

## Document Citation

Title	<b>Charles Chaplin's modern times</b>
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Kino International Corporation</i>
Date	
Type	press kit
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	13
Subjects	Chaplin, Charlie (1889-1977), Walworth, London, Great Britain
Film Subjects	Modern times, Chaplin, Charlie, 1936

**KINO**  
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

P R E S E N T S

Chaplin's masterpiece returns to the big screen in a new  
35mm restoration.

**CHARLES CHAPLIN'S**

**MODERN  
TIMES**

**Contact: Larsen Associates**

Karen Larsen, Caroline Hanni

And Tim Buckwalter

Telephone 415 957-1205

**Press Contact: Rodrigo Brandão at Kino International**

(212) 629-6880 or [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)

**PRESSBOOK**

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)



## MODERN TIMES

### CREW

Director/Producer/Writer – CHARLES CHAPLIN  
Assistant Directors – CARTER DE HAVEN, HENRY BERGMAN  
Photography – ROLAND TOTHEROH, IRA MORGAN  
Art Directors – CHARLES D. HALL, RUSSELL SPENCER  
Music – CHARLES CHAPLIN  
Arrangers – EDWARD POWELL, DAVID RAKSIN  
Musical Director – ALFRED NEWMAN  
Musical themes used in addition to original compositions: 'Halleluiah, I'm a Bum', 'Prisoners' Song' (C. Massey), 'How Dry Am I?', 'In the Evening By the Moonlight' (Bland), 'Je cherche après Titine' (Duncan and Daniderff)

### CAST

Charles Chaplin – FACTORY WORKER  
Paulette Goddard – GAMINE  
Henry Bergman – CAFÉ OWNER  
Stanley J. ('Tiny') Sandford – BIG BILL / WORKER  
Chester Conklin – MECHANIC  
Hank Mann – BURGLAR  
Louis Natheaux – BURGLAR  
Stanley Blystone – SHERIFF COULER  
Allan Garcia – COMPANY BOSS  
Sam Stein – FOREMAN  
Juana Sutton – WOMAN WITH BUTTONED DRESS  
Jack Low – WORKER  
Walter James – WORKER  
Dick Alexander – CONVICT  
Dr Cecil Reynolds – PRISON CHAPLAIN  
Myra McKinney – CHAPLAIN' S WIFE  
Lloyd Ingraham – PRISON GOVERNOR  
Heinie Conklin – WORKER  
John Rand, Murdoch McQuarrie – CONVICTS

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)





## MODERN TIMES

### SYNOPSIS

Playing a factory worker struggling to survive in an unidentified industrialized society, Charlie Chaplin created in MODERN TIMES one of the most elaborate cinematic critiques of mass production and the mechanization of 20th-century life. As Chaplin's charming yet hapless Tramp executes some of his most famous slapstick routines, he accidentally ends up in the middle of a communist rally and falls in love with a street waif played by Chaplin's then real-life partner Paulette Goddard.



### Technical Specs:

Year: 1936  
Aspect Ratio: 1.33:1  
Duration: 87 Minutes  
Format: 35mm  
Country of origin: U.S.  
B&W  
Silent

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)

**KINO**  
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## MODERN TIMES

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT  
(Continued)

