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— Brussels Philharmonic —

21

FALL/WINTER

CHARLIE CHAPLIN

THE KID LIVE IN CONCERT

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

DIRK BROSSÉ, DIR.

OTTO DEROLEZ, CONCERTMEESTER / KONZERTMEISTER

18-19-20.09.2020

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 brussels
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EUROPÄISCHE
FILM PHILHARMONIE

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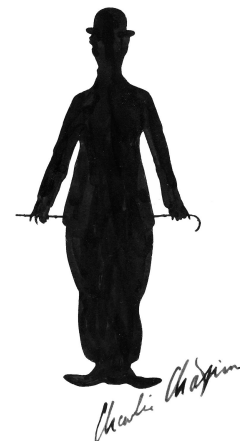
“One happy thing about sound was that I could control the music, so I composed my own. I tried to compose elegant and romantic music to frame my comedies in contrast to the tramp character, for elegant music gave my comedies an emotional dimension. Musical arrangers rarely understood this. They wanted the music to be funny. But I would explain that I wanted no competition, I wanted the music to be a counterpoint of grave and charm, to express sentiment, without which, as Hazlitt says, a work of art is incomplete. (...)

Nothing is more adventurous and exciting than to hear the tunes one has composed played for the first time by a fifty piece orchestra.” - Charles Chaplin

WELKOM

De magie van Charlie Chaplin blijft ook na bijna 100 jaar fantastisch indrukwekkend, ontroerend en hilarisch. De sympathieke zwerver, die ondanks zijn goede bedoelingen toch steeds weer in de problemen raakt, laat ons allemaal, klein én groot, lachen en nadenken.

De meester zorgt gelukkig steeds voor een happy end, en componeerde ook voor *The Kid* zelf de prachtige muziek. Een pareltje.



PROGRAMMA

The Kid (1921)

Charles Chaplin, regie & muziek (arr. Carl Davis)

Charlie Chaplin als The Tramp

Jackie Coogan als The Kid (John)

Edna Purviance als The Woman

FILMPHILHARMONIC EDITION

Film ter beschikking gesteld door Roy Export S.A.S.

Muziek ter beschikking gesteld door Bourne Co. Music Publishers.

Brussels Philharmonic · Dirk Brossé, dirigent · Otto Derolez, concertmeester

SYNOPSIS

Een verwarde vrouw legt haar pasgeboren baby te vondeling in een limousine. Als de auto wordt gestolen laten de dieven de baby achter bij het vuilnis, waar Charlie The Tramp, een arme zwerver, het vindt. Hoewel hij aanvankelijk een ander ermee probeert op te schepen, raakt de arme schooier toch aan het kind verknocht. Hij voedt het jongetje zo goed en zo kwaad als het gaat op.

Vijf jaar later zijn Charlie en The Kid onafscheidelijk. Het jongetje, John, gooit ramen in en vervolgens komt Charlie 'toevallig' langs als glazenmaker. Hiermee verdienen ze hun kost.

De vrouw is intussen een beroemde operaster geworden. Zij doet regelmatig vrijwilligerswerk in de hoop haar verloren zoon terug te vinden. Zo komt ze af en toe zijn buurt opzoeken, en kent zij kleine John zonder te weten dat het haar zoon is.

Als John ziek wordt, stuurt ze een dokter, die ontdekt dat The Tramp niet zijn echte vader is en de kinderbescherming inschakelt. Maar dat laat de vagebond niet zomaar gebeuren en een kat-en-muisspel begint.

DIRK BROSSÉ, DIRIGENT

Dirk Brossé is een veelzijdig componist en een gerespecteerd dirigent op de internationale muzieksce­ne. Hij viert dit jaar zijn zestigste verjaardag en veertig jaar muziekcarrière met onder meer de release van de nieuwe cd 'Brussels Philharmonic plays Dirk Brossé' op 25 september 2020.

Dirk Brossé is gepassioneerd door muziek en werkt wereldwijd als dirigent en componist. Hij is muziekdirecteur van The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia en van de World Soundtrack Awards / Filmfestival Gent. Hij werd door John Williams aangesteld als Principal Conductor van de 'Star Wars in Concert World Tour'. Daarnaast is hij verbonden als hoofd­docent compositie en orkest­directie aan de School of Arts / Koninklijk Conservatorium Gent.

