Ida Lupino: Mother Directs
August 26–September 20, 2010
The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters

Ida Lupino: Mother Directs, a comprehensive selection of films by actress and filmmaker Ida Lupino (American, b. Great Britain, 1918–1995) runs August 26 through September 20, 2010, at The Museum of Modern Art, presenting select films from 1949 to 1966, including her directorial debut Never Fear (1950). The series highlights the filmmaker’s brilliantly balanced career both in front of the camera, acting in over 100 productions for film and television, and behind the camera as a pioneering director who pushed the limits of social taboos and became the second woman to be admitted to the Director’s Guild. The 14 film exhibition is organized by Anne Morra, Associate Curator, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art.

Ida Lupino was branded the “English Jean Harlow” when she arrived in Hollywood in 1932, but as part of a distinguished British theatrical dynasty, she aspired to be more than just an ingénue or femme fatale. A box-office-proven actress with a lucrative contract at Warner Bros., Lupino starred in such films as High Sierra (1941) and Woman in Hiding (1949). She conscientiously studied the work of the directors for whom she acted, and before long found her way behind the camera.

Her career as a feature film director (albeit an uncredited one) began in 1949, when she stepped in for the ailing Elmer Clifton on the set of Not Wanted. Soon thereafter, Lupino established her own production company, The Filmmakers, and from 1949 to 1966 she nurtured a successful dual career as an A-list actress and a filmmaker dedicated to the production of films investigating the social condition of women in contemporary society.

Lupino—who referred to herself as Mother on set and had a director’s chair with “Mother of Us All” embroidered on the back—commenced a directorial career at a time when Hollywood was unaccustomed to women powerbrokers. The American cinema of the late 1940s was booming with directors like Samuel Fuller and Nicholas Ray, who were attracted to stories about thorny social issues and ordinary folk. These narratives fascinated Lupino, who later made half a dozen films focusing on topics once considered taboo for the commercial film industry—unwanted pregnancy, polio, bigamy, and women competing in a world of men.

Ida Lupino: Mother Directs, coincides with the publication by MoMA of Modern Women: Women Artists at The Museum of Modern Art (June 2010), which includes an essay by Anne Morra that examines Lupino’s transition from Hollywood starlet to film director and head of a thriving independent film production company. Morra also dissects Lupino’s directorial debut Never Fear, a film whose subject matter parallels that of the directors own life; the protagonist’s struggle to conquer Polio is analogous to Lupino’s own battle with and eventual conquering of the disease.
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For downloadable images, please visit www.moma.org/press.

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Public Information: The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019
Hours: Films are screened Wednesday-Monday. For screening schedules, please visit www.moma.org.

Film Admission: $10 adults; $8 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D. $6 full-time students with current I.D. (For admittance to film programs only.) The price of a film ticket may be applied toward the price of a Museum admission ticket when a film ticket stub is presented at the Lobby Information Desk within 30 days of the date on the stub (does not apply during Target Free Friday Nights, 4:00–8:00 p.m.). Admission is free for Museum members and for Museum ticketholders.

The public may call (212) 708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us at www.moma.org

Screening Schedule

Ida Lupino: Mother Directs
August 26 – September 20, 2010

Thursday, August 26

4:30 Not Wanted. 1949. Directed by Elmer Clifton. Produced by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Lupino, Paul Jarrico. With Sally Forrest, Keefe Braselle. Clifton was seriously ill when work commenced on this film. In order to keep the production alive, Lupino quietly stepped in to direct. Though she didn’t take a screen credit, Lupino did extend to Dorothy Arzner, one of Hollywood’s first women directors, an invitation to “a first cut of the first [film] I’ve directed.” 94 min.

Friday, August 27


8:00 Never Fear (The Young Lovers). 1950. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Lupino, Collier Young. With Sally Forrest, Keefe Braselle. Carol and Guy are an up-and coming dance team on the L.A. nightclub circuit. The night after their triumphant performance, Carol takes sick, and later learns she has contracted polio. Her dancing career seemingly doomed, she turns away from Guy. Never Fear was produced by Lupino and then-husband Young for their production company, The Filmmakers. 81 min.

Saturday, August 28

3:30 Woman in Hiding. 1949. Directed by Michael Gordon. Screenplay by Oscar Saul. With Ida Lupino, Howard Duff. Pay close attention—Woman in Hiding’s twists and turns reveal a quirky and mysterious narrative. Deborah Chandler (Lupino) rejects Selden Clark’s romantic advances, not least because he manages her father’s factory. When Mr. Chandler turns up dead, Selden woos a vulnerable Deborah and she marries him. But once she’s clued in to her new husband’s shadowy past, Deborah contrives her escape. 93 min.
6:00 **Outrage.** 1950. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Collier Young, Malvin Wald, Lupino. With Mala Powers. Recently engaged and enjoying a fulfilling career, Ann Walton is content with her life—until she is raped on her way home from work one night. Lupino tracks Ann through a series of small streets and alleys before the attack, creating a sense of unbearable tension for the viewer. This film remains one of the few which delves into the aftermath of the crime, and Lupino did not shy away from criticizing a legal system that still assigned some blame to the victims of this heinous crime. 74 min.

8:00 **Hard, Fast, and Beautiful.** 1951. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Martha Wilkerson, based on the novel *Mother of a Champion*, by John R. Tunis. With Claire Trevor, Sally Forrest. Long before Martina Navratilova and the Williams sisters hit it big, fictional tennis sensation Florence Farley waged war on the court—and against her über ambitious mother. Florence isn’t so much interested in a professional tennis career as she is in Gordon, her hometown beau. 76 min.

