

4 out of 5  
dentists  
recommend

# DR. FILM

"Movie history for the digital age."

for their  
patients  
who chew film



PREVIEW PACKAGE



## **What is *Dr. Film*?**

*Dr. Film* is a show that attempts to entertain and teach at the same time. Rather than being simply a standard talking head, Dr. Film is an actual character who has likes and dislikes. The scripts are written to hide some of the “talky” bits by inserting some comedic content. There will be an inherent tension in the show between Dr. Film’s desire to show films and his dislike of some of the people who frustrate him.

## **Why not just do it the regular way?**

The “regular way” is to chop relevant films into clips and have the narrator tie them together. There’s no sense of completeness and sometimes the context is lost. *Dr. Film* attempts to widen the appeal a little by focusing on one particular topic (e.g., an actor, a genre, a studio) per program. The character talks a bit, introduces a short or feature, and then comes back to talk more about it afterward.

## **But it’s still just a clip show, right?**

*Dr. Film*’s goal is to present complete shorts and features when possible. Most documentaries annoy film historians because they show only the highlights, because it’s harder to show historical context in an entertaining way. *Dr. Film* includes longer, more complete clips with more history when necessary... but in a fun way.

## **So it’s making fun of old movies, like *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, right?**

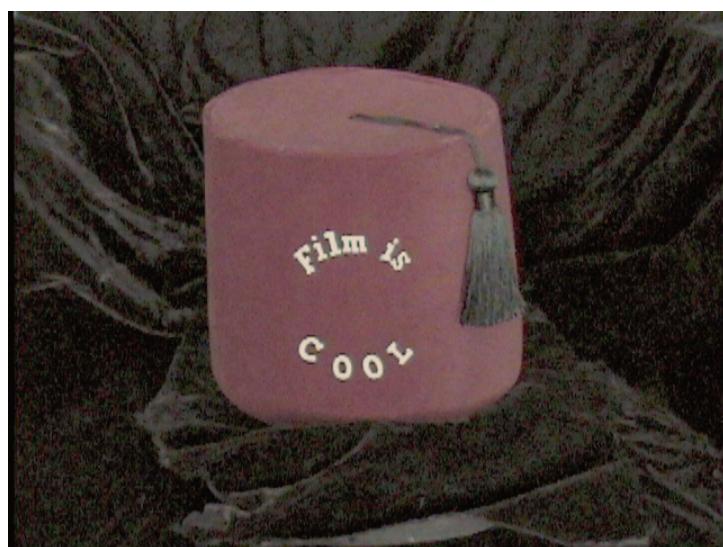
Absolutely not. Dr. Film is portrayed as a somewhat pompous character so that he, rather than the films, can be the object of derision. Let’s be clear: if the film is bad, the program won’t shy away from some critical comments, but the goal will be to show things that represent the whole spectrum from *Gone With the Wind* to *Plan 9 from Outer Space*.

## **I watched the pilot and it’s not like the Kevin Brownlow documentaries.**

That’s right. The opening shot of a Kevin Brownlow documentary costs more than an entire episode of *Dr. Film*. We love Brownlow, but his goal is a bit different from ours. Kevin is flying first class, while Dr. Film is taking the bus. That’s fine, because sometimes you get a better view from the bus! One of the jokes in the show refers to how cheap Dr. Film is... the low budget is actually a source of humor.

## **So who’s behind *Dr. Film*?**

*Dr. Film* is written and produced by Eric Grayson, an internationally recognized film historian, author, and collector. The show uses actual film material from his own collection and will be cleared by a real-life entertainment attorney. Each show will be delivered to you ready-to-air.



# Characters



**Dr. Film:** He is the honorary head of the *Midnight Film Society*, a group that seeks out obscure old movies. This is because he has a great collection of movies, and not because anyone at the *Midnight Film Society* likes him. In high school, you would have liked to beat this guy up—after you made him do your algebra homework. He's pretty sharp and he knows it, but let's be charitable and say he's lacking in the finer social graces. He does know his stuff about film, and he will talk about it endlessly with great enthusiasm. Unfortunately, film is the only thing that gets him very excited. He will skimp on anything and everything to make sure his collection of old movies is kept safe.

He works from the Dr. Film Control Room above the basement film vaults, where his assistant Anamorphia is stationed.

