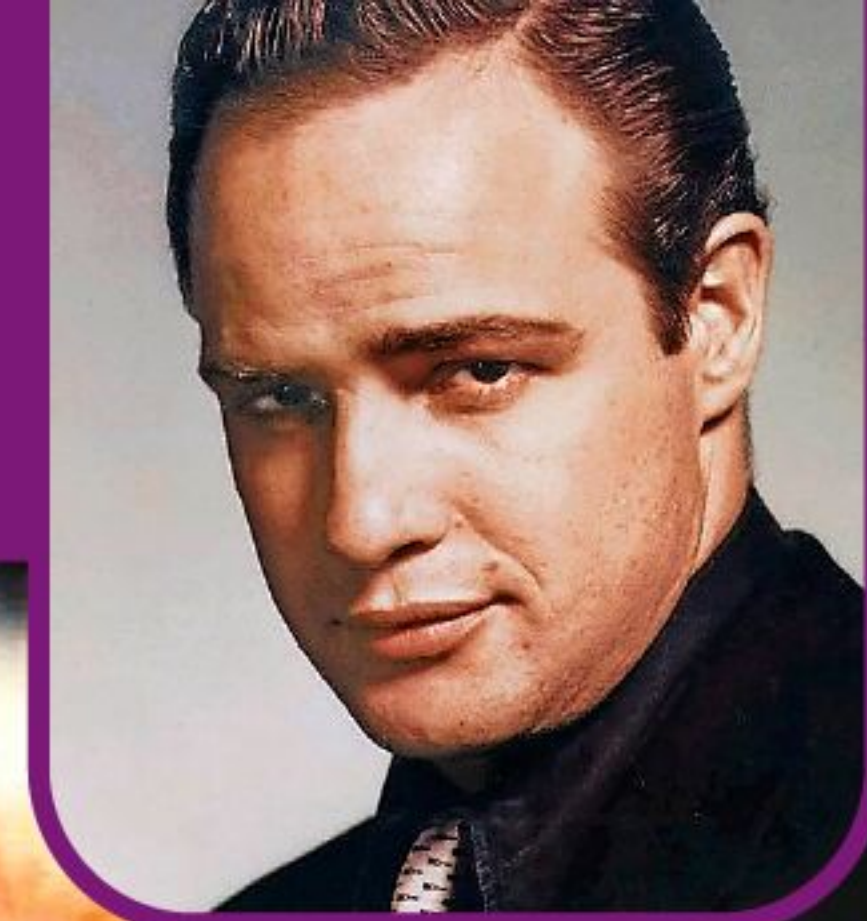


★ TRY ME! ★

EXCLUSIVE  
STAR CHATS

The lost interviews: Marlon Brando  
on politics, fame and Marilyn Monroe



Yours

ISSUE 84 // February 2025

# RETRO

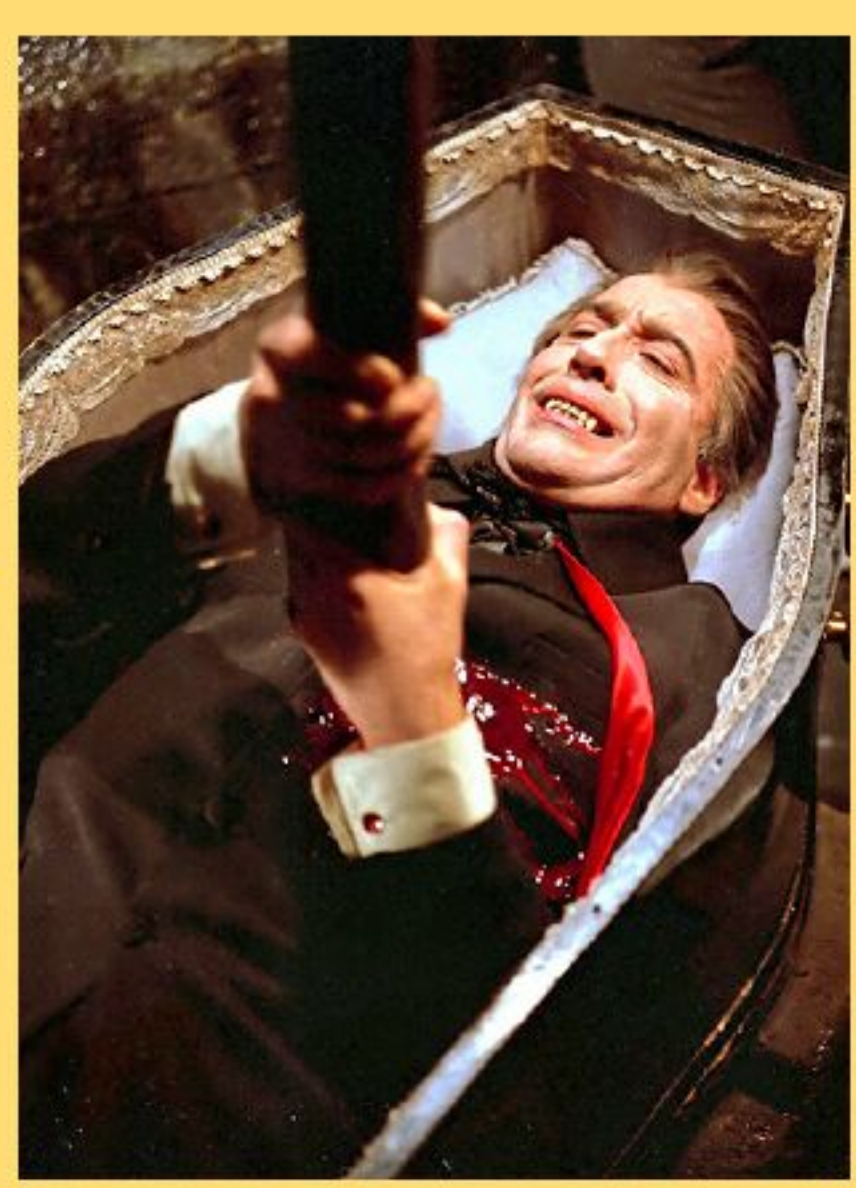
Celebrating the STARS we love



**EDITH HEAD...** Oscar-winning  
genius who dressed  
Hollywood's elite

## STARS DYING FOR A LIVING

Which actors can  
boast the highest  
movie death toll?