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**Sunday, August 29**

2:30 **On Dangerous Ground.** 1951. Directed by Nicholas Ray. Screenplay by A. I. Bezzerides, based on the novel *Mad with Much Heart*, by Gerald Butler. With Ida Lupino, Robert Ryan. The hunt for a police killer has on-the-edge big-city detective Jim Wilson about to jump out of his skin, and his behavior is decidedly not “by the book.” When he is sent to the country to cool off, he meets Mary, a blind woman, amid the serene, almost spiritual winter setting. In one of the most visually bifurcated films ever made, the shadowy, malevolent cityscape gives way to an icy and silent countryside. 82 min

5:30 **Beware My Lovely.** 1952. Directed by Harry Horner. Screenplay by Mel Dinelli. With Ida Lupino, Robert Ryan. When psychopathic Howard Wilton comes upon a boarding house run by Mrs. Gordon, a lonely widow, he takes delight in teasing her into a web of lies and then pointing out her dishonesty. This quirky thriller focuses on the psychological implications of memory, loneliness, and truth. 77 min.

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**Monday, August 30**

4:30 **The Hitch-Hiker.** 1953. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Lupino, Collier Young. With Edmond O’Brien, Frank Lovejoy. In one of the few Lupino-directed features that does not place a woman at the center of the narrative, two buddies on a fishing trip pick up a hitchhiker. The passenger, who has already murdered two others, taunts the men with their impending death at the end of the drive. Remember what your mother told you: never stop for a hitchhiker! 71 min.

7:00 **They Drive By Night.** 1940. Directed by Raoul Walsh. Screenplay by Jerry Wald, Richard Macaulay. Based on the novel by Albert Isaac Bezzerides. With Ida Lupino, George Raft, Humphrey Bogart. Brothers Paul and Joe Fabrini run an independent trucking business transporting produce from farms to markets in Los Angeles. They endeavor to stay away from corrupt trucking syndicates, but this means they must drive long distances without adequate rest and their truck is often in need of serious repair. When an accident takes Paul’s life, Joe goes to work for his old friend Ed Carleson, now a successful businessman. Trouble meets up with Joe when Ed’s restless wife Lana turns her attention his way. New 35mm print made from Warner Bros. original negatives. 95 min.

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**Wednesday, September 1**

4:30 **The Bigamist.** 1953. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Collier Young. With Joan Fontaine, Edmond O’Brien. Unable to have a baby of their own, Harry and Eve, a prosperous married couple, are preparing to adopt. Yet a case worker’s suspicions soon reveal that Harry, a traveling salesman, has a wife, child, and happy home life, in another
city. The film is surprisingly sympathetic to Harry and his overpowering need to be a father. 79 min.

8:00  **Private Hell 36.** 1954. Directed by Don Siegel. Screenplay by Collier Young, Ida Lupino. With Lupino, Steve Cochran. In this stylish, hard-boiled noir classic, a New York City man is murdered and robbed of $300,000. The bills are marked, and when they start showing up in Los Angeles, the cops soon wind up at the doorstep of sassy L.A. lounge singer Lili Marlowe. 81 min.

**Thursday, September 2**

4:30  **Women’s Prison.** 1955. Directed by Lewis Seiler. Screenplay by Crane Wilbur, Jack DeWitt. With Ida Lupino, Howard Duff. Seiler’s pulpy melodrama pits the cruel and uncaring female warden of a women’s prison against a handsome doctor who’s new to the prison system. The doctor goes toe to toe with the frosty warden over issues of inmate medical care, punishment, and the warden’s lack of humanity—or a man. The climactic inmate riot is just too juicy to miss! 80 min.

8:00  **The Trouble with Angels.** 1966. Directed by Ida Lupino. Screenplay by Blanche Hanalis, based on the novel by Jane Trahey. With Rosalind Russell, Hayley Mills. When spirited Mary arrives at St. Francis Academy for Girls with her cigarettes and practical jokes, Mother Superior has her hands full getting the precocious girl to settle down. This was Lupino’s last feature as director. 111 min.

**Friday, September 3**

4:00  **Not Wanted.** (See Thursday, August 26, 4:30)

**Saturday, September 4**

2:00  **Never Fear (The Young Lovers).** (See Friday, August 27, 8:00)

5:00  **Lust for Gold.** (See Friday, August 27, 4:30)

8:00  **Woman in Hiding.** (See Saturday, August 28, 3:30)

**Sunday, September 5**

2:30  **Outrage.** (See Saturday, August 28, 6:00)

5:30  **Hard, Fast, and Beautiful.** (See Saturday, August 28, 8:00)

**Friday, September 17**

4:30  **On Dangerous Ground.** (See Saturday, August 29, 2:30)

**Saturday, September 18**

2:00  **Beware My Lovely.** (See Sunday, August 29, 5:30)

5:00  **The Hitch-Hiker.** (See Monday, August 30, 4:30)

8:00  **They Drive By Night.** (See Monday, August 30, 7:00)

**Sunday, September 19**

2:30  **The Bigamist.** (See Wednesday, September 1, 4:30)
5:30  Private Hell 36. (See Wednesday, September 1, 8:00)

Monday, September 20

4:30  The Trouble with Angels. (See Thursday, September 2, 8:00)

8:00  Women’s Prison. (See Thursday, September 2, 4:30)