



## 1st to 9th November 2014 - Celebrating film across the city...

SFW 2014 offers another nine day programme packed full of film screenings and events at venues across Southampton. The exciting programme includes features and short films, documentary and drama, workshops, networking events and discussion. The programme of music and film in 2014 is particularly exciting and focuses on silent features with live music including *Who is Oscar?* which introduces audiences to the work of prolific African-American film pioneer Oscar Micheaux with a screening of *Within Our Gates*. We round off with the inimitable Dodge Brothers performing live to accompany *Beggars of Life* at Turner Sims on Saturday 8 November. The country blues, rockabilly and skiffle four-piece are joined at the piano by one of the world's leading silent film accompanists, Neil Brand.

For details of all screenings and events or to sign up to our mailing list visit [www.southamptonfilmweek.com](http://www.southamptonfilmweek.com)

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## Wings with Donald MacKenzie at the Compton Organ Southampton O2Guildhall, Thursday 6 November 2014

Dir: William A. Wellman | 142 minutes | USA 1927 | Paramount Pictures



Producer: Lucien Hubbard  
Script. Louis Lighton and Hope Loring  
From a story by John Monk Saunders  
Cinematography: Harry Perry

### CAST:

Clara Bow – Mary Preston

Charles Rogers – Jack Powell

Richard Arlen – David Armstrong

Jobyna Ralston – Sylvia Lewis

El Brendel – Herman Schwimpf

Richard Tucker – Air Commander

Gary Cooper – Cadet White

Gunboat Smith – The Sergeant

Henry B. Walthall – David's Father

Roscoe Karns – Lt. Cameron

Julia Swayne Gordon – David's Mother

Arlette Marchal - Celeste

In 1936, nine years after the world premiere of William Wellman's masterpiece of the Great War in the air *Wings* (1927) Alfred Hitchcock wrote an article for *Picturegoer*. He cited the scene from *Hell's Angels* (1930) of a British pilot dive bombing a Zeppelin: 'We see his face – grim tense, even horror stricken ... Then we are transferred to the pilot's seat, and it is we who are hurtling to death at ninety miles an hour; at the moment of impact – and blackout – a palpable shudder runs through the audience. That is good cinema.' Hitchcock could have been talking about *Wings*, the film that influenced Hughes. It was the first film to place cameras on the airplanes' machine gun mounts and to have stunt pilots and the lead actors themselves act out dogfights. The action sequences set the standard for aerial combat scenes in cinema for decades. One can even see Wellman's influence in the space battles in George Lucas' *Star Wars* films.

Prompted by the success of MGM's epic of the Great War in the trenches, *The Big Parade* (Dir., King Vidor, 1925) *Wings* was produced as a big budget road show feature by Paramount studios in 1927. Acquiring the story from magazine writer John Monk Saunders, Paramount head of production Jesse Lasky planned an aerial spectacle that was to be the centerpiece of their schedule for that year. In order to ensure success they employed their top writing team of Louis Lighton and Hope Loring to adapt the story and producer Lucien Hubbard to oversee it. Financing was difficult and only made possible when Hubbard secured the cooperation of the US War Department. Lasky's decision to have Wellman was risky, he had only directed eleven films, and these were mostly B pictures. It was Wellman's experience as a fighter pilot that tipped the balance. William had seen extensive action with the Lafayette Escadrille, had been wounded, crashed a number of times and knew what the war looked like in the air. His experience was central to the way the film was planned and shot.

Nevertheless a big budget picture required bankable stars and Paramount's biggest star at this time was Clara Bow. Bow had been in pictures since she won Brewster Magazine's annual 'Fame and Fortune' contest at the age of 16. She had been loaned out and starred in a number of B pictures. She had steady success but her biggest hit had been in the Lighton and Loring scripted *It* (1927), Clarence Brown), a shop girl romance in which she played the behind the counter flapper-with-a-heart that wins the boss's handsome son. Bow was as popular in the small towns of America as she was in the cities. Compared to Bow the two male stars were relative unknowns. Charles 'Buddy' Rogers plays the All-American boy Jack, while Richard Arlen plays David, the rich boy. Arlen knew how to fly but Rogers learned for the film. Jobyna Ralston plays the rich girl Jack and David are in love with to round out the principal players. There is also a short but impressive cameo by Gary Cooper.