## JOAN CRAWFORD

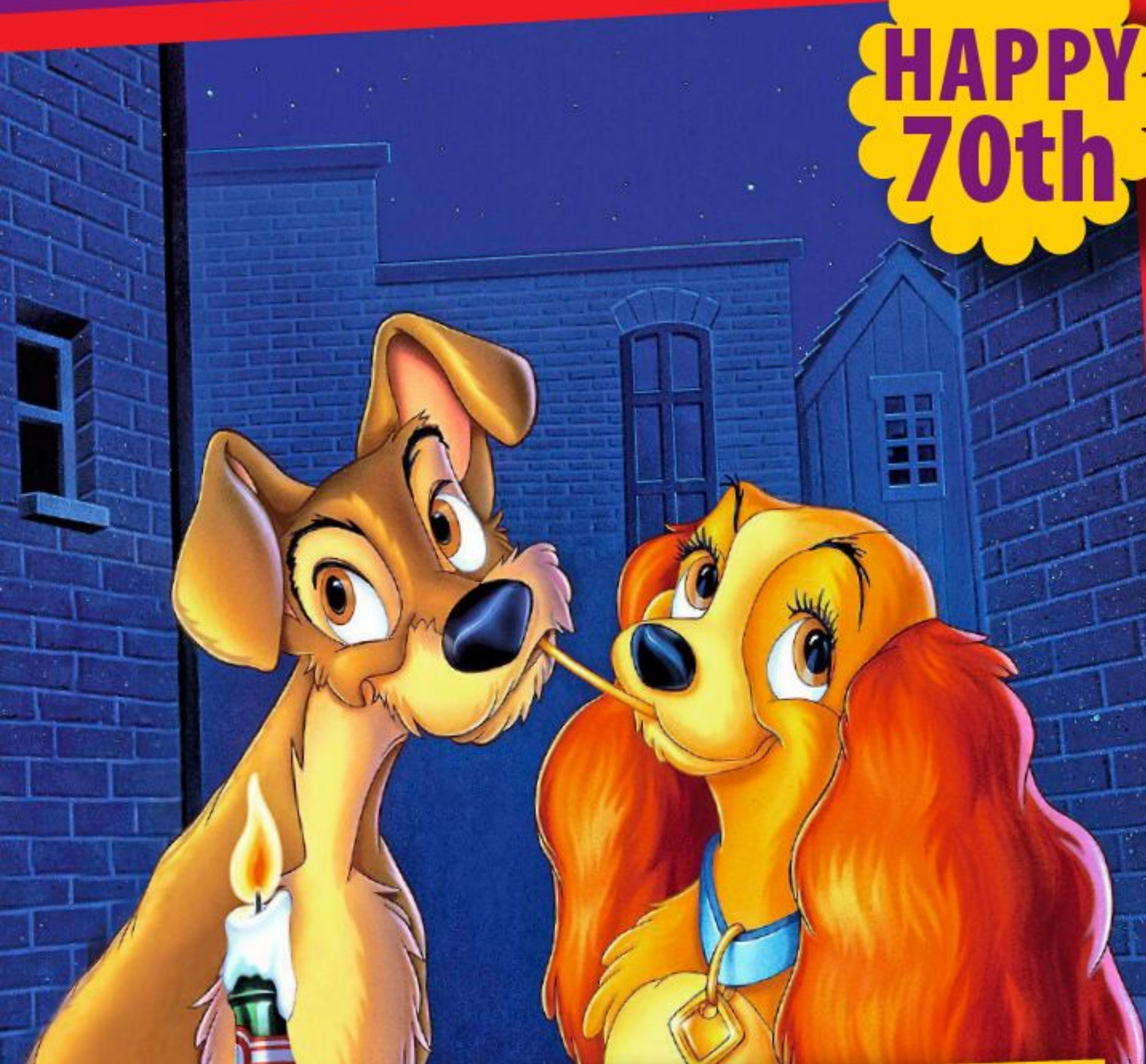
The compelling  
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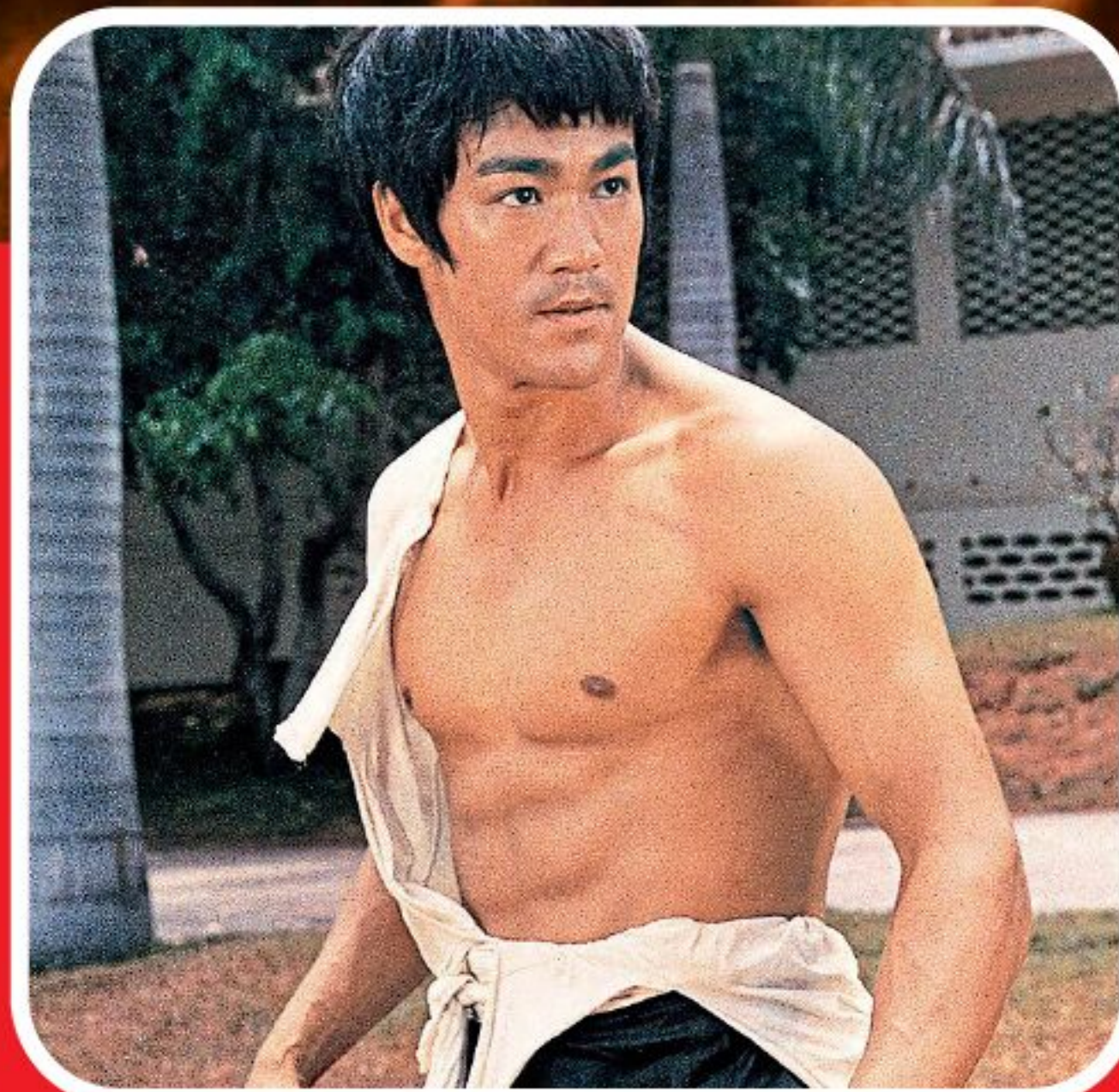
HAPPY  
70th