**Anamorphia:** Much like Rochester, Jack Benny's assistant, Anamorphia is really more competent than her boss. It is she who keeps the vaults organized and finds each reel for Dr. Film. Her knowledge of film history may not be quite so extensive as his, but she doesn't toot her own horn the way he does. Dr. Film and Anamorphia have never gotten along very well, because she thinks he's a blowhard cheapskate and he thinks she's an ungrateful employee. This is probably a fair assessment on both sides. She takes a special delight in baiting him and in cutting him off when he starts to ramble about some bit of film trivia. Not only does this keep the show moving, but it also keeps him from going off the deep end. Anamorphia never seems to leave the basement. All of Dr. Film's orders are barked at her through a hole in the floor between them. We only get to see her through a peep hole that looks like a submarine periscope. Heaven knows why Dr. Film has rigged up such a contraption.



## **Cast Information and Interviews for Press Releases**

### **Dr. Film (Eric Grayson) BIO:**

Eric Grayson is a film historian and collector living in Indianapolis. He specializes in 16mm and 35mm film screenings and strives to mesh historical context with entertainment. Most of his presentations include period trailers and short films in combination with a historic feature. His vast library of obscure material has been used in several productions, notably the A&E Biography segment on Ernie Kovacs. He has written articles for *Filmfax*, *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History*, and *The American Midwest: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*. Eric has provided films and lectures in places too numerous to list here. He has a technical background as an electrical engineer with a degree from Purdue University.

### **Interview with Eric Grayson**

Q: You're not not a full-time actor, are you?

A: I'm a film guy with some acting experience. I've studied actors for years. Now I just have to do more of it myself.

Q: So how did you get involved in *Dr. Film*?

A: I teach about and show old films, and I keep finding that no one knows about them anymore. I thought something needed to be done to help teach about film history in an entertaining way.

Q: How did you get interested in vintage films?

A: That dates back to about 1973, when I bugged my mother and grandmother to let me stay up to watch *Frankenstein* on *Nightmare Theater* hosted by local Indianapolis TV host Sammy Terry.

Q: When did you start collecting films?

A: I started with video tapes in about 1981, mostly things I taped from television. I began collecting 16mm films in 1989, and I moved into 35mm in 1991.

Q: Do you make a living doing this?

A: Not much of one, but I try. I teach film history, do computer consulting, and do film shows. I was a computer programmer for 20 years until they outsourced me.

Q: A computer programmer? Then why are you mixed up in an ancient technology like film?

A: I like to spread the word that film is cool. I have a background in digital imaging. I used to write programs to enhance photographs. After a while, you start to see that the math predicts that film produces better pictures and more rich color than video can.

Q: Is it that much better?

A: Oh, yes. If you look at a TV screen, you see it's made up of little tiny lines. The best DVDs sold today are 525 lines. More lines means sharper picture. Graphics people use 2000 lines for 16mm films and 4000 lines for 35mm prints. That's almost 100 times the sharpness of a DVD. Even HDTV is only 1080 lines, and don't get me started about compression artifacts. On 35mm, I can read the nameplate for Uncle Billy's mynah bird in *It's a Wonderful Life*. You can't see it on video at all. It's too small.

Q: What's the name?

A: Watch the movie.

Q: Other than the quality, what draws you to film?

A: There are things that you can't get on video or DVD. There are those little delightful tidbits that you find in dumpsters and barns and warehouses, stuff that's never been released on video and never will be. Besides, the quality of a good print on film is much better than video.

Q: What do you think of the new digital projectors in cinemas? Will they replace film?

A: Those are different from what you can get at home, and they're a lot better. Most of them are 2000 lines, but they're starting to go to 4000 lines, which rivals 35mm film. If, someday, no new film is made, my collection and others will go on. There's so much stuff that will never be converted to the new format, just like there were many things that never made it to VHS and DVD.

Q: What's your favorite movie?

A: I don't know. I just love movies and have since I was a kid. I have lots of films I love and go back to, from *The Unknown* (1927) to *It's a Gift* (1934) or *North by Northwest* (1959). But I'd say that my favorite film is that one I haven't seen yet... it's just waiting for me to find it and put it in the projector.

Q: If you run a print from your collection, does the studio get paid? They own the rights for the film, after all.

A: Well, I specialize in public domain films, which have expired copyrights. These are especially interesting to me, because most of them are ignored and no one cares about them. If it happens that a particular film is copyrighted, we always get permission first.

Q: Are old films valuable? Is there much of a market for them?

A: No, not really. People aren't educated about films any more. Once upon a time, you could turn on your TV and see WC Fields, Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, and lots of others. Now, you're lucky if you see them at all. No one knows what they're missing.

Q: It seems you want to tell them.

A: Absolutely. When I teach film history, I tell people that it's my goal to show people that there was comedy before Adam Sandler, that there was science fiction before *Star Wars*, and that black and white doesn't mean BAD. You might not like everything you see, but try it. It's like ethnic food. I just had Turkish food for the first time last year, and I'm glad I tried it. It's wonderful. You might just think that Hope and Crosby are hilarious, or that Lon Chaney is too spooky for words, or that Buster Keaton and Ernie Kovacs make you scratch your head in wonder. It's out there for you to see.