The film was a runaway success being road shown as a special event in 1927 and 1928 and finally released generally in 1929. It won the first Academy Award for Best Picture and influenced filmmakers from Hitchcock to Lucas and launched the flying film genre. It is good cinema.

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## Silver Street Films

Tonight's screening and performance is presented for us by Silver Street Films, the organ's concert promoters.

Silver Street films is an independent video and multimedia production company whose personnel have many years experience in professional broadcast television production, as well as corporate and promotional work. The company combines traditional values of quality production techniques with an up-to-date knowledge and appreciation of all media including DVD and Web and can produce audio and video files for Net usage.

The company's audio work falls under the title of Silver Street Music where years of experience in recording and editing audio for video productions combine with a wealth of experience in making and performing music, to delve into the world of high quality recording and production for CD and HD audio download. The Company's hot news is that it has now released a major CD title of one of the world's finest musicians playing one of the world's most incredible instruments. The CD features Richard Hills (who accompanied the SFW13 extraordinary screening of Phantom of the Opera) and celebrates the glorious and diverse music performed on Southampton Guildhall's amazing and unique Compton pipe organ.

[www.silverst.co.uk](http://www.silverst.co.uk)

## Donald MacKenzie



We are delighted to welcome to SFW, once again, the internationally renowned accompanist Donald MacKenzie. Donald MacKenzie was born in 1970 in Ayrshire (Scotland), and after learning to play the piano and classical organ with renowned Scottish organist Gordon Frier, he received his first engagement in 1988 as the resident organist to the Glasgow Garden Festival. In 1991 Donald was the winner of the Senior Young Theatre Organist of the Year in the A.T.O.S. International Competition and this won him a trip to San Francisco to play at their Convention.

In July 1992 Donald began his long association with the Odeon Leicester Square Compton organ, by playing it for a number of events including a preview of 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'Chaplin'. In November 1993 he was engaged to play the organ for 5 weeks before each performance of the film, 'Aladdin'. He was then appointed House Organist and has appeared regularly at film premières, special events and organ concerts. He has broadcast from the Odeon on BBC Radios 2, 3, 4 and the World Service. He has been featured on a number of television programmes and Donald has played for numerous Royal Film Performances, including four in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen.

Donald is one of the regularly featured artists for the Bournemouth Pavilion Compton Organ Concert Series and a featured artist during the past three years at the Wolverhampton International Organ Festival. 2006 has also marked his third concert at the Albert Hall Nottingham. In 2005 and 2006 Donald gave concerts at the International Johann Strauss Festival held in Bucharest. Both his concerts from the famous Atheneum Philharmonic Concert Hall, were televised. In 2005 Donald was privileged to be asked to open the newly installed Compton organ at Movieland in Newtonards near Belfast. In July 2006 Donald made his debut at the world famous Spreckels Organ housed in the magnificent surroundings of Balboa Park in San Diego.

When he is not playing for concerts Donald specialises in the accompaniment of Silent Films - he accompanied his first film when he was 14 for a special evening screening at Paisley Town Hall. He has now more than twenty feature films 'under his fingers' including the major classics of the silent screen - The Phantom of the Opera, Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde, King of Kings, Carmen, The Black Pirate, Metropolis - as well as many different types of short silent films. His now renowned accompaniments have led to numerous bookings throughout the UK (including the Victoria Hall Hanley, Bournemouth Pavilion, in at Wolverhampton City Hall and the Lighthouse Media Centre, in London at the Odeon Leicester Square, Alexandra Palace and St Martin in the Fields, Somerton Arts Festival, in Tywyn at the Neu Pendre Hall), Ireland (in Belfast at St Annes Cathedral and Clonard Monastery), Germany (Weikersheim), USA (Boston University, Rivieria Theatre in Tonawanda), Holland (Scheidam Theatre) and most recently Poland. One of his most treasured memories was playing for the film 'Nosferatu' at the Usher Hall Edinburgh in October 2005 to a very enthusiastic full house. In December 2005 Donald appeared at the Odeon on an ITV programme, demonstrating the art of silent film accompaniment.

