

# Frank Borzage

Frank Borzage directed over 100 films during his 40-year career, most of which centered on his idealized vision of romantic love. Borzage's earliest films, mainly westerns and melodramas, were made for the Thomas Ince studio. His first film, *PITCH O'CHANCE* (1915), in which he also acted, is one of the few from this period that have survived. He later worked at a number of different studios before joining Fox Film Corporation where he made his reputation with such silent films as *LAZYBONES*, which emphasizes the religious theme that is subtly present in many of his films.

*7TH HEAVEN* and *STREET ANGEL*, which made stars of Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell, are examples of Borzage's pioneering method for eliciting sensitive performances from his actors. *7TH HEAVEN* earned him the first Academy Award ever given for Best Director and also garnered Oscars for Janet Gaynor as Best Actress and Benjamin Glazer for Best Writing-Adaptation. He also won a second Oscar for his 1931 film *BAD GIRL*. Borzage's last film, *THE BIG FISHERMAN* (1959), starring Howard Keel and Susan Kohner, was adapted from



*Humoresque*, pictured here, was released by Famous Players-Lasky Corp. during 1920 and directed by Frank Borzage.

Lloyd C. Douglas's novel about the life of Saint Peter.

New York and the Library of Congress.

All of Borzage's sound films have survived although at least 46 of his earlier films are thought to be lost. Of the 31 films shown in the Borzage retrospective organized by the UCLA Film and Television Archive, eight have been preserved by UCLA including *AFTER TOMORROW*, *YOUNG AMERICA*, *LILIOM*, the 1933 version of *SECRETS* (which marks Mary Pickford's final screen appearance) and *HISTORY IS MADE AT NIGHT*. Other films have been restored by the Museum of Modern Art in

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## FILMS

(this is only a partial list – consult the Archive Research and Study Center for further listings)

### As Director

*Humoresque* (1920). Cosmopolitan Productions. Scenario, Frances Marion. Based on a story by Fannie Hurst. Study Copy: VA 4337 M

*Lucky Star* (1929). Fox Film Corp. Scenario, Sonya Levien. Based on a story by Tristram Tupper. Study Copy: VA 19995 M

*Liliom* (1930). Fox Film Corp. Writer, S.N. Behrman and Sonya Levien. Based on the play by Ferenc Molnár. Study Copy: VA 20022 M

*Bad Girl* (1931). Fox Film Corp. Writer, Edwin Burke. Based on a novel and play by Viña Delmar. Study Copy: VA 19474 M

*Farewell to Arms* (1932). Paramount. Writers, Benjamin Glazer and Oliver H.P. Garrett. Based on the novel by Ernest Hemingway. Study Copy: DVD 3036 M

*Man's Castle* (1933). Columbia Pictures Corp. Writer, Jo Swerling. Based on the play by Lawrence Hazard. Study Copy: VA 1106 M

*Secrets* (1933). The Pickford Corp. Writer, Frances Marion. Based on a play by Rudolf Besier, May Edinton. Study Copy: VA 7916 M

*History is Made at Night* (1937). Walter Wanger Productions. Writers, Gene Town and Graham Baker. Study Copy: VD 929 M

*Three Comrades* (1938). MGM. Writers, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Edward E. Paramore. Based on a novel by Erich Marie Remarque. Study Copy: DVD 7339 M

*Stage Door Canteen* (1943). Principal Artists Productions. Writer, Delmer Daves. Study Copy: VA 13577 M.

*The Spanish Main* (1945). RKO. Writers, George Worthing and Herman J. Mankiewicz. Based on a story by Aeneas MacKenzie. Study Copy: VA 18568 M

### As Performer

*Every Inch a Man* (191?) Thomas Ince Productions. With William S. Hart. Study Copy: VA 10395 M

## PRINT RESOURCES

(for more information consult the UCLA Arts Library)

Belton, John. *The Hollywood Professionals: Howard Hawks, Frank Borzage, Edgar G. Ulmer*. London: Tantivy Press, 1974.

Lamster, Frederick. *Souls Made Great Through Love and Adversity: The Film Work of Frank Borzage*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981.