

Robert Shields

From: Jeff Rapsis <silentfilmmusic@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 1:28 AM
To: silentfilmmusic
Subject: Town Hall Theatre to screen 1916 silent film version of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' on Sunday, 5/9 with live music
Attachments: 20K_leagues_under_sea_B.jpg; 20K_leagues_under_sea_C.jpg;
20K_leagues_under_sea_A.jpg

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Town Hall Theatre to screen original 1916 silent film version of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea'

Early adaptation of Jules Verne classic pioneered underwater photography; shown with live music on Sunday, May 9

WILTON, N.H.—The original silent film version of the Jules Verne classic '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1916) will be shown with live music on Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Theatre, 40 Main St., Wilton, N.H.

The screening is free to the public; a donation of \$10 per person is suggested to support the Town Hall Theatre's silent film series.

The Town Hall Theatre continues to observe procedures to comply with all state and CDC public health guidelines. Capacity is limited to 50 percent; patrons are required to maintain social distance and wear masks until seated.

Live music will be provided by Jeff Rapsis, a New Hampshire-based silent film accompanist.

In production for more than two years by Universal, the original silent film version of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' is an epic retelling of the classic Jules Verne novel, and with elements from other Verne stories mixed in.

Allen Holubar stars as the domineering Captain Nemo, who rescues the passengers of an American naval vessel after ramming them with his iron-clad steampunk submarine, The Nautilus.

Incorporating material from Verne's 'Mysterious Island,' the film also follows the adventures of a group of Civil War soldiers whose hot-air balloon crash lands on an exotic island, where they encounter the untamed "Child of Nature" (Jane Gail).

Calling itself "The First Submarine Photoplay Ever Filmed," the film is highlighted by pioneering underwater photography, including an underwater funeral and a deep sea diver's battle with a giant cephalopod.

The film, directed by Stuart Paton, was filmed largely in the Bahamas to take advantage of shallow seas and bright sunshine.

Several methods were devised to capture scenes underwater, including a sort of "reverse periscope lens" that used mirrors in long tubes to enable a camera onboard ship to film below the surface.

The film has little in common with a later adaptation released in 1954 by Walt Disney Studios and starring James Mason.

In honor of extraordinary technical and artistic achievement, the silent version of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' was added to the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress.

Accompanist Jeff Rapsis will create a musical score for '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' live during the screening, in the manner of theater organists during the height of silent cinema.

"For most silent films, including '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,' there was never any sheet music and no official score," Rapsis said. "So creating original music on the spot to help the film's impact is all part of the experience of silent cinema."

"That's one of the special qualities of silent cinema," Rapsis said. "Although the film itself is well over a century old, each screening is a unique experience — a combination of the movie, the music, and the audience reaction."

The original silent film version of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1916) will be screened with live music on Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Theatre, 40 Main St., Wilton, N.H. Free admission; a donation of \$10 per person is suggested to support the Town Hall Theatre's silent film series.

For more information, visit www.wiltontownhalltheatre.com or call (603) 654-3456. For more about the music, visit www.jeffrapsis.com.

IMAGE CAPTIONS

CAPTION A: Original promotional artwork for '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1916), an early big screen adaptation of the Jules Verne story. The film will be screened with live music on Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Theatre, 40 Main St., Wilton, N.H. Free admission; a donation of \$10 per person is suggested to support the Town Hall Theatre's silent film series.

CAPTION B: A view of Captain Nemo's submarine 'Nautilus' in '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1916), an early big screen adaptation of the Jules Verne story. The film will be screened with live music on Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Theatre, 40 Main St., Wilton, N.H. Free admission; a donation of \$10 per person is suggested to support the Town Hall Theatre's silent film series.

CAPTION C: The dustjacket appearing on the novelization of '20,000 Leagues Under the Sea' (1916), an early big screen adaptation of the Jules Verne story. The film will be screened with live music on Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m. at the Town Hall Theatre, 40 Main St., Wilton, N.H. Free admission; a donation of \$10 per person is suggested to support the Town Hall Theatre's silent film series.

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Images attached.

More high-resolution digital images available upon request.