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THE GOLD RUSH 1925 81 min. b&w (d) Charles Chaplin (lp) Charles Chaplin, Mark Swain, Georgia Hale, Tom Murray, Henry Bergman (c) Rollie Totheroh (p) Charles Chaplin Order number: CIC-6 Rental: \$8.00.

Film Description

Chaplin once stated that THE GOLD RUSH was the film by which he wanted to be remembered. It has endured as one of the screen's most beloved comedies written and directed by a man whom George Bernard Shaw called the only genius developed in motion pictures.

Chaplin plays the pathetic little Lone Prospector, who journeys to the Klondike hoping to discover gold and make his fortune. In Alaska, he shares a flimsy shack with Big Jim McKay (Mack Swain), and falls in love with Georgia (Georgia Hale), a dance hall queen. The film's comedy and pathos center around the hard times and glamorous dreams of the prospectors. Delirious with hunger, Big Jim mistakes his roommate for a huge turkey, and prepares to shoot him. On another occasion, the Lone Prospector salts and eats a candle as if it were a stick of celery, then devours a boiled shoe (rolling the laces as if they were spaghetti and sucking the nails as if they were bones). When Georgia accepts his invitation to a New Year's party, he dances wildly with joy. Later, he has a touching yet marvelously funny fantasy about his intended party.

Critical Comments

Of all comedians (Chaplin) worked most deeply and most shrewdly within a realization of what a human being is, and is up against. The Tramp is as centrally representative of humanity, as many-sided and as mysterious as Hamlet, and it seems unlikely that any dancer or actor can ever have excelled him in eloquence, variety, or poignancy of motion....The finest pantomime, the deepest emotion, the richest and most poignant poetry were in Chaplin's work. --James Agee, Life

(THE GOLD RUSH'S) laughs, drawn out of tragedy, have a magnified force and meaning. Its principal character symbolizes the good, kind and pitiful care of humanity. Moments of the film reach the sublime. --Theodore Huff, Charlie Chaplin

It was a proud night for Chaplin, as while he sat looking at the picture and listening to Carl Edwards's orchestra he was not insensible to the chuckles and shrieks of laughter provoked by his own antics on the screen. The joy of the spectators testified to the worth of the picture, on which he had worked for more than 18 months...you find yourself stirred by the story, gripped by its swing and filled with compassion for the pathetic little hero...he grows upon you as something real...it is the outstanding gem of all Chaplin's pictures. --Mordaunt Hall, New York Times