Brossé dirigeert wereldwijd toporkesten zoals London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic, Vancouver Opera, Opéra de Lyon, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra en l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Hij realiseerde 90 cd-opnames en dirigeert regelmatig in gerenommeerde concertzalen zoals het Koninklijk Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Seoul Arts Center, Royal Albert Hall London, Royal Opera House Covent Garden London, De Munt Brussel, Tokyo Forum, Concert Hall Shanghai, Hollywood Bowl en Kimmel Center Philadelphia. In februari 2016 maakte Dirk Brossé zijn debuut in de Carnegie Hall te New York.

Brossé componeerde 400 werken, waaronder concerten, symfonische werken, oratoria, liederen en kamermuziek, en schreef muziek voor tientallen films onder meer voor Boerenpsalm, Daens (Academy Award Nomination), The Lovers, Koko Flanel, en voor de musicals Prince of Africa, Daens, Kuifje - de Zonnetempel, Pauline & Paulette, en 14-18. Voor zijn muziek voor de BBC/HBO serie Parade's End, werd hij genomineerd voor een befaamde Emmy Award. Hij werkte nauw samen met artiesten zoals José Van Dam, Philip Webb, Claron McFadden, Julian Lloyd Webber, Sabine Meyer, Alison Balsom, Salvatore Accardo, John Williams, Toots Thielemans, Hans Zimmer, Mel Brooks, Sinead O' Connor, Cristina Branco, Michel Legrand, Youssou N'Dour en Marcel Khalifé en met schrijvers Seth Gaaikema, Alard Blom, Stefan Perceval, Didier Van Cauwelaert en Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Dirk Brossé kreeg de titel Cultureel Ambassadeur van Vlaanderen en werd onderscheiden met oa de Gouden Erepensing van het Vlaams Parlement, de Achille Van Ackerprijs, Joseph Plateau Honorary Award, de André Demedtsprijs, Award for Excellence in Cultural Creativity door het Global Thinkers Forum. Sinds 2010 is Brossé ereburger van Destelbergen. In 2013 werd aan Dirk Brossé erfelijke adeldom verleend met de persoonlijke titel van ridder. Lid van de Vlaamse Koninklijke Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten. Hij is Fellow in Arts & Humanities aan de Vrije Universiteit Brussel. In 2018 werd hij commandeur in de Leopoldsorde.

www.dirkbrosse.be

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

Brussels Philharmonic werd in 1935 opgericht door de Belgische openbare omroep (NIR), en werkte vanaf zijn ontstaan samen met internationale topdirigenten en -solisten. Het orkest was en is bekend als pionier in het uitvoeren van muziek van de eigen tijd – een reputatie die wereldvermaarde componisten als Bartók, Stravinsky en Messiaen naar Brussel haalde. Ook vandaag de dag zet Brussels Philharmonic die traditie verder, en neemt het in bijna elk concertprogramma een werk van de 21ste eeuw op. Het orkest repeteert en concerteert in de historische thuishaven Flagey in Brussel, hart van Europa, dat meteen de ideale uitvalbasis is voor concerten in Vlaanderen en de rest van de wereld.

De Franse topdirigent Stéphane Denève is muzikdirecteur van Brussels Philharmonic. Zijn passie voor muziek uit de 21ste eeuw en persoonlijke missie om een dialoog te creëren tussen het repertoire van vroeger en dat van de toekomst sluit helemaal aan op het DNA van het orkest. En dat vertaalt zich niet alleen in de concertprogramma's en opnames, maar ook in het CffOR-platform (Centre for Future Orchestral Repertoire). Deze online database verzamelt sleutel informatie rond symfonische composities vanaf 2000, en voedt zo een brede wereldwijde dialoog rond het repertoire van de toekomst.

Op internationaal vlak heeft Brussels Philharmonic steeds een eigen plaats gehad, met vanaf de beginjaren uitnodigingen voor de belangrijkste festivals en concertzalen in Europa. Zo speelt het orkest in onder meer Philharmonie de Paris, Musikverein (Wenen), Grosses Festspielhaus (Salzburg), Usher Hall (Edinburgh) en Cadogan Hall (Londen). De internationale vertegenwoordiging door IMG Touring brengt het orkest naar nieuwe podia, zowel binnen als buiten Europa (Japan in 2017, Noord-Amerika in 2019). In maart 2019 stond Brussels Philharmonic voor het eerst in Carnegie Hall in New York.

