

12/39

Anna Pavlova on Screen at BFI Southbank in August

with a preview of Madam and the Dying Swan + Q&A



BFI Southbank is launching a season of films featuring the ballet legend **Anna Pavlova** (1881 – 1931). **Anna Pavlova on Screen** is part of **PAVLOVA 2012**, a celebration of the ballerina acquiring her London home at Ivy House in 1912, where she lived until her death in 1931. As well as being an inspirational ballerina, Anna Pavlova was also an independent career woman and mega-star loved by the media and audiences throughout the world. Pavlova had many of her solos recorded and during the season audiences will be able to see footage of her dancing in **The Immortal Swan** (1935), **The Dying Swan** (1917) and an edition of **Omnibus** (1970). She invested in the medium of film to such a degree that she even starred in a Hollywood feature film **The Dumb Girl of Portici** (1916), which led one Guardian critic to state that ‘next to seeing Pavlova in person, there is no better substitute than seeing her through the mechanism of the kinema’. The documentaries, recordings of dances and dramatisations on offer throughout this season, indicate the range of ballets Anna Pavlova performed, and will, alongside expert introductions from season curator **Jane Pritchard**, place her career in context with contemporary recordings of dance.

Pavlova’s role in **The Dumb Girl of Portici** (1916) revealed why she was a great dramatic ballerina. In this adaptation of Auber’s opera Masaniello she plays Fenella, a poor Italian girl who falls in love and is then betrayed by a Spanish nobleman who disguises himself as a fisherman. A **Preview + Q&A** of **Madam and the Dying Swan** (with filmmakers Candida Brady and Titus

Ogilvy and dancer Marguerite Porter, hosted by Jane Pritchard) will provide an intriguing look at the development of British Ballet. It focuses on how, in 1980, Dame Ninette de Valois passed on to the ballerina Marguerite Porter the version of Pavlova's Swan solo she had notated in 1913. In the film we see Porter, in turn, teaching it to a Royal Ballet ballerina in the present day. **The Immortal Swan** (1935) combines documentary material on Pavlova with extracts of later stagings of some of the ballets she danced, and also material which shows some of her time at Ivy House. **Omnibus: Anna Pavlova** (1970) gives the opportunity for those who saw her dance to recall their experiences of watching the great ballerina on stage and **Pavlova and Her Contemporaries on Screen**, places footage of Pavlova alongside some of her contemporaries including Tamara Karsavina, Maria Baldina and Theodore Kossloff.

In the sole film to dramatise Pavlova's life **Pavlova: A Woman for All Time** (1983), Galina Beliaeva stars as the titular ballerina. The film interprets Pavlova's life, from her childhood in the countryside near St Petersburg, through to her death in The Hague. Despite occasionally lacking some knowledge of dance, it is an interesting film, complete with some striking cameos from James Fox, Bruce Forsyth and Roy Kinnear and is befitting to a season which will dedicate itself to exploring the life and work of this world famous ballerina.

The book *Anna Pavlova: Twentieth-Century Ballerina* by Jane Pritchard with Caroline Hamilton is published by Booth-Clibborn Editions, price £25.
booth-clibborn.com/info

Season Curator Jane Pritchard will be available for interview.

Screenings taking place in Anna Pavlova on Screen Season:

Preview + Q&A: Madam and the Dying Swan

UK. 2012. Dir Candida Brady & Titus Ogilvy. 70min. Advised cert PG. Courtesy of Blenheim Films

An intriguing documentary set against a background of the development of British Ballet. It focuses on how, in 1980, Dame Ninette de Valois, known widely as 'Madam', passed on to ballerina Marguerite Porter the version of Pavlova's Swan solo she had notated at the Palace Theatre in 1913. In the film we see Porter, in turn, teaching it to Argentinian Royal Ballet ballerina Marianela Nuñez at one of the Yorkshire ballet galas. Plus an extract from *Anna Pavlova* (1924).

Followed by a Q&A with filmmakers Candida Brady and Titus Ogilvy and dancer Marguerite Porter, hosted by Jane Pritchard.

Thu 23 Aug 18:15 NFT1

The Dumb Girl of Portici

USA. 1916. Dir Lois Weber & Phillips Smalley. With Anna Pavlova, Rupert Julian, Wadsworth Harris. c120min. PG.

Playing the dumb Fenella in Lois Weber's adaptation of Auber's opera *Masaniello*, Pavlova reveals why she was a great dramatic ballerina. The plot is based on the Neapolitan uprising against Spanish oppressors in 1647. It concerns Fenella, a poor Italian girl, who falls in love and is then betrayed by a Spanish nobleman disguised as a fisherman. Their affair triggers a revolution and national catastrophe.

With live piano accompaniment

Introduced by Jane Pritchard

Sat 11 Aug 15:50 NFT2

The Immortal Swan

UK. 1935. Dir Edward Nakhimoff. 50min. Total programme c110min.

This programme combines documentary material on Pavlova with extracts of later stagings of some of the ballets she danced: the Vision scene from *The Sleeping Beauty* (with Antoinette Sibley and Anthony Dowell), *Giselle* and *Don Quixote* (with Natalia Makarova and Mikhail Baryshnikov). The opening section of *The Magic of Dance 2: The Ebb and Flow* includes material on Pavlova and *Ivy House*, while *The Immortal Swan* looks at her life on tour and some of her most important solos.

*Introduced by Jane Pritchard

Fri 17 Aug 18:10 NFT2*

Fri 31 Aug 18:20 NFT2

Omnibus: Anna Pavlova

BBC. 1970. Dir Margaret Dale. 50min

Margaret Dale's Omnibus documentary gives some of Pavlova's company and those who saw her dance the opportunity to recall their own experiences of the great ballerina and the challenges of the old, silent footage of Pavlova dancing are revealed.

+ The Dying Swan

Umirayushchii Lebed Russia. 1917. Dir Evgeni Bauer. With Vera Karalli, Vitold Polonsky, Andrej Gromov. 49min.

Omnibus will be preceded by Evgeni Bauer's 1917 feature film, *The Dying Swan*. This features Bolshoi ballerina Vera Karalli (with Pavlova in London in 1920) and has a new score added by Joby Talbot.

Introduced by Jane Pritchard

Sat 18 Aug 18:00 NFT2

Pavlova: A Woman for All Time

UK-USSR. 1983. Dir Emil Loteanu. With Galina Beliaeva. 135min. some EST

This Anglo-Soviet co-production shows a dramatised interpretation of the life of Anna Pavlova from her childhood in the countryside outside St Petersburg through to her death in The Hague half a century later. Its knowledge of dance is sometimes questionable, but there are interesting cameos by choreographer Piotr Gusev as Marius Petipa, Bruce Forsyth as Alfred Butt and Roy Kinnear as Pavlova's gardener. Galina Beliaeva stars as Pavlova and James Fox as Victor Dandré.

*Introduced by Jane Pritchard

Wed 15 Aug 18:00 NFT3*

Sat 25 Aug 15:20 NFT2

Pavlova and Her Contemporaries on Screen

From early in the 20th century, serious attempts were made to record some of the greatest ballet dancers and their repertoire. This programme places Pavlova alongside her contemporaries: including not only film footage of Pavlova, but also Tamara Karsavina, Maria Baldina and Theodore Kossloff. It will also include film by two pioneers of dance on screen: Peter Elfelt recording the Royal Danish Ballet and Alexander Shiryayev filming in Russia.

With live piano accompaniment

Presented by Jane Pritchard

Fri 24 Aug 18:00 NFT2

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

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***** PICTURE DESK *****

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