

Battling Butler (1926)

w/ [All Sure-locked Homes](#) - featuring Felix the Cat (1928)

Although a lesser-known film, *Battling Butler* was regarded as Keaton's personal favorite and considered the greatest box office success of all his independent comedies. There is a subtle departure from the usual gags and physical comedy that mark Keaton's earlier work with a move towards more suggestive comedy and "tongue-in-cheek" humor. The storyline involves a rich, young bachelor (Keaton) who leads a charmed life due to the constant pampering of the family butler. In an effort to "toughen up" his young son, Keaton's father sends him on a camping trip.....still accompanied by his butler. Unable to break away from his gentle mannerisms, Keaton explores the wilderness only to meet and fall in love with a country girl. The young girl mistakes Keaton for a famed prizefighter of the same name (Alfred Butler) and, as a result, Keaton must convince his beloved that he is indeed the fearsome fighter hailed in the papers. The remainder of the film is filled with hysterical scenes in which Keaton trains for a real fight in order to impress his fiancée. From innuendo to moments of full-fledged physical comedy, BQE's musical score breathes new life into a rarely seen, but nonetheless, masterful work from the great Buster Keaton.

As a warm-up to Keaton, scary shadows and the imagination run wild with BQE's musical accompaniment to an early Felix the Cat silent cartoon, "All Sure-locked Homes." Together, both films make for a fun and diverse screening experience!



“Tom's score really did the work *Battling Butler* needs...it supported the energy, gags, rhythm and the heart of the piece. The sound is traditional and is scored down to the second...meaning it's not mood music beds that fit, it's more like a real film score timed to each beat of the picture.”

- Ben Model (Silent Film Music Accompanist)

Technical Information

Available Formats: 35mm, DVD (cartoon is available in 16mm as well as DVD)

Film Length: “Battling Butler” = 71 minutes,

“All Sure-locked Homes” (Felix the Cat) = 8 minutes

Instrumentation: Violin, Upright bass, Percussion, Bassoon, Flute/Clarinet,
Acoustic Piano

Ensemble Fee / Print Licensing: Available upon request

Promotional Stills: Available upon request

Technical Requirements:

- Sound System: microphones for all instruments (specifics are provided in tech rider)
- Wooden Stool (with cushion): for bass player
- Chairs: 3 padded chairs for players
- Stands: 9 black music stands (standard type used in orchestras and Broadway plays)
- Lights: 8 clip-on lights for music stands (standard type used in orchestras and Broadway plays) plus gells for each light (to be used as needed).
- Monitors (audio): 5 in total
- Bass amp: A bass amp will be needed
- Concert grand acoustic piano (6 ft. 11 inches or larger preferred) with adjustable piano bench:
(piano to be tuned the day of the performance – before load-in / soundcheck)
- Video monitor (optional): If the movie screen is not at eye level with conductor, a suitable video monitor will be needed.