**LADY & THE TRAMP**

Trials and tantrums

making a Disney classic



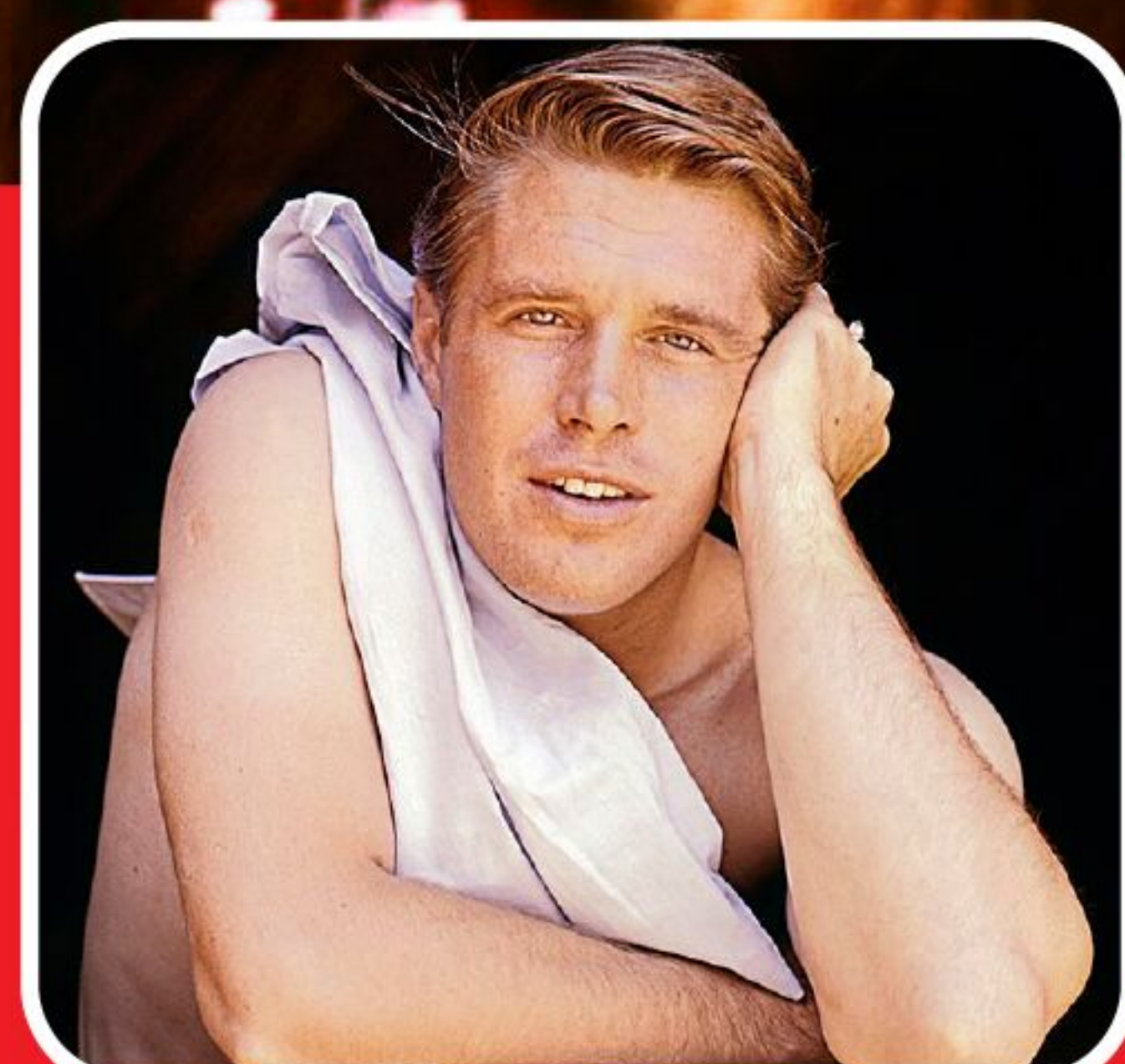
■ **BRUCE LEE**

Was the martial arts  
master murdered?



■ **THE MUNSTERS**

TV's favourite freaky  
family turns 60



■ **GEORGE PEPPARD**

Why the method actor  
alienated co-stars

UNLIKELY PALS: **Kenneth Williams & Maggie Smith**





## On the cover

**06** A star reborn. How Mildred Pierce saved Joan Crawford's career.

**15** TV's most weird and wonderful family, The Munsters, turns 60.

**20** The unlikely friendship between Kenneth Williams and Dame Maggie Smith.

**24** Dressed for success. How eight-time Oscar winner Edith Head became the queen of Hollywood costume design.

**36** Exclusive 'lost' interview. Marlon Brando chats politics, fame and the death of Marilyn Monroe.

**40** Lady and the Tramp's difficult road to big-screen success.

**54** Which actor has filmed the most death scenes?

**57** Why George Peppard was his own worst enemy.

**68** What really happened the night Bruce Lee died?



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## Hello again...

**L**ots of tales of friendships and friction in this month's magazine. Our cover star Joan Crawford found an unexpected friend in co-star Ann Blyth while filming *Mildred Pierce* (p6).

Maggie Smith and Kenneth Williams shared a lifelong friendship after appearing on stage together early in their careers (p20) and *National Treasure* June Whitfield seemed to charm everyone she ever worked with (p52).

In our exclusive 'lost' interview this month, Marlon Brando, who was known for not suffering fools gladly, talks about the death of his friend Marilyn Monroe (p36). While, at the opposite end of the spectrum there's George Peppard, who seemed to alienate practically everyone he met (p57).

See you next issue.