Een andere specialisatie waarmee Brussels Philharmonic een internationale reputatie opbouwde, is het opnemen van soundtracks bij series, games en films, waaronder de Oscar-winnende muziek voor 'The Artist' (muziek van Ludovic Bource). In eigen land is het orkest vaste partner van Film Fest Gent en MotorMusic, en zijn er jaarlijks concerten met iconische films (zowel blockbusters met bekroonde scores als zwart-wit klassiekers met een nieuwe soundtrack).

Intussen bewees het orkest ook op andere vlakken een pionier te zijn. Naast de vooruitstrevende initiatieven die lopen, waaronder de Tax Shelter, een stichting voor de aankoop van strijkinstrumenten en een partnerschap met Brussels Airlines, schrijft het orkest innovatie bewust in op alle vlakken en niveaus van de werking. Zo dragen de heren van het orkest het Symphonic Sporting Jacket, op maat ontwikkeld door het Belgische Café Costume met technische innovaties op vlak van stof en snit, en werd intendant Gunther Broucke uitgeroepen tot Overheidsmanager van het jaar 2016.

De uiteenlopende cd-reeksen van Brussels Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon, Palazzetto Bru Zane, Warner/Erato Classics, Film Fest Gent, Brussels Philharmonic

Recordings) krijgen internationale bijval, met onder meer een ECHO Klassik, Ceciliaprijs, Choc de Classica de l'année en Diapason d'Or de l'année. Bij Deutsche Grammophon en met Stéphane Denève kwamen intussen 4 cd's uit: een cd rond Prokofiev, twee cd's gewijd aan het 21ste-eeuws repertoire van Guillaume Connesson (waaronder de meest recente dubbel-cd Lost Horizon met solisten Renaud Capuçon en Timothy McAllister) en een album met onder meer het celloconcerto van Fazil Say met soliste Camille Thomas.

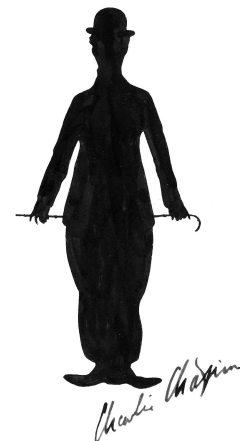
Brussels Philharmonic is een instelling van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

www.brusselsphilharmonic.be

BIENVENU(E)

La magie de Charlie Chaplin opère encore près d'un siècle plus tard, toujours aussi impressionnante, émouvante et irrésistible. Le sympathique vagabond, qui malgré toutes les bonnes intentions du monde se crée toujours des problèmes, fait rire et réfléchir à tout âge.

Le maître des happy ends a composé lui-même la superbe musique de *The Kid*. Un vrai petit bijou.



PROGRAMME

The Kid (1921)

Charles Chaplin, réalisateur & musique (arr. Carl Davis)

Charlie Chaplin : The Tramp

Jackie Coogan : The Kid (John)

Edna Purviance : The Woman

FILMPHILHARMONIC EDITION

Film à l'invitation de Roy Export S.A.S.

Musique à l'invitation de Bourne Co. Music Publishers.

Brussels Philharmonic · Dirk Brossé, chef d'orchestre · Otto Derolez, konzertmeister

SYNOPSIS

Le ton du film est établi par le premier carton : « Un film avec un sourire... et peut être aussi, une larme », tandis qu'un autre carton annonce l'histoire : « La femme dont le péché est d'être mère. »

La femme sort d'un dispensaire, un nourrisson entre les bras. Une courte scène nous montre le père de l'enfant, un jeune artiste qui fait négligemment tomber une photo de la femme dans le feu. La mère abandonne son enfant dans une voiture luxueuse, accompagné d'un mot demandant à la personne qui le trouvera de prendre soin du bébé. Mais la voiture est volée par deux brigands qui déposent le bébé à côté des poubelles dans une petite ruelle.

C'est là que Charlot le trouve, après plusieurs tentatives infructueuses pour se débarrasser de cette nouvelle responsabilité non désirée, il l'emmène dans sa mansarde et se fabrique ingénieusement tout le matériel nécessaire pour pouponner.