His overseas concert appearances have included - in Poland at the Bielsko Biala Bach Festival, in Philadelphia (USA) at the Wanamaker Store and Girard College, in Holland for the Nederlands Orgel Federation and several times in Germany playing the Moller organ in the music hall of the world famous organ building firm of August Lankhuff. At this venue he has also played for silent film evenings as part of the Hohenloher Cultural Summer Festival.

Donald has a degree in music from the University of London. He also has an interest in Steam Trains, Tram Cars, and enjoys going to orchestral concerts and the opera.

[www.donaldmackenzie.org.uk](http://www.donaldmackenzie.org.uk)

## Southampton Guildhall's Unique Dual-console Compton Pipe Organ



The decision to incorporate a Guildhall into Southampton's new suite of civic buildings was taken in 1934 and the order was placed with the John Compton Organ Company of Acton for an organ suitable for a whole range of tasks. On the one hand it was required to be of sufficient size and magnitude to accompany the vast civil ceremonies planned and to lend voice beside the top choirs of the day and on the other to have available the most modern refinements of the theatre organ; pipework suitable for the playing of popular and light music as well as the customary tuned and non-tuned percussions. The organ that was devised met these criteria and met them well -

indeed John Compton was undoubtedly the ideal builder for the required instrument, having produced many great theatre organs by this time, but also having been responsible for numerous fine church and classical instruments. However the Guildhall organ was not simply a case of bolting a few 'theatre' ranks of pipes to a classical instrument or vice versa but was the creation of a stunning and tonally balanced dual purpose organ.

Apart from the two majestic four-manual Walnut consoles which control the forty units of pipes, the instrument is totally enclosed above the proscenium arch high up near the auditorium ceiling. The 'classical' console, with its illuminated push button stops, is situated stage left while the 'theatre' console (or 'variety' console as it was originally called) sits stage right. Its stops are arranged in a horseshoe around the manuals, typical of such instruments installed in cinemas and theatres in the 1930s. It is believed that the Southampton Guildhall organ is the only true dual purpose classical and theatre style organ with two distinctly different consoles for the two purposes which share most of the same body of pipes, although some are only accessible from one or other console.

While traditional care was lavished on the pipes, the most modern of technologies was employed in a number of areas: The relay system, which occupies a space the size of the average living room, the 32' Polyphone Bourdon which uses valves to add additional resonance chambers to a single pipe, and the Melotone, an early analogue system for electronically generating sound waves. Other notable facets include the two large scale open 32' stops – the Diaphone and Posaune, the splendid Diapason chorus, the many fine reed stops including a rare Cor Anglais and numerous mixtures. The tone of every rank of pipes is carefully crafted and the attention to detail during the installation has produced one of the finest and most versatile instruments in the country.

In recent years the organ had largely been taken out of use due to declining condition and had become totally unreliable, largely due to a lack of maintenance and infrequent playing. In 2007 the management decided to have it restored and whilst not able to fund a full refurbishment, such as complete re-leathering etc., they are committed to having the organ back on good form and to using and maintaining it. HWS Associates won the contract and since May 2008 work proceeded in returning the Compton to operational order. The project has involved a great deal of cleaning, adjusting, freeing of moving parts, some rewiring, some re-leathering, and general maintenance, together with the refurbishment of both consoles, revival of the Melotone, tuning throughout and generally getting all aspects of the organ up and running properly.

[www.guildhall-compton.org.uk](http://www.guildhall-compton.org.uk)