*Sharon*

**Sharon** EDITOR

### This issue

**04** Seven of the best scenes of monkey mischief.

**12** News, views, reviews and your questions answered.

**18** Subscribe and save with our latest special offer.

**23** Steve McQueen's most stylish look from *The Thomas Crown Affair*.

**28** Remembering comedy hero Pearl Hackney.

**29** His career was tragically cut short, but Buddy Holly earned a place in history.

**32** Buster Keaton's most life-threatening stunts.

**35** The day that Britain went decimal.

**39** When every woman wanted a Jacqmar scarf.

**46** The UK's most groundbreaking music show, *The Old Grey Whistle Test*.

**48** How De Niro, Hoffman and Pacino started a Hollywood revolution.

**52** Why June Whitfield was the comedian's comedienne.

**60** Celebrating the brief but brilliant era of the Small Faces.

**62** How TV's *A Family at War* helped launch the careers of many small-screen stars.

**66** Fast facts about Tommy.

**70** The 'other' Beatles cartoon.

**72** Laugh along to *The Happiest Days of Your Life*.

**74** Behind the lens with filmmaker Alan Parker.

**78** Reel Obsession: One reader's favourite films.

**79** Test your wits in our quiz.

**80** Shelley Winters and Vittorio Gassman's passion.

**83** Free epic film poster.



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**Yours Retro** magazine is published by H Bauer Publishing, a company registered in England and Wales with company number LP003328, registered address The Lantern, 75 Hampstead Road, London, NW1 2PL

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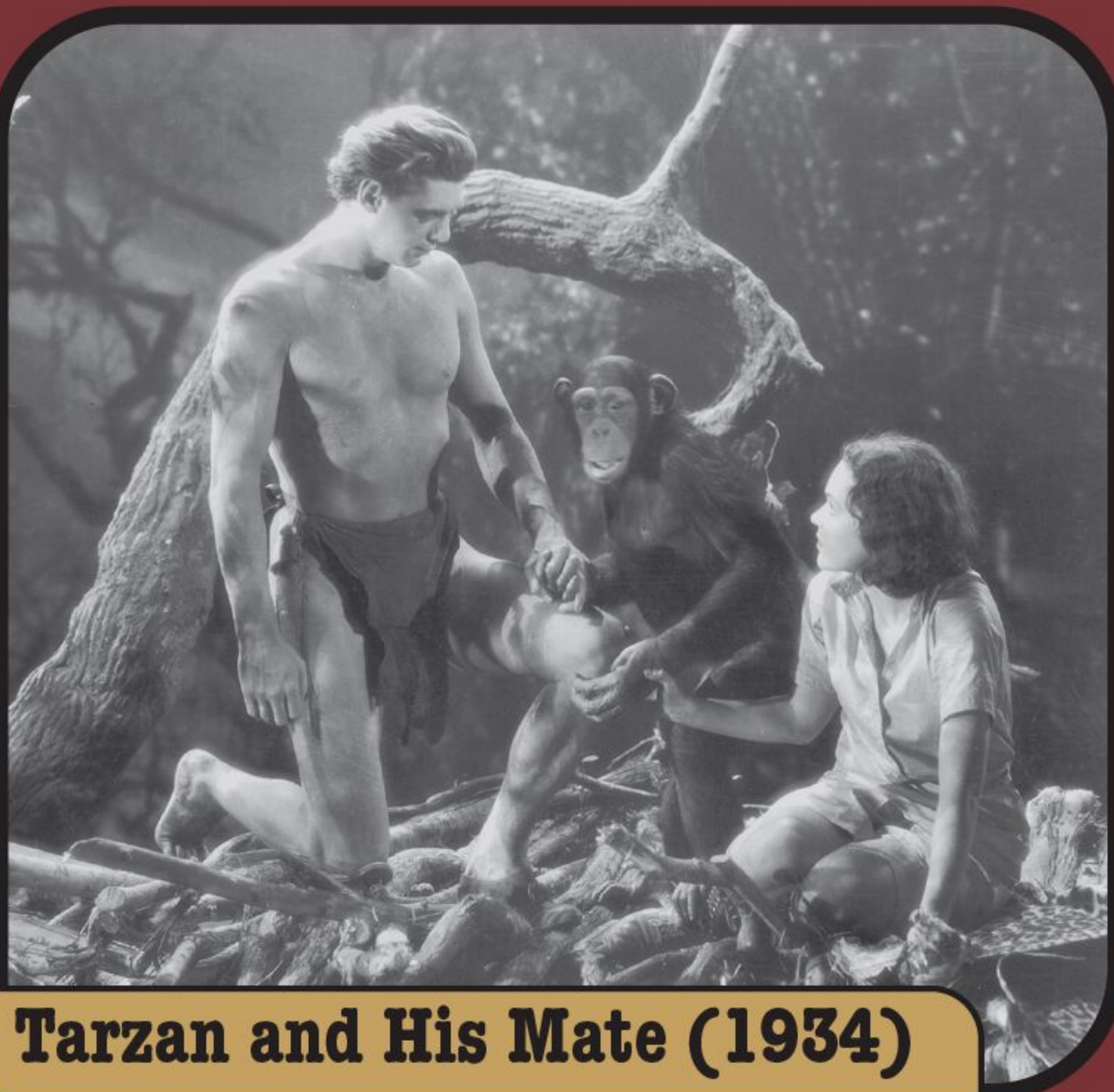
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# Seven scenes