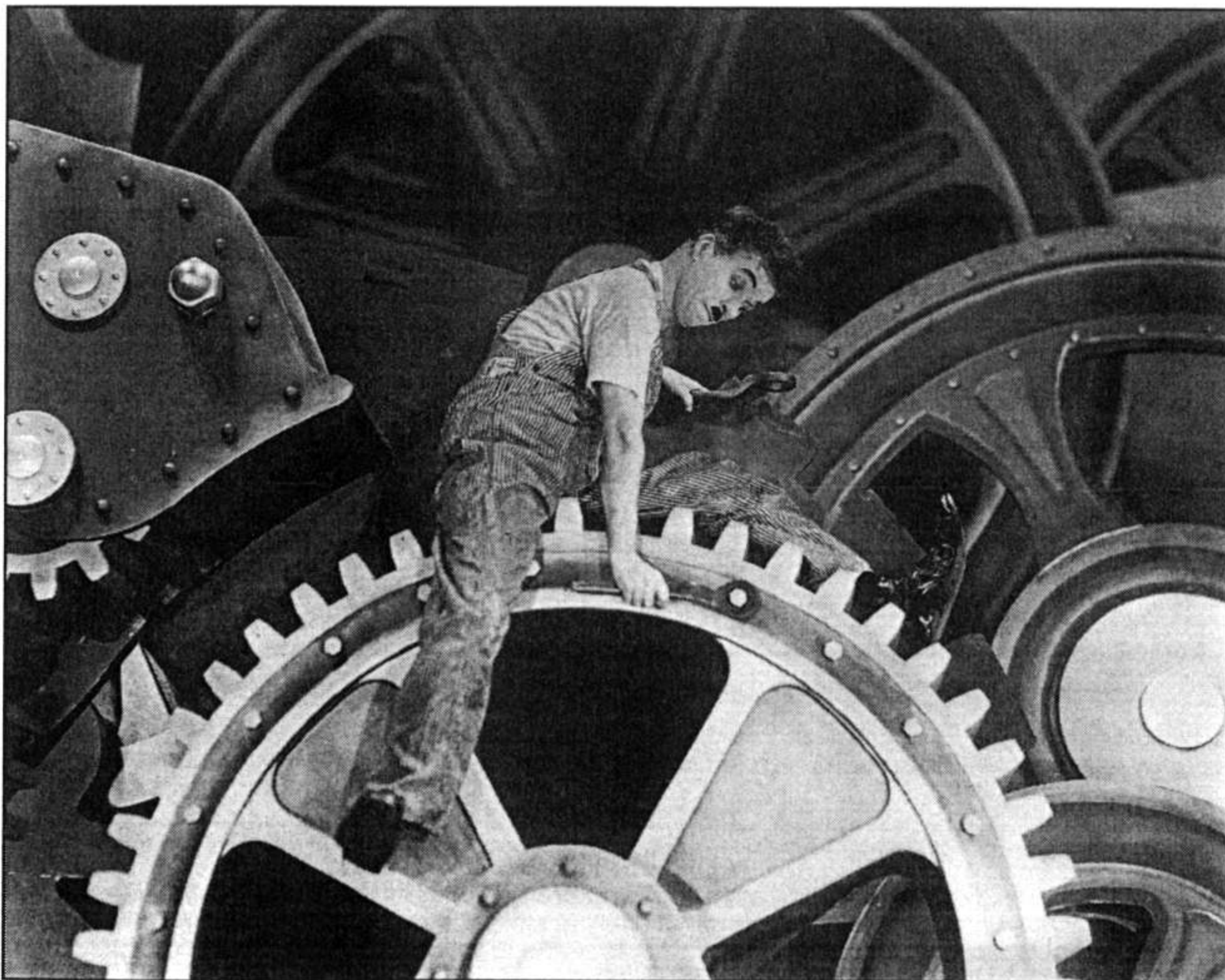
JANUARY 12th, 1936 - Postproduction ends.

FEBRUARY 5th, 1936 - World première at the Rivoli Theater, New York.

FEBRUARY 11th, 1936 - London première at the Tivoli Theatre.

FEBRUARY 12th, 1936 - Hollywood première at Grauman's Chinese Theater.

MARCH 6th, 1936 - Paris première at the Théâtre Marigny.



KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)



# **KINO** I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## **MODERN TIMES**

### **THE DIGITAL RESTORATION**

In 2001, the Chaplin heirs concluded a search for a worldwide partner by signing with international film producer, sales agent and distributor MK2. To celebrate their new partnership, the Chaplin family and MK2 have launched a high-definition digital restoration of "Modern Times", a first for a Chaplin film. Unveiled at the closing night of the 2003 edition of the Cannes Film Festival, the digital restoration of Modern Times used Scanlab's state-of-the-art digital system, which was also used for the digital post-production in 2K-resolution films such as *Irréversible*, *Demonlover*, *The Pianist*, and *Swimming Pool*.