Cinq ans plus tard, le Kid est devenu un petit aide-ménager efficace et un collaborateur enthousiaste : il sillonne les rues en cassant des fenêtres et Charlot, qui s'est fait vitrier ambulancier, le suit à la trace pour proposer ses services.

L'enfant tombe malade, et Charlot révèle son histoire à un médecin, qui en réfère aux autorités sociales. Mais Charlot résiste avec acharnement à leurs efforts pour placer l'enfant à l'assistance publique.

La mère, devenue une grande vedette de la scène, offre une récompense à qui lui rendra son fils. Comme le Kid et Charlot trouvent refuge dans un asile de nuit, le patron enlève l'enfant pour obtenir la récompense. De nouveau seul et sans ressources, Charlot s'endort sur les marches du perron et rêve d'un paradis où les gentils et les méchants de ce monde sont tous des anges portant des ailes.

Le péché s'insinue sous la forme d'un ange féminin séducteur. Charlot est tué lors d'une bagarre, et le Kid muni d'ailes pleure sur son corps en sang... jusqu'à ce qu'il soit réveillé par un policier qui le conduit jusqu'à la somptueuse demeure où l'enfant vit désormais avec sa mère retrouvée.

DIRK BROSSÉ, CHEF D'ORCHESTRE

Dirk Brossé est un des compositeurs européens les plus éclectiques et un chef d'orchestre respecté sur la scène internationale. Il célèbre cette année son 60e anniversaire et 40 ans de carrière musicale avec la sortie de son nouveau cd 'Brussels Philharmonic plays Dirk Brossé, ce 25 septembre 2020.

Dirk Brossé est directeur musical et chef d'orchestre du Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, directeur musical du Filmfestival Gent / World Soundtrack Awards et chef d'orchestre du projet 'Star Wars in Concert World Tour'. Dirk Brossé est également professeur de composition et de direction d'orchestre au Conservatoire royal de Gand / School of Arts.

Dirk Brossé a dirigé les plus grands orchestres belges; de par le monde, il fut appelé à diriger des orchestres prestigieux, comme le London Symphony Orchestra, le London Philharmonic Orchestra, le Royal Philharmonic, le Vancouver Opéra, l'Opéra de Lyon, le Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra et l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Dirk Brossé a réalisé plus de 90 enregistrements et a dirigé les salles de concert renommées telles que le Koninklijk Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Seoul Arts Center, Royal Albert Hall London, Royal Opera House Covent Garden London, La Monnaie Bruxelles, Tokyo Forum, Concert Hall Shanghai, Hollywood Bowl et Kimmel Center Philadelphia. En février 2016, Dirk Brossé a fait ses débuts au Carnegie Hall de New York.

Dirk Brossé a composé plus de 400 œuvres – concerti, œuvres symphoniques, oratoires, chants et musique de chambre. Il a aussi écrit la musique de dizaines de films – tels que Boerenpsalm, Daens, The Lovers, Koko Flanel – et des comédies musicales Prince of Africa, Daens, Kuifje, Pauline & Paulette, Ben X, 14-18. Sa musique pour la série télévisée Parade's End (BBC/HBO) a été nommée pour les célèbres Emmy Awards. Il collabore avec des artistes de grande renommée dont José Van Dam, Philip Webb, Claron McFadden, Julian Lloyd Webber, Sabine Meyer, Alison Balsom, Salvatore Accardo, John Williams, Toots Thielemans, Hans Zimmer, Emma Thompson, Kenneth Branagh, Mel Brooks, Sinéad O' Connor, Cristina Branco, Michel Legrand, Youssou N'Dour, Marcel Khalifé, Seth Gaaikema, Alard Blom, Stefan Perceval, Didier Van Cauwelaert et Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Dirk Brossé a été nommé Ambassadeur culturel des Flandres et a reçu la médaille d'honneur du Parlement flamand, le prix Achille Van Ackere, le Joseph Plateau Honorary Award et le Award for Excellence in Cultural Creativity attribué par le Global Thinkers Forum. Il est Citoyen d'honneur de Destelbergen depuis 2010. En 2013, la noblesse héréditaire a été concédée à Dirk Brossé avec le titre de chevalier à titre personnel. Il est membre de l'Académie royale flamande de Belgique des sciences et des arts. Il est Fellow in Arts & Humanities à l'Université libre de Bruxelles. En 2018, il est devenu Commandeur de l'Ordre de Léopold.