...with monkeys

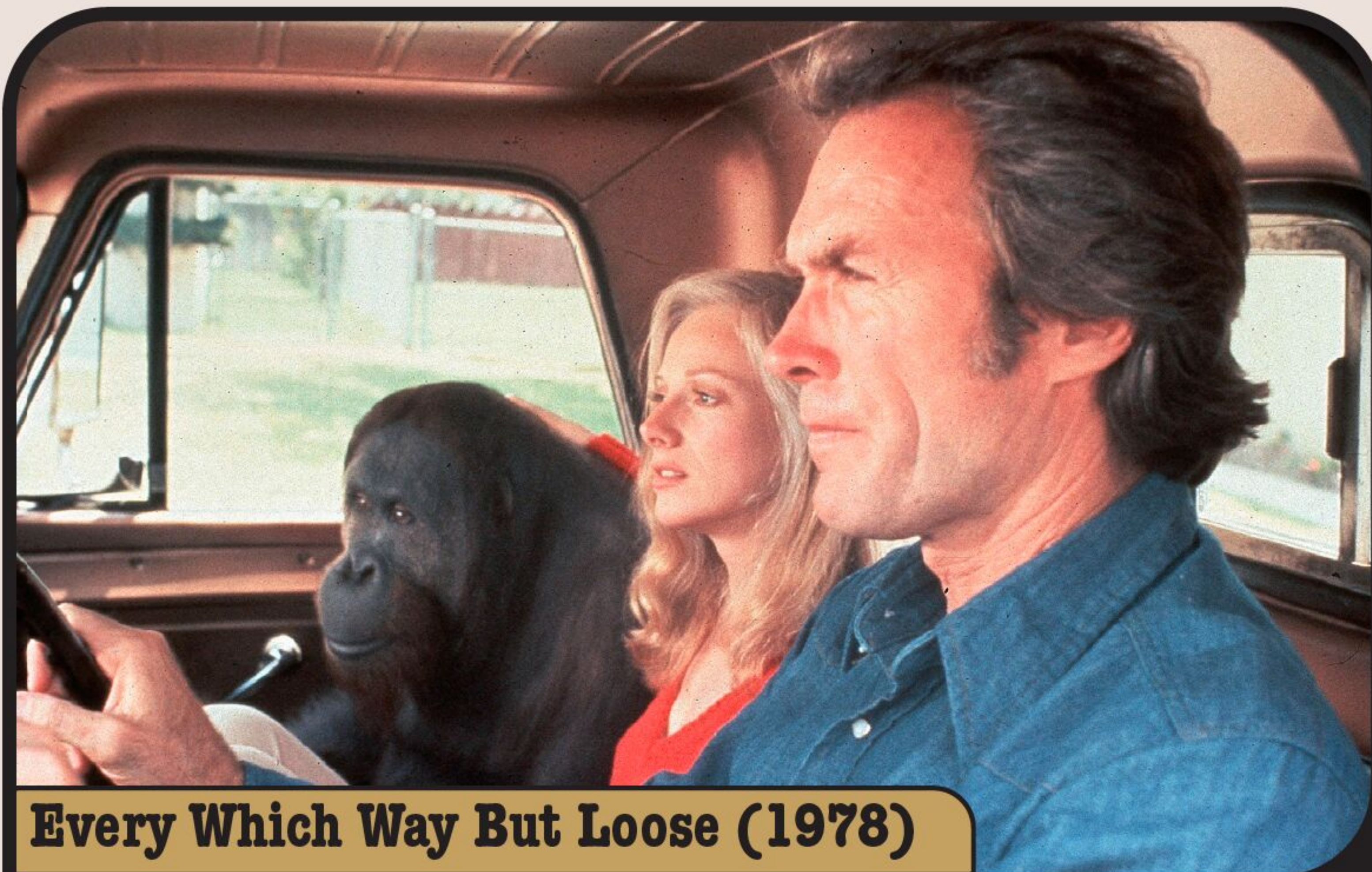
Cinema primates come in all shapes and sizes, from King Kong to tiny capuchin monkeys, but all bring bags of personality



**Tarzan and His Mate (1934)**

Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan may have been the stars but cheeky chimp Jiggs made his presence felt as Cheetah. Raised by Hollywood animal trainers Tony and Jacqueline Gentry, Jiggs also appeared opposite Laurel and Hardy in *Dirty Work* (1933) and Dorothy Lamour in *Her Jungle Love* (1938).

RETRO says: Jiggs' best friend was a dog named Spanky.



**Every Which Way But Loose (1978)**

Trucker turned prize fighter Philo Beddoe (Clint Eastwood) is happy travelling with his pet Orangutan Clyde, until he lays eyes on country singer Lynn (Sondra Locke). Eastwood said his co-star was, 'one of the most natural actors I ever worked with. But you had to get him on the first take because his boredom level was very limited'.

RETRO says: Right turn Clyde!