The HD scan of the internegative is carried out on a Spirit telecine and recorded on a Specter machine which reads in real time the digitized film on HD hard disks and screens it on a DLP digital movie projector. During the digitization process, color corrections can be made. For a restoration of the film in black and white, the aim is to regenerate the original contrast that wear and tear has diminished over the course of time.

Automatic scratch reduction filters are used to eliminate large and small dust particles and defects due to voluntary and involuntary deterioration (e. g. Customs stamps). Every frame of every reel is treated on a graphics palette. Certain shots are also stabilized, one image at a time, to restore the original stability. For Modern Times, a total of 126,000 frames were treated.

When the grader-restorer has had his work approved by the producers, the digital files are sent to the film recording ArriLaser system. This recorder comprises 3 lasers (red, green, blue) which print an internegative. In the case of "Modern Times", only the blue laser is used to print a 2234 black-and-white internegative. This is then given to the lab, LTC which handles the photochemical work and makes new prints for theatrical release.

**KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)**





## **MODERN TIMES**

### **THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

**1911** - F. W. Taylor, an American engineer and economist, publishes a book entitled "Principles of Scientific Management" in which he presents his theories on the scientific management of work. "Taylorism" sweeps across the USA, and then Europe. As the term suggests, the scientific management of work consists of scientifically studying the workers' production process and then organizing the company in the most rational, profitable way possible. Taylor reorganized the production process based on a vertical and horizontal division: vertical in that the design and commands are the exclusive responsibility of the management - the worker merely executes the management's orders and is not paid to think; and horizontal in that the work is broken down into basic tasks.

**1925** - Ford's 10 millionth car rolls off the production line (the 25 millionth in 1937). Henry Ford, who set up the Ford Motor Company in 1903, applied Taylor's ideas in two areas which led to the birth of "Fordism":

- The development of production line work: it is no longer the men who set the pace but the conveyor belt. The worker becomes simply a cog in the machine.
- The social application of Taylor's ideas: Ford's workers are the best paid in the United States, not as an act of altruism, but because Ford rightly thought that, in so doing, his first customers would be his employees.

**1930** - The Great Depression starts in the U.S.

**1931** - A nous la liberté ("Liberty for Us") by René Clair is released in France.

- Chaplin leaves Hollywood for an 18-month tour of the world. He meets Gandhi and Einstein, and travels widely in Europe.

**1932** - Chaplin meets Paulette Goddard.

**1933** - Preparation of the film begins.

**AUGUST, 1934** - Final version of the screenplay.

**OCTOBER 11th, 1934** - The shoot begins.

**AUGUST 30th, 1935** - The shoot ends.

**KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com**





## MODERN TIMES

### The Charles Chaplin Biography ( 1889-1977)

Charles Spencer Chaplin was born in London on the 16th of April, 1889. His parents, Charles and Hannah, were music hall singers who separated before Charles was three years old. Mrs Chaplin struggled to bring up Charles and his older step-brother, born illegitimate, despite her own failing health (she was eventually confined in mental hospitals). Often living in extreme poverty, the boys spent part of their infancy in homes for destitute children.

At 10 years old, however, Charles embarked on his professional career, as a member of a troupe of juvenile clog-dancers. For several years he played Billy the pageboy in touring productions of Sherlock Holmes, even appearing in the role in London's West End. Other jobs in the music hall led to his eventual recruitment by Fred Karno, the leading impresario of comedy sketches. Chaplin's exceptional skills for comedy quickly made him a star of the Karno company. In late 1913, while touring the American music hall circuits, he was recruited by Mack Sennett for the Keystone Comedy Company in Hollywood and embarked on a long series of one and two-reel films. For the second of these he created the costume and make-up which were to become famous. Within a year, he was on the road to international fame and affection.

Always in quest of greater creative independence, Chaplin was continually moving between film companies. In 1918 he established his own studio and in 1919 he joined Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford and D.W. Griffith in founding their own distribution organization United Artists.

