the company since 1996.

The films for this new collection were assembled with the cooperation of archives around the world: The Library of Congress in Washington, DC, The British Film Institute in London, England and Film Preservation Associates in Hat Creek, California. Raymond A. Brubacher performs new musical accompaniment composed exclusively for this three-disc set.

- **Volume 7: *Thanhouser Presents Shakespeare*** Edwin and Gertrude Thanhouser, the only American studio founders to come from theater, were ideally equipped to bring not only Shakespeare, but detailed narrative and visual excellence to the screen. This disc contains three of the six Shakespeare films produced by Thanhouser: *The Winter's Tale* (1910), *Cymbeline* (1913), and *King Lear* (1916). Only three or four U.S. films from Shakespeare plays appeared before 1910.
- **Volume 8: *Thanhouser Presents the Classics*** The most difficult challenge of early cinema was the story film, which required very careful presentation of scenes to tell the story. Drama and literature were important sources for Thanhouser films as this collection demonstrates. It includes *Nicholas Nickleby* (1912), *King Rene's Daughter* (1913), *Tannhäuser* (1913) and *The Vagabonds* (1915).
- **Volume 9: *Lloyd Lonergan's Legacy*** A tribute to Edwin Thanhouser's brother-in-law Lloyd Lonergan who drew on nearly 20 years experience writing for important newspapers in Chicago and New York City. He wrote over 800 scenarios for the studio (many with alliterations in their title) as well as heading its story department. This sampling of his creative genius includes *Daddy's Double* (1910), *When the Studio Burned* (1913), *An Elusive Diamond* (1914), *The Marvelous Marathoner* (1915) and *The Woman in White* (1917).

The three-disc "Thanhouser Collection Volumes 7, 8 & 9" is priced at \$24.95. The DVD set is available for immediate shipment and may be ordered directly from Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc. at 8770 NW Kearney Street, Portland, Oregon 97229 USA or online at www.thanhouser.org.

Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation established for the research, preservation and publication of educational materials related to early silent era, with a focus on Thanhouser. For additional information, e-mail postmaster@thanhouser.org or FAX (503) 226-7961.

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Background on Thanouser Company Film Preservation, Inc.

Thanouser Company, including its successor, Mutual's Thanouser Film Corporation, was an extraordinarily active and energetic film company that thrived from 1909 through 1917. Based in New Rochelle, New York, Thanouser produced and released over 1,000 silent films to worldwide distribution.

Founders Edwin and Gertrude Thanouser were the first to head an American motion picture studio that had a substantial background in theater. Thanouser was an important leader in the rebellion of the "Independents" against the Motion Picture Patents group associated with Thomas Edison.

Thanouser entered the field and grew to be a significant force at the time when Edison and Biograph were peaking and then going into decline. Hence, Thanouser was an important element in bridging the gap between the earliest pioneers and the establishment of the "Hollywood" industry we know today.

Important Thanouser screen personalities include James Cruze, who rose to fame as a Hollywood director during the 20's and 30's; legendary Broadway star Jeanne Eagels; and popular Shakespearean actor Frederick Warde, star of the recently discovered 1912 feature film *Richard III*.

According to the National Film Preservation Foundation, only half of U.S. feature films survive in complete form. Of the American features produced before 1920, only 20% survive. The situation is worse for films prior to 1920. Of the over 1,000 films produced by Thanouser, less than 200 prints have been located. While most surviving Thanouser films have been preserved, new films are discovered each year and over a dozen Thanouser nitrate films currently await preservation.

Important collections of Thanouser posters and films are maintained at the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), The George Eastman House (Rochester, New York), the British Film Institute (London), Netherlands Filmmuseum (Amsterdam, Holland), The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences Margaret Herrick Library (Hollywood, California) and in private collections and archives.

Ned Thanouser, grandson of founders Edwin and Gertrude Thanouser, has worked since 1986 to locate, preserve and improve access to early film history. With his family he established in 1989 the Thanouser Film Preservation Endowment at the Library of Congress and he was a member of the 1994 AFI/NEA Film Preservation Grant Advisory Panel. In 1995 he formed a non-profit company, Thanouser Company Film Preservation, Inc., to further his preservation activities. Mr. Thanouser has assisted in the identification and preservation of Thanouser films held in archives and private collections around the world.

Thirty-eight restored Thanouser films are available on three three-disc DVD Collector Sets. Also available is the complete history of the Thanouser film enterprise on CD-ROM: [Thanouser Films: An Encyclopedia and History](#), written by noted historian Q. David Bowers.

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