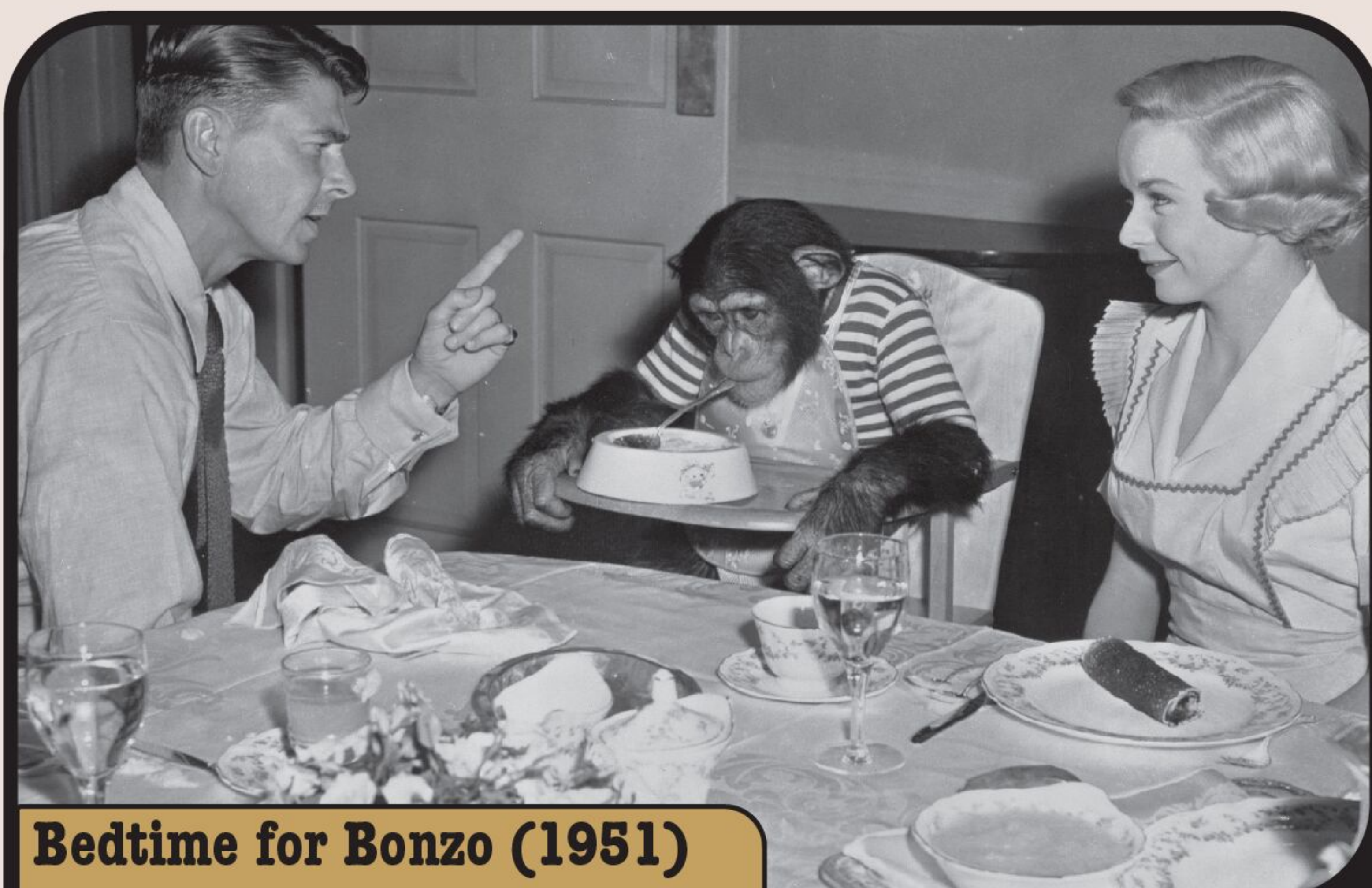


**The Jungle Book (1967)**

Voiced by jazz legend Louis Prima, King Louie was created specifically for the Disney film and doesn't appear in the Rudyard Kipling novel. His song, *I Wanna Be Like You*, written by the Sherman Brothers, also featured improvised scat singing by Prima and Phil Harris, who voiced Baloo the Bear.

RETRO says: Louis Prima was truly the king of the swingers.

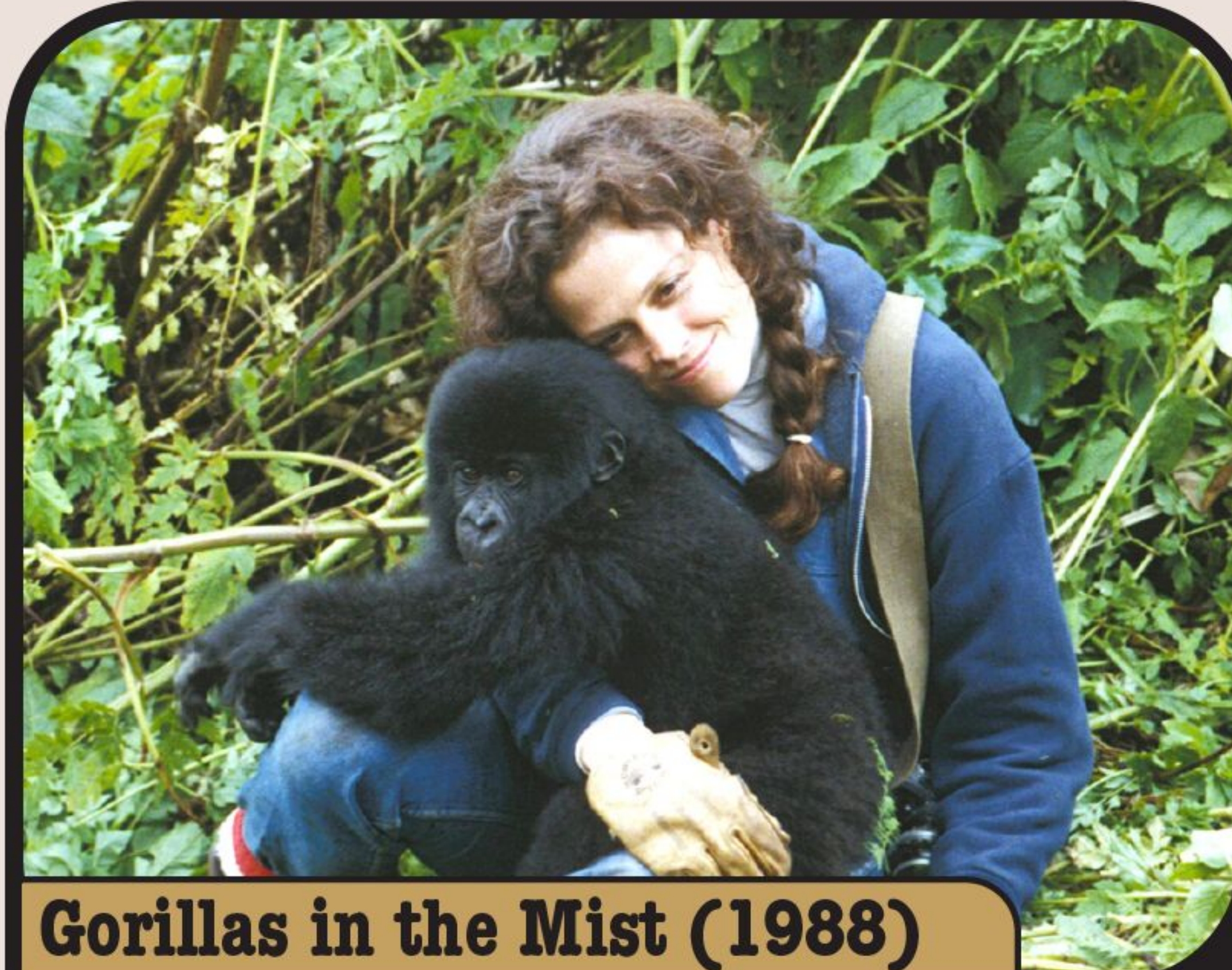




### Bedtime for Bonzo (1951)

The nature vs nurture argument is explored by a psychology Professor Peter Boyd (Ronald Reagan) who's determined to show his fiancée Diana (Jane Linden) that he can teach human morals to Bonzo the chimpanzee.

RETRO says: Political opponents made great sport of the film during Reagan's presidential campaign.



### Gorillas in the Mist (1988)

Fresh from defeating ghosts and aliens Sigourney Weaver starred in the true story of naturalist Dian Fossey, who fought to protect mountain gorillas in Africa. Director Michael Apted wanted to use real gorillas where possible but some shots used an ultra-realistic gorilla suit.

RETRO says: 'Get off my mountain!'



### The Wizard of Oz (1939)

The Wicked Witch's hairy Luftwaffe squadron of Oz were happy to do her bidding, kidnapping Toto and torturing Scarecrow. The head monkey (seen here) was called Nikko and played by veteran animal impersonator Pat Walshe. Some of the Munchkin actors doubled up as flying monkeys.

RETRO says: 'Fly my pretties!'



### Raiders of the Lost Ark (1981)

The cheeky waistcoat-wearing, Nazi-sympathising capuchin monkey happily double crosses Marion (Karen Allen) but then gets his comeuppance when he steals poisoned fruit meant for Indy.

RETRO says: Now that's what I call a bad date!