With masterpieces like *The Immigrant*, *Shoulder Arms*, *The Kid* and *The Gold Rush*, Chaplin brought new dimensions to comedy. His formidable skills expanded beyond his performance and gag invention to character studies, emotions and social commentary. The coming of talking pictures was a greater problem for Chaplin than for other silent film stars. He had built up a worldwide audience through the universal language of pantomime. In his first sound films, *City Lights* and *Modern Times* he continued to make silent films, using the new medium only to provide synchronized musical accompaniments. When he finally embarked on dialogue films, with *The Great Dictator* (1940) he integrated sound and speech into his repertoire with adept skill.

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com





## MODERN TIMES

### The Charles Chaplin Biography – Continued (1889-1977)

Chaplin had enjoyed a universal idolatry granted to few; but in the paranoia of America's post- Second World War years he came increasingly under attack from the political right for his suspected radical views. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, under its notorious chief J. Edgar Hoover, orchestrated a much- publicized paternity suit against him which further eroded his popularity. In 1952 he chose to permanently set up residence in Switzerland rather than to continue living under a cloud in the United States. In Europe he made three more films, published two autobiographical books and continued to write scripts and compose new musical accompaniments for his old silent films practically until his death, in the early hours of Christmas Day 1977.

#### Filmography:

##### 1914

Making a Living / Kid Auto Races at Venice / Mabel's Strange Predicament  
Between Showers / A Film Johnnie / Tango Tangles  
His Favorite Pastime / Cruel, Cruel Love / The Star Boarder  
Mabel at the Wheel / Twenty Minutes of Love / Caught in a Cabaret  
Caught in the Rain / A Busy Day / The Fatal Mallet  
Her Friend the Bandit / The Knockout / Mabel's Busy Day  
Mabel's Married Life / Laughing Gas / The Property Man  
The Face on the Bar Room Floor / Recreation / The Masquerader  
His New Profession / The Rounders / The New Janitor  
Those Love Pangs / Dough and Dynamite / Gentlemen of Nerve  
His Musical Career / His Trysting Place / Tillie's Punctured Romance

##### 1915

His New Job / A Night Out / The Champion  
In the Park / A Jitney Elopement / The Tramp  
By the Sea / Work / A Woman  
The Bank / Shanghaied / A Night in the Show

##### 1916

Burlesque on Carmen / Police / Triple Trouble  
The Floorwalker / The Fireman / The Vagabond  
One A. M / The Count / The Pawnshop

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com

# **KINO**

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## **MODERN TIMES**

Filmography (continued):

Behind the screen / The Rink

**1917**

Easy Street / The Cure  
The Immigrant / The Adventurer

**1918**

A Dog's Life / How to Make Movies  
The Bond / Shoulder Arms

**1919**

Sunnyside / A Day's Pleasure

**1921**

The Kid  
The Idle Class

**1922**

Pay Day  
The Pilgrim

**1923**

A Woman of Paris

**1925**

The Gold Rush

**1928**

The Circus

**1931**

City Lights

**1936**

Modern Times

**1940**

The Great Dictator

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com



**KINO**  
I N T E R N A T I O N A L

## MODERN TIMES

Filmography (continued):

