

THE NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC PRESENTS A SCREENING OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S COMEDY CLASSIC CITY LIGHTS

Vail, CO – On Saturday, June 23, the New York Philharmonic, led by guest conductor Timothy Brock, presents a screening of Charlie Chaplin's silent film *City Lights*, accompanied by a live performance of the film's score. In an evening of fun for adults and kids alike, the orchestra will play in the outdoor Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, with the movie projected onto screens above the stage.

The New York Philharmonic's recent presentations of *City Lights* have been hailed as a "revelation" (*The New York Times*) and a "crowning success" (*Berkshire Fine Arts*). "Chaplin would have been thrilled to hear the Philharmonic's plush, sensitive playing of his *City Lights* score," *The New York Times* wrote. Watching *City Lights* live, raved *Vogue* (online), "offers a pleasure that you can't get at home, namely, experiencing it as it was intended: on a big screen, amid the laughter of fellow audience members, with Chaplin's own spritely, sentimental score played by a live orchestra — in this case, a mighty fine one...."

City Lights premiered in Los Angeles on January 30, 1931 (with Albert Einstein as the premiere's guest of honor), and it quickly became a critical and commercial success. Chaplin wrote, directed, produced, edited, and starred in the film, which centers on the relationship between a blind Flower Girl and The Little Tramp, a character Chaplin created in 1914 and included in dozens of his films, up through *Modern Times* (1936). Chaplin also wrote the film's score, his first of many. Arthur Johnston and Alfred Newman arranged and orchestrated the score. In his 1964 autobiography, Chaplin wrote: "I tried to compose elegant and romantic music to frame my comedies in contrast to the tramp character, for elegant music gave my comedies an emotional dimension."

Conductor and composer Timothy Brock wrote his first silent-film score in 1986, and in 1998 the Chaplin estate commissioned him to restore the score for *Modern Times* and make it accessible for live performance. "So I started doing that," he recently told The Criterion Collection, "and subsequently have done all the features...." Chaplin "didn't write any of his film scores to be played live," Brock adds, "so ... you have to make not only a score that's a documentation of what's actually in print but what's actually performable, which are two different things. For example, *City Lights*' score "engaged thirty-four players total, but you have to use at least forty, forty-five players to do it and make it sound how it sounded then."