www.dirkbrosse.be

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

Fondé en 1935 sous l'égide de l'Institut national de radiodiffusion (INR/NIR), le Brussels Philharmonic a collaboré tout au long de son existence avec de grands chefs et des solistes d'envergure internationale. L'orchestre s'est taillé une réputation enviée dans la création de nouvelles œuvres en collaborant avec des compositeurs de renommée mondiale comme Bartók, Stravinsky et Messiaen. L'orchestre répète et se produit dans son port d'attache historique de Flagey, à Bruxelles, au cœur de l'Europe. Cette position en fait le point de départ idéal pour des concerts à Bruxelles, en Flandre et dans le reste du monde.

Le grand chef d'orchestre français Stéphane Denève assure la direction musicale du Brussels Philharmonic. Sa passion pour la musique du XXI^e siècle et la mission qu'il s'est donnée de tisser un dialogue entre le répertoire du passé et celui du futur s'inscrivent parfaitement dans l'ADN de l'orchestre. En témoignent les programmes de concerts et d'enregistrements, mais aussi la plateforme CffOR (Centre for Future Orchestral Repertoire). Cette base de données en ligne recueille des informations sur les œuvres symphoniques composées depuis le tournant de 2000 et nourrit ainsi un vaste dialogue mondial sur le répertoire du futur.

Le Brussels Philharmonic a toujours eu sa place sur la scène internationale. Depuis sa constitution, les plus grands festivals et les plus grandes salles de concert en Europe l'ont invité sur leurs scènes. Ainsi, il s'est produit notamment à la Philharmonie de Paris, au Musikverein de Vienne, à la Grosses Festspielhaus de Salzbourg, à l'Usher Hall d'Édimbourg et au Cadogan Hall de Londres. Représenté à l'international par IMG Touring, l'orchestre se voit ouvrir de nouvelles portes en Europe et hors de ses frontières (Japon en 2017, Amérique du Nord en 2019). En mars 2019, le Brussels Philharmonic s'est produit pour la première fois au Carnegie Hall de New York. En 2020, il est notamment programmé à l'Elbphilharmonie à Hambourg.

C'est également l'enregistrement de bandes originales de séries, de jeux vidéo et de films, dont la musique oscarisée de *The Artist* (musique de Ludovic Bourque), qui a forgé la réputation internationale du Brussels Philharmonic. Dans son propre pays, l'orchestre est le partenaire régulier du Festival international du Film de Flandre-Gand (Film Fest Gent) et des studios MotorMusic ; il donne chaque année des concerts avec projection de films cultes (des blockbusters aux partitions primées ou des classiques en noir et blanc avec une nouvelle bande-son).

Le Brussel Philharmonic fait également œuvre de pionnier dans d'autres domaines. Parmi ses initiatives innovantes, citons le Tax Shelter, la création d'une fondation pour financer l'achat d'instruments à cordes et le partenariat avec Brussels Airlines. Les musiciens de l'orchestre sont habillés par Café Costume du Symphonic Sporting Jacket, conçu sur mesure. Celui-ci leur permet d'offrir une prestation du plus haut niveau dans le confort et l'élégance.

Les nombreux enregistrements du Brussels Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon, Palazzetto Bru Zane, Warner/Erato Classics, Film Fest Gent, Brussels Philharmonic Recordings) ont connu un succès international, récompensés notamment par un ECHO Klassik, un Prix Cecilia, un CHOC de l'année de Classica et un Diapason d'Or de l'année. L'orchestre a sorti 4 CD chez Deutsche Grammophon sous la direction de Stéphane Denève : un enregistrement consacré à Prokofiev et deux au compositeur contemporain Guillaume Connesson (dont le récent double CD Lost Horizon avec les solistes Renaud Capuçon et Timothy McAllister).

Le Brussels Philharmonic est une institution de la Communauté flamande.

www.brusselsphilharmonic.be

CHARLIE CHAPLIN

Childhood

Charles Spencer Chaplin was born in London, England, on April 16th 1889. His father was a versatile vocalist and actor; and his mother, known under the stage name of Lily Harley, was an attractive actress and singer, who gained a reputation for her work in the light opera field.