## Cast Information and Interviews for Press Releases

**Glory-June Greiff (Anamorphia) BIO:** Glory-June Greiff is a professional narrator and a performer of song and story, spoken word and first-person characters. She worked for several years in radio and eventually evolved into a public historian and preservation activist. She researches and writes history and tends to run into old dilapidated buildings with wild abandon. Glory's first full-length book, *Remembrance, Faith and Fancy: Outdoor Public Sculpture in Indiana*, was published in 2005; she has just completed a book on the history of Indiana's state parks. Glory hails from the lake country on the Indiana-Michigan border. She earned a B.S. in Radio-Television and English from Butler University and a master's degree in Public History from Indiana University.

### Interview with Glory-June:

Q: So you're the real actress in *Dr. Film*, right?

A: If you mean with acting experience, then, yes, I've done a fair amount of work. I was a professional radio personality for several years; I've done some stage work, voiceovers—and singing as well. And I have interpreted several historical characters in appearances around my state.

Q: So you majored in theater?

A: No, I have a bachelor's in Radio-TV and a master's in Public History. History is what I do now—mostly.

Q: History?

A: I try to save old buildings and help folks see the value and the wonder of the past. I write National Register nominations, articles, and books, among other things. I do a lot of talks, illustrated with real Kodachrome slides.

Q: That's not really so much different from preserving old film.

A: No, it isn't. And in fact that is how I met Eric.

Q: So you must love old films too!

A: Absolutely! And films are wonderful history, telling a lot about the times in which they were made.

Q: Is Eric as obnoxious in real life as he is in *Dr. Film*?

A: He would like me to say he isn't.

Q: What's a historian doing acting?

A: I like to do a lot of different things. That's good, because none of the things I do pays very much. Besides, *Dr. Film* involves both acting and history.

Q: Was it a lot of fun to shoot?

A: Sometimes. But remember, when you have one guy who's the writer, director, producer, and so-called star, there are problems—often just with logistics! The best part was that his sister brought great food to the shoots.

## Coming soon to a TV near you!

So, you ask, after such an auspicious beginning, could there be additional episodes of *Dr. Film*? Here are some shows ready to be produced from Mr. Grayson's existing stash:

- a history of color in the movies with some clips and some complete shorts.
- a tribute to stop-motion animation, with complete shorts by Willis O'Brien, Charley Bowers, Ladislaus Starevitch, and maybe even Ray Harryhausen.
- an episode dedicated to Lee Tracy, with a biography and a showing of his complete feature, *The Payoff* (1942).
- a collection of eclectic shorts from the early 1930s, most of which have never been seen, including *NVA Fundraiser* (with Walter Huston, Robert Montgomery, and Jimmy Durante), an interview with James Cagney, and some other rare bits.
- an exploration of Boris Karloff's early career, with clips from *Without Benefit of Clergy* (1920), *Parisian Nights* (1926), a chapter of two of *King of the Kongo* (1929), and some surprises.
- a showing of the nearly lost picture *Life Returns* (1934) with a discussion of the history of the film and actors in it, focusing on the fascinating, controversial story of Dr. Robert E. Cornish.
- a previously lost feature by silent comedian Monty Banks.
- tributes to Dr. Film's favorite comedians, using rare clips and shorts, including WC Fields, Ernie Kovacs, Carole Lombard, and maybe Buster Keaton.
- a discussion of writer-producer Gene Stratton-Porter, with clips from some films based on her books and a showing of *Laddie* (1940).
- a salute to 1930s governmental propaganda films, including *Mother's Helper* (with ZaSu Pitts and El Brendel), some other NRA shorts, plus *The River* and *The Plow That Broke the Plains*, complete with extensive history behind the making of the films.
- a salute to 1940s governmental propaganda films, including parts of *Why We Fight*, *Private Snafu*, some complete Army/Navy Screen Magazines, and, maybe a PG-13 VD training film that is not graphic, but full of implication.

Shows will always be tailored to highlight material that is not generally available on video or cable showings, and material that has some historical interest. We will bias the scripts toward showing complete features and shorts whenever possible.



4 out of 5  
dentists  
recommend

# DR. FILM

"Movie history for the digital age."

for their  
patients  
who chew film



Visit our web site at <http://www.drfilm.net>

See the Dr. Film fan page on Facebook... search for Dr. Film, or if you like to type:  
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=134986915574>

Download this document for yourself:  
<http://www.drfilm.net/promo.pdf>