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Bed And Sofa

Audio Brandon catalog

Abram Room (1894-1976)

Like many of the masters of the silent cinema, Abram Room came to film after serving time in both the Red Army (he was a doctor) and in the radical theatre movement which flourished in the years after the Revolution. He will be remembered by the two silent classics, *Bed And Sofa* (1927) and *The Ghost That Never Returns* (1929), which remain as daringly original today (the former in content, the latter in technique) as when they first appeared. His other silents were two experimental shorts made in 1924: *The Race After The Moonshine Vodka* and *Guess What "Mos" Says; The Death Bay* (1926); *Traitor* (1926) and *Ruts* (1928)—which, per Jay Leyda, “attacked a psychological problem as serious as that in *Bed And Sofa*, how a marriage can be broken by the difficulties that a new child brings into a home;” and *Plan Of*

Great Works (1930). Room’s first sound feature, *A Stern Young Man* (1936), cost two million rubles and prevented him from getting quality assignments for years. The film was banned from exhibition (and its screenwriter arrested), for suggesting that an advanced intellectual elite might well be treated with more privilege in a future classless society. Room’s first post-war feature, *In The Mountains Of Yugoslavia* (1946), was removed from circulation for different reasons: after Tito’s break with Stalin, films glorifying his wartime role as an anti-Nazi partisan leader were not desirable. In the sixties, Room directed two fragile literary adaptations, *Garnet Bracelet* (1964) and *Belated Flowers* (1969). His last film was an adaptation of Gorky’s unfinished play, *Yakov Bogomolov* (1971). (TL, YB)