Charlie was thrown on his own resources before he reached the age of ten as the early death of his father and the subsequent illness of his mother made it necessary for Charlie and his brother, Sydney, to fend for themselves.

Having inherited natural talents from their parents, the youngsters took to the stage as the best opportunity for a career. Charlie made his professional debut as a member of a juvenile group called "The Eight Lancashire Lads" and rapidly won popular favour as an outstanding tap dancer.

Beginning of his career

When he was about twelve, he got his first chance to act in a legitimate stage show, and appeared as "Billy" the page boy, in support of William Gillette in "Sherlock Holmes". At the close of this engagement, Charlie started a career as a comedian in vaudeville, which eventually took him to the United States in 1910 as a featured player with the Fred Karno Repertoire Company.

He scored an immediate hit with American audiences, particularly with his characterization in a sketch entitled "A Night in an English Music Hall". When the Fred Karno troupe returned to the United States in the fall of 1912 for a repeat tour, Chaplin was offered a motion picture contract.

He finally agreed to appear before the cameras at the expiration of his vaudeville commitments in November 1913; and his entrance in the cinema world took place that month when he joined Mack Sennett and the Keystone Film Company. His initial salary was \$150 a week, but his overnight success on the screen spurred other producers to start negotiations for his services.

At the completion of his Sennett contract, Chaplin moved on to the Essanay Company (1915) at a large increase. Sydney Chaplin had then arrived from England, and took his brother's place with Keystone as their leading comedian.

The following year Charlie was even more in demand and signed with the Mutual Film Corporation for a much larger sum to make 12 two-reel comedies. These include "The Floorwalker", "The Fireman", "The Vagabond", "One A.M." (a production in which he was the only character for the entire two reels with the exception of the entrance of a cab driver

in the opening scene), "The Count", "The Pawnshop", "Behind the Screen", "The Rink", "Easy Street" (heralded as his greatest production up to that time), "The Cure", "The Immigrant" and "The Adventurer".

Gaining independence

When his contract with Mutual expired in 1917, Chaplin decided to become an independent producer in a desire for more freedom and greater leisure in making his movies. To that end, he busied himself with the construction of his own studios. This plant was situated in the heart of the residential section of Hollywood at La Brea Avenue.

Early in 1918, Chaplin entered into an agreement with First National Exhibitors' Circuit, a new organization specially formed to exploit his pictures. His first film under this new deal was "A Dog's Life". After this production, he turned his attention to a national tour on behalf of the war effort, following which he made a film the US government used to popularize the Liberty Loan drive: "The Bond".

His next commercial venture was the production of a comedy dealing with the war. "Shoulder Arms", released in 1918 at a most opportune time, proved a veritable mirthquake at the box office and added enormously to Chaplin's popularity. This he followed with "Sunnyside" and "A Day's Pleasure", both released in 1919.

In April of that year, Chaplin joined with Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and D.W. Griffith to found the United Artists Corporation. B.B. Hampton, in his "History of the Movies" says: "The corporation was organized as a distributor, each of the artists retaining entire control of his or her respective producing activities, delivering to United Artists the completed pictures for distribution on the same general plan they would have followed with a distributing organization which they did not own. The stock of United Artists was divided equally among the founders. This arrangement introduced a new method into the industry. Heretofore, producers and distributors had been the employers, paying salaries and sometimes a share of the profits to the stars. Under the United Artists system, the stars became their own employers. They had to do their own financing, but they received the producer profits that had formerly gone to their employers and each received his share of the profits of the distributing organization."

The Kid (1921)

However, before he could assume his responsibilities with United Artists, Chaplin had to complete his contract with First National. So early in 1921, he came out with a six-reel masterpiece : The Kid, in which he introduced to the screen one of the greatest child actors the world has ever known - Jackie Coogan. The next year, he produced "The Idle Class", in which he portrayed a dual character.

Then, feeling the need of a complete rest from his motion picture activities, Chaplin sailed for Europe in September 1921. London, Paris, Berlin and other capitals on the continent gave him tumultuous receptions. After an extended vacation, Chaplin returned to Hollywood to resume his picture work and start his active association with United Artists.

