



Il Cinema Ritrovato

XXVI edition
Bologna, 23rd-30th June

AN UNPUBLISHED SUBJECT BY CHARLES CHAPLIN INSPIRED BY BALLETS RUSSES GREAT DANCER VACLAV NIJINSKY: “CAREER IS NOT THE FULFILLMENT OF MAN’S DESIRES”

Discovered some unpublished handwritten notes of an entirely new subject by Charles Chaplin and partially merged into *Limelight*, 60 years after its realization

Recovered also four new photographs of Chaplin and Buster Keaton on the set of *Limelight*

An unpublished and complete subject (inspired by *Ballets Russes* great dancer Vaclav Nijinsky) never realized by Charles Chaplin and only partially merged into his masterpiece *Limelight*, a bitter reflection on the old age, where a 63-year-old Chaplin wanted another big star of the silent films by his side, **Buster Keaton**.

“The theme of the play is that a career is not the fulfillment of man’s desires, but only a road leading to his destiny”: these are the **opening words of the subject** recovered among Charles Chaplin’s precious papers.

The discovery is the result of an exhaustive work made on the director’s papers since ten years – it started in 2002 – by the **Charlie Chaplin Project of the Cineteca di Bologna**: an impressive effort which is extremely important to discover more and more features of one of the biggest geniuses of the Twentieth Century.

The research, made for the **60th anniversary of *Limelight*** (realized in **1952**), will be presented on **Friday 29th June** by **Cecilia Cenciarelli** (manager of the Chaplin Archive of the Cineteca di Bologna) and **David Robinson** (one of the most renowned international scholars on Charles Chaplin) during the **Cinema Ritrovato festival**, in its XXVI edition, promoted by the Cineteca di Bologna.

Chaplin e Nijinsky met in Los Angeles, when the dancer – on tour with the legendary *Les Ballets Russes* created by Sergej Djagilev – visited Chaplin Studios, during the making of *Easy Street* (1916-1917). He was **fascinated by Chaplin's art: "You are a dancer"**.

Twenty years later, that meeting was still in the director's mind and led him to a subject (all the handwritten notes by Chaplin have been recovered) called with the **name of Naginsky**.

All the following parts of the project presented some recurring elements, as the difficult relationship between the dancer's devotion to his profession and love, and the troubles concerning a dancer's career, who was much younger than him: these are the main topics that we can find in *Limelight*, the last major film by Charles Chaplin.

The connection between this unpublished subject and the film that Chaplin realized, *Limelight*, seems clear in every basic idea: genius and loneliness, art and old age. In fact, these are the **traits used by Chaplin to portray the main character**: "Naginsky, the great genius of the Russian ballet, was a simple, shy, inarticulate man who came from humble origins. He was the son of a poor cobbler who could not afford to give him the education that he desired".

These are the dramatic intents, written by Chaplin: "to show the genius as a dancer. To show his relationship with the members of the company. To show how he intercedes with Degaloff on behalf of one of the members of the cast. To show his sense of justice. To show his loyalty to an old member of the cast who has been drinking because he is too old to dance".

Sixty years after the release of *Limelight*, these precious papers, held by the Chaplin Archive, have now dug up, together with some **unpublished photographs of Charles Chaplin e Buster Keaton** on set, thanks to the cataloguing and digitalization work made by the Chaplin Project. They add a new dimension to Chaplin's biography and to the genesis of the film.

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22nd June preview of the restored *Once Upon a Time in America*

23rd – 30th June

Venue

Piazza Maggiore

Cinema Lumière (via Azzo Gardino, 65)

Cinema Arlecchino (via Lame, 57)

Cinema Jolly (via Marconi, 14)

Biblioteca Renzo Renzi (via Azzo Gardino, 65)

Sala Cervi e Sala espositiva (via Riva di Reno, 72)

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