



# The Lambs Foundation

Established in 1943

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, March 11, 2019 – New York

### **The Lambs® exhibit short films not seen in nearly a century**

In the early 1930's, The Lambs® created 2-reel comedy short films with Columbia Pictures. These shorts were created as a means to raise fund for the Club during the Great Depression. Most of these films have never been seen in almost a century. The films offer a rare historical look at The Lambs, its famous members and activities. The presentation included: *Shave it with Music* (1932), *The Curse of the Broken Heart* (1933), *Poor Fish* (1933) and *Hear'em and Weep* (1931).

A columnist for Classic Images magazine and Lambs' member, Robert Tevis, who organized the screening, said, "It's exciting to open the door to forgotten film history."

George Willeman, of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center of the Library of Congress, plucked these rare gems from the Library of Congress vaults and presented them at The Lambs 51<sup>st</sup> Street Clubhouse to a packed house. Willeman, who is the nitrate film vault manager, brought the films to the attention of his friend, Mr. Tevis.

Mr. Tevis and Marc Baron, Shepherd of The Lambs, rolled up their sleeves and visited the Special Collections room at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, facilitated by Steve Massa of the library staff. The Library holds 35 linear feet of 192 boxes of Lambs' archives.

Robert Tevis did archival research to put these films into their glittering context. He stated, "I was ecstatic to find a letter on George Gershwin's personal stationary to the then Shepherd of The Lambs, saying in effect "count me in." Another letter from famed actor Spencer Tracy in 1932, sadly declining the opportunity to participate, read, "You must believe there's nothing in the world I'd rather do than this thing for The Lambs' club." "What it shows is how much giants of entertainment loved their Club and wanted to help," said Shepherd Baron.

Acting greats and Lambs Tracy and William Powell were prohibited to participate due to their contracts at the time with major studios.

"In addition to theater, Lambs members have always been involved movies. Paramount Pictures and United Artists were formed by Lambs, as was Screen Actors Guild – and more recently the merger of SAG-AFTRA."

The evening's film program was made possible to by the generosity of Sony Pictures, which owns the rights to the Columbia film library. The company allowed the

**Marc Baron**  
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**Doug Gerbino**  
Director

**Bruce Brown**  
Ex-Shepherd / Advisor

#### **Members:**

John Bowes  
Annette Hunt  
Kathy Kelleher  
Eileen Lacy  
Donald Pippin  
Joyce Randolph  
Sarah Ann Rodgers  
Davida Rothberg  
Roseann Sheridan  
leslie Shreve

#### **Grants Committee**

Marc Baron  
Peter Kingsley  
Peter Dizozza  
Sarah Ann Rodgers

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presentation of the films to Lambs members and invited guests and allowed The Lambs Foundation to keep a copy for their archives.

Willeman also spoke about the Library of Congress' film facility in Culpepper, VA. He pointed out that the Film Foundation estimates that 90% of silent films no longer exist, and the Library estimates that 75% of all films ever made are lost.

Founded in 1874, The Lambs is America's first professional theatrical organization. Its member included Fred Astaire, George M. Cohan, W.C. Fields, Will Rogers, and John Philip Sousa. Lerner and Loewe first met at The Lambs, and Loewe left a bequest of royalties from *Brigadoon* to The Lambs Foundation. Current luminaries include Joyce Randolph (Trixie of *The Honeymooners*), Don Pippin, and Honorary members Jim Dale and Matthew Broderick.

Tevis said his favorite scene in *The Curse of the Broken Heart* – a spoof of melodramas of the day – occurs when the heroine is attempting to rescue the hero. Both are airborne in the cockpits of two separate biplanes. The hero is tied up and cannot fly his plan. His girlfriend in the other is trying to shoot the ropes with which her lover has been villainously bound. Shooting at his plane, she hit's him. When we cut back to see he is bleeding. Still, he urges her, shouting, "Don't worry, darling, I still have confidence in your aim."

Willeman concluded by inviting everyone to visit the Library's Culpeper, VA, facility, which houses a cinema that is open to the public. In reference to the fact that the Library of Congress is America's library and funded at taxpayer expense, he told the audience, "I always say about our screenings – you've already paid for them!"

The evening was underwritten by a grant from The Lambs Foundation, founded 75 years ago to promote education in the arts and support non-profit theatre. For more information about The Lambs or The Lambs Foundation, visit our web sites, or contact:

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*The Lambs may be found on all social media as TheLambsInc*

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