Under his arrangement with U.A., Chaplin made eight pictures, each of feature length, in the following order:

A Woman of Paris (1923)

was a courageous step in the career of Charles Chaplin. After seventy films in which he himself had appeared in every scene, he now directed a picture in which he merely walked on for a few seconds as an unbilled and unrecognisable extra – a porter at a railroad station. Until this time, every film had been a comedy. A Woman of Paris was a romantic drama. This was not a sudden impulse. For a long time Chaplin had wanted to try his hand at directing a serious film. In the end, the inspiration for A Woman of Paris came from three women. First was Edna Purviance, who had been his ideal partner in more than 35 films. Now, though, he felt that Edna was growing too mature for comedy, and decided to make a film that would launch her on a new career as a dramatic actress.

The Gold Rush (1925)

Chaplin generally strove to separate his work from his private life; but in this case the two became inextricably and painfully mixed. Searching for a new leading lady, he rediscovered Lillita MacMurray, whom he had employed, as a pretty 12-year-old, in The Kid Still not yet sixteen, Lillita was put under contract and re-named Lita Grey. Chaplin quickly embarked on a clandestine affair with her; and when the film was six months into shooting, Lita discovered she was pregnant. Chaplin found himself forced into a marriage which brought misery to both partners, though it produced two sons, Charles Jr and Sydney Chaplin.

The Circus (1928)

"The Circus" won Charles Chaplin his first Academy Award – it was still not yet called the 'Oscar' – he was given it at the first presentations ceremony, in 1929. But as late as 1964, it seemed, this was a film he preferred to forget. The reason was not the film itself, but the deeply fraught circumstances surrounding its making. Chaplin was in the throes of the break-up of his marriage with Lita Grey; and production of The Circus coincided with one of the most unseemly and sensational divorces of twenties Hollywood, as Lita's lawyers sought every means to ruin Chaplin's career by smearing his reputation. As if his domestic troubles were not enough, the film seemed fated to catastrophe of every kind [...] In the late 1960s, after the years spent trying to forget it, Chaplin returned to "The Circus" to re-release it with a new musical score of his own composition. [...] It seemed to symbolize his reconciliation to the film which cost him so much stress.

City Lights (1931)

"City Lights" proved to be the hardest and longest undertaking of Chaplin's career. By the time it was completed he had spent two years and eight months on the work, with almost 190 days of actual shooting. The marvel is that the finished film betrays nothing of this effort and anxiety. Even before he began City Lights the sound film was firmly established. This new revolution was a bigger challenge to Chaplin than to other silent stars. His Tramp character was universal. His mime was understood in every part of the world. But if the Tramp now began to speak in English, that world-wide audience would instantly shrink. Chaplin boldly solved the problem by ignoring speech, and making City Lights in the way

he had always worked before, as a silent film. However he astounded the press and the public by composing the entire score for "City Lights". The premieres were among the most brilliant the cinema had ever seen. In Los Angeles, Chaplin's guest was Albert Einstein; while in London Bernard Shaw sat beside him. "City Lights" was a critical triumph. All Chaplin's struggles and anxieties, it seemed, were compensated by the film which still appears as the zenith of his achievement and reputation.

Modern Times (1936)

Chaplin was acutely preoccupied with the social and economic problems of this new age. In 1931 and 1932 he had left Hollywood behind, to embark on an 18-month world tour. In Europe, he had been disturbed to see the rise of nationalism and the social effects of the Depression, of unemployment and of automation. He read books on economic theory; and devised his own Economic Solution, an intelligent exercise in utopian idealism, based on a more equitable distribution not just of wealth but of work. In 1931 he told a newspaper interviewer, "Unemployment is the vital question . . . Machinery should benefit mankind. It should not spell tragedy and throw it out of work".

The Great Dictator (1940)

When writing "The Great Dictator" in 1939, Chaplin was as famous worldwide as Hitler, and his Tramp character wore the same moustache. He decided to pit his celebrity and humour against the dictator's own celebrity and evil. He benefited – if that is the right word for it, given the times – from his "reputation" as a Jew, which he was not – (he said "I do not have that pleasure"). In the film Chaplin plays a dual role – a Jewish barber who lost his memory in a plane accident in the first war, and spent years in hospital before being discharged into an antisemite country that he does not understand, and Hynkel, the dictator leader of Ptomania, whose armies are the forces of the Double Cross, and who will do anything along those lines to increase his possibilities for becoming emperor of the world. Chaplin's aim is obvious, and the film ends with a now famous and humanitarian speech made by the barber, speaking Chaplin's own words.

