

Chicago Sun-Times

December 7, 2012

<http://www.suntimes.com/entertainment/movies/16869634-421/siskel-film-center-series-showcases-100-years-of-universal-studios.html>

Siskel Film Center series showcases 100 years of Universal Studios

By Tony A. Solano

It's fair to say it's been a pretty successful 100 years for Universal Studios.

Since the Universal Film Manufacturing Company was founded in 1912, the studio has evolved from silent films to Technicolor to 3D; introduced movie-goers to menacing monsters such as Dracula, Wolf Man and the great white shark from "Jaws"; spawned unforgettable characters such as Abbot and Costello, Spartacus and Tony Montana; and allowed directors from Alfred Hitchcock to Oliver Stone to Steven Spielberg to breathe life into their finest works on the big screen.

Universal is the eldest of all film production and distribution companies, and its cinematic achievements will be recognized at the Gene Siskel Film Center with the premiere of "Universal Pictures: Celebrating 100 Years" on Sunday. The film series includes eight classic Universal films, running twice per week through Jan. 3.

The UCLA Film & Television Archive was charged with selecting the film series. The 40-film program premiered at UCLA earlier this year.

"When you think of any studio's output over 100 years, how do you select the films to include in a program like this? We looked for films that had a huge audience impact and the films that incorporated a unique style or new techniques," said Jan-Christopher Horak, director of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Horak, a film historian, archivist and professor, is intimately familiar with Universal Pictures. He served as the founding Director of Archives & Collections at Universal Studios from 1998 to 2001, where he searched and archived the studio's props, sets, costumes and more. In all, Horak archived over 20,000 objects for the collection.

Horak was eager to share his list of 10 seminal Universal films that helped shape the studio's first 100 years:

Where Are My Children (1916)
Phantom of the Opera (1925)
All Quiet on the Western Front (1930)
Dracula (1931)
Frankenstein* (1931)
Showboat (1936)
Buck Privates (1940)
Winchester '73* (1950)
Imitation of Life* (1959)
To Kill a Mocking Bird* (1962)
Jaws (1975)
Apollo 13 (1995)
*Showing at the Gene Siskel Film Center