1947

Monsieur Verdoux

1952

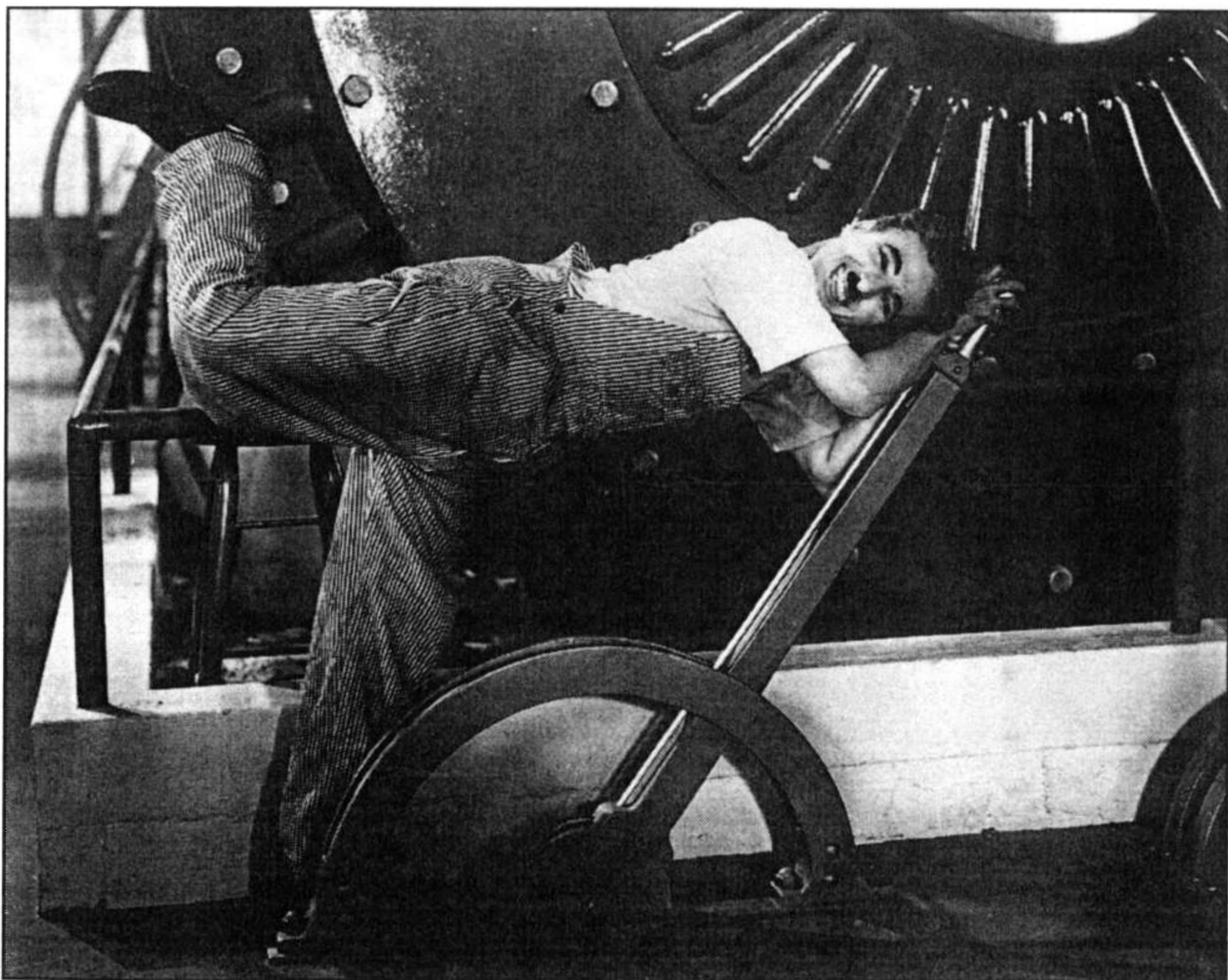
Limelight

1957

A King in New York

1966

A Countess from Hong Kong



KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)





## MODERN TIMES

### NOTES ON MODERN TIMES BY DAVID ROBINSON

*Modern Times* marked the last screen appearance of the Little Tramp—the character which had brought Charles Chaplin world fame, and who still remains the most universally recognized fictional image of a human being in the history of art.

The world from which the Tramp took his farewell was very different from that into which he had been born, two decades earlier, before the First World War. Then he had shared and symbolized the hardships of all the underprivileged of a world only just emerging from the 19th century. *Modern Times* found him facing very different predicaments in the aftermath of America's Great Depression, when mass unemployment coincided with the massive rise of industrial automation.

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."

In *Modern Times*, he set out to transform his observations and anxieties into comedy. The little Tramp—described in the film credits as "a Factory Worker"—is now one of the millions coping with the problems of the 1930s, which are not so very different from anxieties of the 21st century—poverty, unemployment, strikes and strike breakers, political intolerance, economic inequalities, the tyranny of the machine, narcotics. The film's portentous opening title—"The story of industry, of individual enterprise—humanity crusading in the pursuit of happiness"—is followed by a symbolic juxtaposition of shots of sheep being herded and of workers streaming out of a factory. Chaplin's character is first seen as a worker being driven crazy by his monotonous, inhuman work on a conveyor belt and being used as a guinea pig to test a machine to feed workers as they work.