Monsieur Verdoux (1947)

The idea was originally suggested by Orson Welles, as a project for a dramatised documentary on the career of the legendary French murder Henri Désiré Landru – who was executed in 1922, having murdered at least ten women, two dogs and one boy. Chaplin was so intrigued by the idea that he paid Welles \$5000 for it. The agreement was signed in 1941, but Chaplin took four more years to complete the script. In the meantime the irritating distractions of a much-publicised and ugly paternity suit had been compensated by his brilliantly successful marriage to Oona O'Neill. In the late 1940s, America's Cold War paranoia reached its peak, and Chaplin, as a foreigner with liberal and humanist sympathies, was a prime target for political witch-hunters. This was the start of Chaplin's last and unhappiest period in the United States, which he was definitively to leave in 1952.

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Limelight (1952)

Not surprisingly, then, in choosing his next subject he deliberately sought escape from disagreeable contemporary reality. He found it in bitter-sweet nostalgia for the world of his youth – the world of the London music halls at the opening of the 20th century, where he had first discovered his genius as an entertainer. With this strong underlay of nostalgia, Chaplin was at pains to evoke as accurately as possible the London he remembered from half a century before and it is clear from the preparatory notes for the film that the character of Calvero had a very similar childhood to Chaplin's own. *Limelight's* story of a once famous music hall artist whom nobody finds amusing any longer may well have been similarly autobiographical as a sort of nightmare scenario. Chaplin's son Sydney plays the young, talented pianist who vies with Calvero for the young ballerina's heart, and several other Chaplin family members participated in the film. It was when on the boat travelling with his family to the London premiere of *Limelight* that Chaplin learned that his re-entry pass to the United States had been rescinded based on allegations regarding his morals and politics. Chaplin therefore remained in Europe, and settled with his family at the *Manoir de Ban* in Corsier sur Vevey, Switzerland, with view of lake and mountains. What a difference from California. He and Oona went on to have four more children, making a total of eight.

A King in New York

With *A King in New York* Charles Chaplin was the first film-maker to dare to expose, through satire and ridicule, the paranoia and political intolerance which overtook the United States in the Cold War years of the 1940s and 50s. Chaplin himself had bitter personal experience of the American malaise of that time. [...] To take up film making again, as an exile, was a challenging undertaking. He was now nearing 70. For almost forty years he had enjoyed the luxury of his own studio and a staff of regular employees, who understood his way of work. Now though he had to work with strangers, in costly and unfriendly rented studios. [...] The film shows the strain. In 1966 he produced his last picture, "*A Countess from Hong Kong*" for Universal Pictures, his only film in colour, starring Sophia Loren and Marlon Brando. The film started as a project called *Stowaway* in the 1930s, planned for Paulette Goddard. Chaplin appears briefly as a ship steward, Sydney once again has an important role, and three of his daughters have small parts in the film. The film was unsuccessful at the box office, but Petula Clark had one or two hit records with songs from the soundtrack music and the music continues to be very popular.

Last Years

Chaplin's versatility extended to writing, music and sports. He was the author of at least four books, "*My Trip Abroad*", "*A Comedian Sees the World*", "*My Autobiography*", "*My*

Life in Pictures" as well as all of his scripts. An accomplished musician, though self-taught, he played a variety of instruments with equal skill and facility (playing violin and cello left-handed).

He was also a composer, having written and published many songs, among them: "Sing a Song"; "With You Dear in Bombay"; and "There's Always One You Can't Forget", "Smile", "Eternally", "You are My Song", as well as the soundtracks for all his films. Charles Chaplin was one of the rare comedians who not only financed and produced all his films (with the exception of "A Countess from Hong Kong"), but was the author, actor, director and soundtrack composer of them as well.

He died on Christmas day 1977, survived by eight children from his last marriage with Oona O'Neill, and one son from his short marriage to Lita Grey.

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