

National Film Archive of India
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

Press Note

NFAI to commemorate the first film screening in India with screenings of Lumière films

First screening of rare footage of the Delhi Durbar (1911)

Do you want to relive the experience of India's tryst with cinema in 1896? Then come to NFAI on Saturday evening at 5 pm where we will take you on a journey back in time! An added attraction of the special event is the screening of rare footage of Delhi Durbar (1911), which is believed to be lost till now!

When the Lumières showed *Arrival of a Train* for the first time in Paris, it is said that the audience screamed and ran, trying to save themselves from an oncoming train. It has been over 120 years since and cinema has come a long way.

To commemorate the first film screening held in India, NFAI has organised a special event on Saturday, July 8, which will screen the films of Lumière brothers along with a special screening of newly found footage of the Delhi Durbar in 1911. The event will give cine-enthusiasts a chance to relive the magic of India's first tryst with cinema in original 35mm.

The Lumière brothers held the first screening of the cinematograph on December 28 in 1895 in Paris. On July 7, 1896, Marius Sestier, a Lumière agent held the first screening of films in India at the Watson Hotel in Bombay.

In addition to this, a special screening of a small footage (5 minutes) *from With Our King and Queen Through India* (1912), a film shot during the Delhi Durbar of 1911, which was considered lost for so long, will also be held in the archive.

There were three Durbars held in Delhi. The first Delhi Durbar was held in 1877 to celebrate the coronation of Queen Victoria. The Delhi Durbar of 1903 celebrated the coronation of Edward the VII and Queen Alexandra, a lavish ceremony that captured the imagination of the world. The third Durbar was held to proclaim King George and Queen Mary as the Emperor and Empress of India. It was held on 12 December 1911 at the Coronation Park in Delhi with the new Emperor and Empress as the chief guests of honour. At this ceremony, the important decision of shifting the capital from Calcutta to Delhi was also made.

The film was made in Kinemacolor, a two-color additive process that was popularised by the studio-owner and filmmaker Charles Urban. The film was first screened in London on 12 February 1912. NFAI recently procured the film courtesy of Cineteca di Bologna.

The list of films to be screened includes:

5 films screened at the Watson Hotel in Bombay on July 7, 1896:

1. Entry of Cinematograph (Entrée Du Cinématographe)
2. Arrival of a Train (L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat)
3. The Sea Bath (Baignade En Mer/ La Mer)
4. A Demolition (Démolition d'Un Mur, II)
5. Workers Leaving the Factory Gate (La Sortie de l'Usine Lumière de Lyon)

A Single Long Reel of Ten Films:

1. Workers Leaving the Factory Gate (La Sortie de l'Usine Lumière de Lyon)
2. Trick Riding (La Voltige)
3. Fishing for Goldfish (La Peche Aux Poissons Rouge)
4. The Photographical Congress Arrives in Lyon (Le Debarquement Du Congrès de Photographie à Lyon)
5. The Blacksmiths (Les Forgerons)
6. The Tables Turned on the Gardener / The Gardener (Le Jardinier)
7. Baby's Dinner (Le Repas/ Le Repas de Bébé)
8. Jumping the Blanket (Le Saut A La Couverture)
9. Cordeliers' Square in Lyon (La Place des Cordeliers à Lyon)
10. The Sea Bath (Baignade En Mer/ La Mer)

Rare footage of *With Our King And Queen Through India* (1912)

The screening will be held at 5 pm on Saturday, July 8, 2017.

Entry is open to all and seating will be on first come first served basis.