Exceptionally, the Tramp has a companion in his battle with this new world. On his return to America after a world tour in 1931, Chaplin had met the actress Paulette Goddard, who was to remain, for several years, an ideal partner in his private life. Her personality inspired the character of the "Gamine" in *Modern Times*—a young girl whose father has been killed in a labour demonstration, and who joins forces with Chaplin.

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com





## MODERN TIMES

### NOTES ON MODERN TIMES

(Continued)

The couple are neither rebels nor victims, but, wrote Chaplin, "The only two live spirits in a world of automatons. We are children with no sense of responsibility, whereas the rest of humanity is weighed down with duty. We are spiritually free". In a sense, then, they are anarchists.

Chaplin at first planned a sadly sentimental ending for the film. While the Tramp was in a hospital, recovering from nervous breakdown, the Gamine was to become a Nun and so be parted from him for ever. This ending was filmed, but was finally abandoned in favour of a more cheerful finale. "We'll get along", says a title, and the couple arm in arm, set bravely off down a country lane, towards the horizon. By the time *Modern Times* was released, talking pictures had been established for almost a decade but until now, Chaplin had resisted dialogue, knowing that his comedy and its universal understanding depended on silent pantomime. This time though he weakened to the extent of preparing dialogue, and even doing some trial recordings.

Finally he thought better of it, and as in *City Lights*, uses only music and sound effects. Human voices are only heard filtered through technological devices – the boss who addresses his workers from a television screen, the salesman who is only a voice on the phonograph. Just at one moment, though, Chaplin's own voice is heard directly. Hired as a waiter, the Little Worker is required to stand in for the romantic café tenor. He writes the words on his shirt cuffs, but these fly off with a too-dramatic flourish and he is obliged to improvise the song in a wonderful, mock-Italian gibberish. Chaplin's voice had already been heard on radio and in at least one newsreel, but this was the first and only time that the world heard speech from the Little Tramp.

Apart from this indecision over sound and the changed ending, the shooting seems to have been fairly untroubled and, by Chaplin's standards, comparatively fast. It may have helped that the essential structure is neatly devised in four "acts"—each one more or less equivalent to one of his old two-reel comedies. As the contemporary American critic Otis Ferguson wrote, they might have been individually titled *The Shop*, *The Jailbird*, *The Watchman* and *The Singing Waiter*.

As he had done for *City Lights*, Chaplin composed his own musical score, giving his arrangers and conductors a harder time than usual, with the result that the distinguished Hollywood musician Alfred Newman walked off the film. The film became the victim of a strange charge of plagiarism. The Franco-German firm of Tobis claimed that Chaplin had stolen ideas and scenes from another classic film about the 20th century industrial world, *A Nous la Liberté*, directed by René Clair. The case was weak, and Clair, a great admirer of Chaplin, was deeply embarrassed by it.

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • rbrandao@kino.com





## MODERN TIMES

### NOTES ON MODERN TIMES (Continued)

Yet Tobis persisted, and even renewed its claims in May 1947, after the Second World War. This time the Chaplin Studio finally agreed to a modest payment, just to get rid of the nuisance. Chaplin and his lawyers remained convinced that the determination of the German-dominated company was revenge for the anti-Nazi sentiment of *The Great Dictator*.

Happily for posterity, Tobis failed in their original demand to have Chaplin's film permanently suppressed. Instead, *Modern Times* survives as a commentary on human survival in the industrial, economic and social circumstances of the 20th century society. It remains as relevant, in human terms, for the 21st century.

KINO INTERNATIONAL • SUITE 503 • 333 W. 39<sup>th</sup> STREET • NY, NY, 10018 • TEL (212) 629-6880 • FAX (212) 714-0871 • [rbrandao@kino.com](mailto:rbrandao@kino.com)