In wartime Hollywood, Joan Crawford's career was on the slide until the electrifying Mildred Pierce put her right back on top. Allan Hunter salutes one of cinema's great comeback stories

# A Star is Reborn





## DID YOU KNOW?

Carol Burnett appeared in a 1976 television spoof of *Mildred Pierce* called *Mildred Fierce* and received an appreciative note from Joan, who suggested they had spent more on the sketch than Warners had spent on the film.



Ann Blyth, who played Veda in the film, and Joan remained friends for many years

**W**hen Michael Curtiz was assigned to direct *Mildred Pierce* (1945) the last person he wanted as his leading lady was Joan Crawford.

Never one to pull his punches, Curtiz bluntly complained, 'She comes over here with her high-hat airs and her goddamn shoulder pads... Why should I waste my time directing a has-been?' Ouch!

Joan had featured in the list of top 10 box-office attractions every year from 1930 to 1936, but in the notorious 1938 survey of cinema owners she was suddenly labelled 'box-office poison'. She was dismissed as one of those stars 'whose dramatic ability is unquestioned, but whose box-office draw is nil'. Others on the list included Katharine Hepburn, Marlene Dietrich and Mae West. Joan clawed back some of her popularity as the conniving vixen Crystal in *The Women* (1939) and with a powerful dramatic role in *A Woman's Face* (1941) but the damage had been done.

Audiences seemed to have tired of her wrong side of the tracks romances and her box-office ➤





**Curtiz and Crawford**  
(seated centre) watch the  
rushes with cast and crew

standing was slipping. Her career reached its lowest point during the Second World War. Greer Garson had become the biggest female star at Joan's home studio of MGM and Joan's fellow stalwarts, and one-time rivals, Norma Shearer and Greta Garbo both retired in 1942, never to appear on screen again. Joan was in danger of becoming yesterday's news. Her private life provided little solace. In July 1942, she married actor Phillip Terry and later admitted, 'I was unutterably lonely. Never marry because of loneliness. I owed him an apology from the start. We just weren't made for each other.' The couple announced their separation late in 1945.

Joan decided something had to change. After 18 years at MGM, Joan paid the studio \$100,000 to terminate her contract in June 1943. She wrote to a friend, 'When I started to feel too depressed, I suddenly remembered what lousy

stories they'd given me, and then I got good and mad and walked out without a tear. The people I hated leaving were my crews – the electricians, make-up people, hairdressers, wardrobe. They really seemed like family to me.'

Two days after she left, Joan signed a three-picture deal with Warner Brothers for \$500,000 payable over six years. It was a great leap into the unknown. Warners was an unlikely destination for Joan. If MGM was the Rolls-Royce

of studios, steeped in glamour and sophistication, then Warners was all grit and gangsters. Was there really a place for her there? Bette Davis was the undisputed queen of the lot and there were plenty of others waiting to grab the scraps from her table. Hollywood insiders wondered if Jack Warner had hired Joan merely as a bargaining chip in his constant battles to keep Davis in line. None of Warners' biggest male stars, including James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart, seemed desperate to work with Joan. Bogart had once offered the grudging praise, 'Joan Crawford, as much as I dislike the lady, is a star.'

Joan began to wonder if she had made the biggest mistake of her career. Warners couldn't find a project for her. Scripts were rejected and idleness weighed heavily on someone with a famously strong work ethic. Joan even asked to return her weekly salary because she had done nothing to earn



**Joan had to win over**  
**director Michael Curtiz**



## Mother of the Year



Costume designer Milo Anderson created 29 costumes to enhance Mildred's character development

**M**ildred Pierce's tale of a mother locked in conflict with her daughter would eerily echo in Joan's family life. She adopted baby Christina in June 1940, followed by Christopher and then twins Cathy and Cindy in 1947. She doted on Christina, who later wrote, 'I wanted for nothing: toys, clothes and baby jewellery. My adoring, indulgent mother couldn't resist giving me anything I asked from her. In return, she had my total devotion.'

Christina became an actress but found it impossible to escape her mother's shadow. When Christina fell ill and was unable to continue her role in the TV soap *The Secret Storm* in 1968, Joan stepped in as her replacement. Christina felt her mother was now, 'beginning to relive her life through me'.

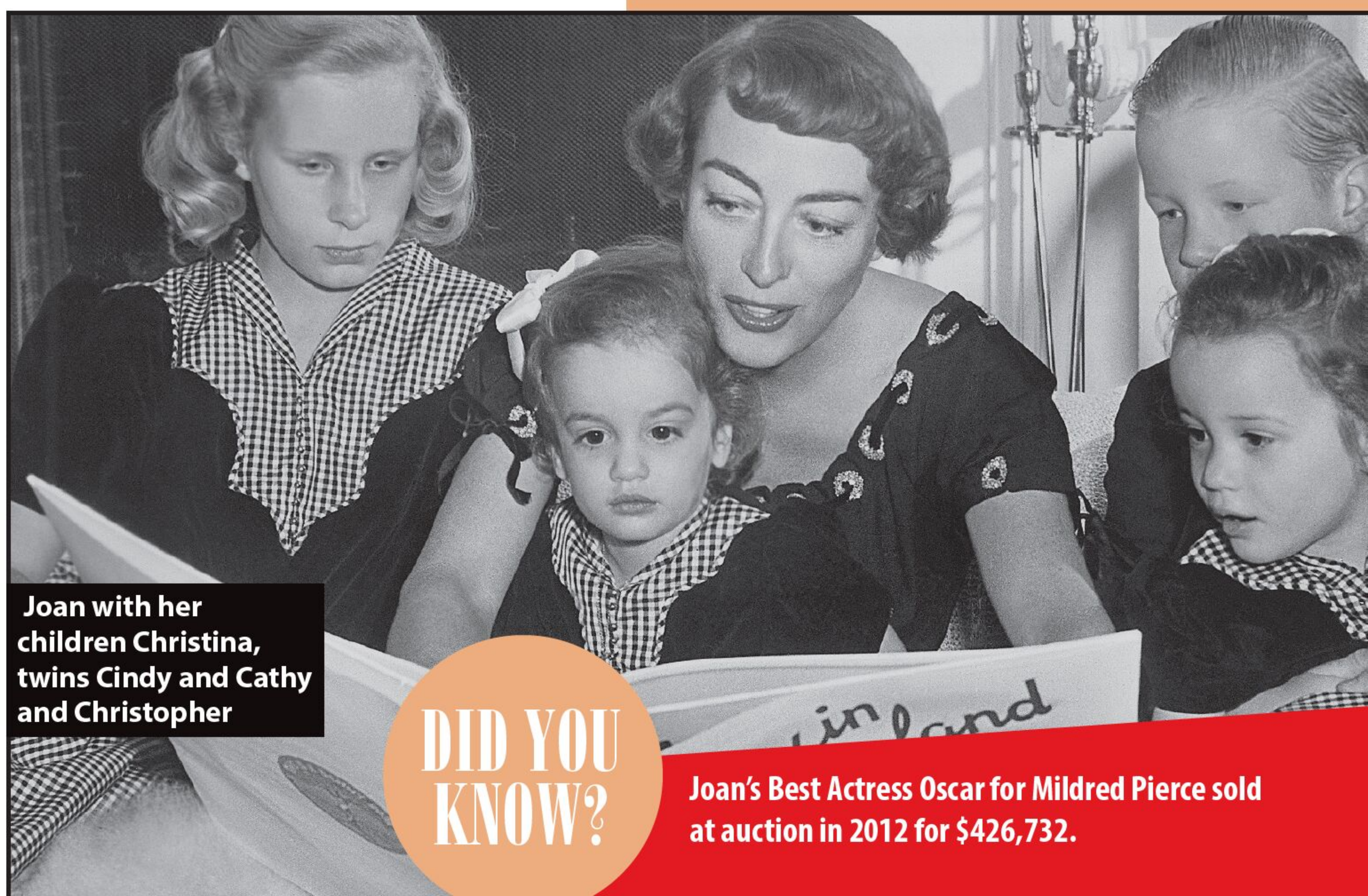
The relationship grew increasingly strained and Christina eventually exacted her revenge in the memoir *Mommie Dearest* (published after Joan's death) that painted Joan as a manipulative, inflexible disciplinarian and alcoholic. Joan's friend Myrna Loy and ex-husband Douglas Fairbanks Jr were among those who said the book did not represent the Joan they had known. Cathy and Cindy called it a 'work of fiction'. Nevertheless it caused permanent damage to Crawford's reputation.

