



FRANKLIN COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OTTAWA, KANSAS

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Classic silent films with live musical score coming to Ottawa on October 21

Ottawa, Kansas—The Franklin County Historical Society is bringing three fun and spooky films accompanied by live music to the Plaza Cinema on October 21.

Bill Shaffer, director of the Kansas Silent Film Festival in Topeka and former producer/director at KTWU, will emcee the October 21 event, which starts at 7 p.m. The evening's lineup includes the short films *Habeus Corpus* (1927) and *The Haunted House* (1921) and one of the most famous silent feature-length films of all time, *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925/1929).

What will make the October 21 program unique is the live musical accompaniment. Composer and theatre organist Marvin Faulwell and Topeka Symphony Orchestra percussionist Bob Keckeisen will perform Faulwell's musical score during the program.

"We rarely have the opportunity to experience a silent film the way it would have been experienced in the early part of the twentieth century," said Deborah Barker, executive director of the Franklin County Historical Society. "Movie goers in the early 1920s would have enjoyed a dramatic score played by live musicians, which would have made every cinematic experience unique."

In *Habeus Corpus*, Laurel and Hardy play a pair of handy-men hired by a professor to dig up a body for experiments, only to discover the corpse they exhume isn't a corpse, but a very-much-alive police detective in disguise. *The Haunted House* features Kansas-born Buster Keaton, who plays a bank clerk wrongly accused of a crime who, in order to clear his name, must pursue the real crooks to a mansion rigged to appear haunted to throw off police.

The evening's main attraction is *The Phantom of the Opera*, a classic film loaded with atmosphere, melodrama and what would become one of the great make-up creations of all time: The Phantom, the mysterious man who lurks in the catacombs far beneath the Opera House of Paris. Originally released in 1925, the film was rereleased in 1929 with portions of the film reshot for the new release. Many scenes are in vivid two-color Technicolor, including a sequence that is partly hand-colored with the Phantom's flowing red cape silhouetted against the night sky.

Tickets are \$12 each and can be purchased at the Plaza Cinema in person or by calling (785) 242-5555. Tickets can also be purchased online at <https://squareup.com/store/old-depot-museum>. The Plaza Cinema is located at 209 South Main in Ottawa, Kansas.

This program is made possible thanks to sponsorship provided by Marguerite Gibson, Adamson Bros Heating and Cooling, and Kalmar Ottawa.

For more information, contact the Plaza Cinema or the Old Depot Museum (part of the Franklin County Historical Society) at (785) 242-1250.

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