



## 10 films that will restore your faith in romantic comedies.

Film Streams returns to the Golden Age of Cinema with  
'Screwball Comedies' series (July 22 – September 29)

Omaha, Nebraska (6/23/11) – Any screenwriting course will teach that without conflict, there is no film. Screwball comedies thrive on conflict, running a taut line of tension between the sexes, social classes, and even personality types. From rich/poor, sexy/dour, to educated/uneducated, dichotomies fuel these madcap tales. And despite their zany and farcical nature, an embedded layer of social commentary often lurks underneath the light-hearted veneer. To watch some of the greatest screen legends—Cary Grant, Barbara Stanwyck, Clark Gable, Carole Lombard, Katharine Hepburn—wittily dish and banter at a thrilling, rapid-fire pace is to realize how dull and formulaic most contemporary romantic comedies are.

This summer, Film Streams' Ruth Sokolof Theater returns to that magical era in moviemaking with **Screwball Comedies**, a 10-film series running **July 22 to September 29**. The series opens with Frank Capra's **IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT** (1934) starring Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable, the first film ever to win all five major Academy Awards (Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actress, Best Actor, Best Screenplay). It continues throughout August and September with more classic comedies from legendary directors Howard Hawks, Ernst Lubitsch, George Cukor and Preston Sturges. (A full list of films and dates on the following pages.)

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## Screwball Comedies (cont'd)

Most of the films featured in Film Streams' **Screwball Comedies** series were made under the strict Hays Code, film regulations concerned with morality. (As a result, the film critic Andrew Sarris loosely defined a screwball comedy as a "sex comedy without the sex.") To skirt the restrictions, screenwriters wrote sharp, layered dialogue encoded with hidden meaning; double entendres and allusions abound, elevating flirtation to an art form and creating one of the most memorable facets of the genre.

Another remarkable trait, apparent in every film in the series, is the strength of the female characters. Independent, headstrong, and sharp-tongued, they were dimensional, funny and often ran the show. The series features standout performances by Carole Lombard, Irene Dunne, Katharine Hepburn, and Barbara Stanwyck, among others.

### Tickets

Tickets for all regular screenings at Film Streams' Ruth Sokolof Theater are \$9 general, \$7 for students, seniors, teachers and military, and \$4.50 for Film Streams Members. Tickets are available at the box office inside Film Streams' Ruth Sokolof Theater or online at [www.filmstreams.org](http://www.filmstreams.org).

### Contact

For more information, questions or requests, please contact Casey Logan at (402) 933-0259 x 11 or [casey@filmstreams.org](mailto:casey@filmstreams.org).

-SEE BELOW FOR FILM & DATE INFO-

## Film Streams Repertory Series

### Screwball Comedies

July 22 – September 29, 2011 · All 3mm Prints

July 22 – 28

#### **It Happened One Night** 1934

Directed by Frank Capra.

Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable verbally spar and playfully flirt their way into each other's hearts in this pioneer of the genre. The first to win all five major Academy Awards, the film contains some of the most memorable scenes in cinematic history (*Walls of Jericho*, *Hitchhiking*).



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## Screwball Comedies (cont'd)

July 29 – August 4

### **Twentieth Century** 1934

Directed by Howard Hawks.

John Barrymore inhabits the role of a hotheaded theater director who makes a star of an unknown played by Carole Lombard. Based on the Broadway play by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur (who adapted it to film).



August 5 – 11

### **The Awful Truth** 1937

Directed by Leo McCarey.

Charisma is not easily defined, but it's impossible to take your eyes off Cary Grant or Irene Dunne in this hilarious comedy about a feuding couple. This film propelled Grant's career as a leading man, and it's easy to see why.



August 12 – 18

### **Trouble in Paradise** 1932

Directed by Ernst Lubitsch.

Two pickpockets in love fall into a love triangle with their wealthy mark. Lubitsch's sly, sophisticated wit is evident in this sexually charged farce -- one of the few films in this series made before the Hays Code.



August 19 – 25

### **The Philadelphia Story** 1940

Directed by George Cukor.

This classic rightfully placed Katharine Hepburn, playing a spoiled daughter who doesn't know quite what (or who) she wants, back into the spotlight after a two-year absence from the screen. Cary Grant and James Stewart round out the excellent cast.



August 26 – September 1

### **My Man Godfrey** 1936

Directed by Gregory La Cava.

Carole Lombard displays both vulnerability and tenacity as a loopy but well-intentioned socialite from the hilariously dysfunctional Bullock family. The first film to receive nominations in all four major acting categories.



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September 2 – 8

**His Girl Friday** 1940

Directed by Howard Hawks.

An update of Broadway's "The Front Page" (and its subsequent Howard Hughes-produced adaptation), Hawks's classic comedy HIS GIRL FRIDAY features Rosalind Russell in what had been a male role. This gender reversal adds not only the romantic angle but a smart layer of social commentary.



September 9 – 15

**The Palm Beach Story** 1942

Directed by Preston Sturges.

The dialogue comes at a breakneck pace in this zany, social satire that playfully skewers the idle rich. Sturges also seemed to have another satirical target in mind: The original film title was IS MARRIAGE NECESSARY?



September 18 & September 21

**Bringing Up Baby** 1938 – NEW 35MM PRINT!

Directed by Howard Hawks.

A battle of the sexes pushed to absurdist extremes, the misadventures pile up in this film by screwball auteur Howard Hawks. The third film co-starring Katharine Hepburn and Cary Grant, whose on-screen rapport and banter is at the top of its game.



September 23 – 29

**Ball of Fire** 1941

Directed by Howard Hawks.

Gary Cooper is a professor whose hermetic world is punctured by the arrival of a nightclub performer called Sugarpuss (played by Barbara Stanwyck) in this tale of opposites attract. Billy Wilder wrote the screenplay, delivered with expert comic timing by Stanwyck and Cooper.



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**Film Streams** is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the cultural environment of the Omaha-Council Bluffs area through the presentation and discussion of film as an art form. For more information, visit [www.filmstreams.org](http://www.filmstreams.org).

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