it. Looking back, she remarked, 'All I did in two years was a guest appearance in Hollywood Canteen, in which all the Warners stars appeared, including Trigger, the horse'. Her luck finally changed when she read the script for *Mildred Pierce*.

### DRAMA AND STRUGGLE

The novel by James M Cain was published in 1941. Producer Jerry Wald paid \$15,000 for the screen rights and set about shaping it into a movie for Warner Brothers. The story begins in dramatic fashion as gunshots blast out and a man falls to the ground uttering the word 'Mildred' with his last breath. The police investigation quickly identifies a guilty party, but a series of flashbacks reveal the bigger picture and the life of Mildred. Divorced from her first husband, Mildred vows to ensure her two daughters will lack for nothing. Mildred's humbling as a waitress

and subsequent success as a restaurateur comes with a price tag – the contempt of spoilt, selfish older daughter Veda who wants nothing to do with her. There was something about the themes of sacrifice, shame and struggle that echoed Joan's early years. She felt a connection to the material and ➔



Joan with her children Christina, twins Cindy and Cathy and Christopher

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Joan's Best Actress Oscar for *Mildred Pierce* sold at auction in 2012 for \$426,732.



not even Oscar-winning Casablanca director Michael Curtiz was going to stand in her way.

Eight writers worked on Mildred Pierce before a final version of the script was agreed. Like all the best material at Warners, Mildred Pierce was offered to Bette Davis who turned it down in favour of making *The Corn is Green* (1945). Bette later explained, 'I didn't want to do a rags-to-riches melodrama, and I couldn't stand to work for Curtiz again'. Curtiz originally wanted Barbara Stanwyck to play Mildred and Warners had a number of contract stars who might have suited the role, including Ann Sheridan.

## WINNING THE PART

Joan kept making her case to the studio bosses, to her great champion producer Jerry Wald and to Curtiz. She even agreed to do a screen test for the part, something unheard of for a star of her stature. Curtiz wanted to know if she could handle the demands of a character who was tough, vulnerable and ultimately tragic. Joan said she knew she had the part when Curtiz watched the screen test and wiped a tear from his eye.

Joan showed her commitment to the film by privately coaching 16-year-old Ann Blyth in preparation for her screen test to play the ungrateful daughter Veda. Blyth, now 96, later recalled Joan as, 'the kindest, most helpful



Joan's next film was *Humoresque* (1946) opposite John Garfield

human being I've ever worked with. We remained friends for many years after the film.'

Mildred Pierce began filming on 7 December 1944 under the working title *House on the Sand*. Joan and Curtiz were frequently at loggerheads. Joan asked if the merciless director might be replaced with 'a human being'. Curtiz referred to her as 'Phoney Joanie' and felt she was undermining the character by always trying to make Mildred more glamorous. Mildred's wardrobe became a battleground. Curtiz favoured everyday, off-the-peg dresses to mark Mildred's straitened financial circumstances. Joan was accused

of clinging to her shoulder pads like a comfort blanket. 'I had to be the referee,' Wald later revealed. 'We had several meetings filled with blood, sweat, and tears. Then everything started to settle down. Mike restricted himself to swearing only in Hungarian, and Joan stopped streamlining the apron strings around her figure and let them hang.'

Star and director eventually declared a truce, especially when they observed the powerful chemistry between Crawford and Ann Blyth and began to sense how good the film might be. The growing friendship between the women made it possible for them

## And the Oscar goes to...

Joan Crawford received her first Best Actress Oscar nomination for Mildred Pierce. Her fellow nominees that year were Ingrid Bergman for *The Bells of St Mary's*, Greer Garson for *The Valley of Decision*, Jennifer Jones for *Love Letters* and Gene Tierney for *Leave Her to Heaven*. Joan did not expect to win and a sudden illness prevented her attending the ceremony at Grauman's Chinese Theatre on 7 March 1946. In her autobiography *A Portrait of Joan*, she wrote, 'On the night of the Awards, I was running a temperature of 104. I'd been suffering with flu for the past week, filming *Humoresque*. Flu coupled with the nervous tension of being eligible for an Oscar had me shaking with chills and fever.' When presenter Charles Boyer announced the winner, reporters flocked to Joan's Brentwood bedside where they found the perfectly made-up and impeccably coiffured invalid sitting up and able to take a little adoration. Michael Curtiz handed her the Oscar and Ann Blyth was there to share the moment of triumph.







Joan worked with Curtiz again on *Flamingo Road* starring David Brian

both to invest in key scenes in the film where Mildred slaps Veda and later when a snarling Veda's slap sends her mother tumbling to the ground. 'I loved every scene with her,' Joan enthused, 'except where I had to slap her and she had to slap me... After I slapped Ann, I burst into tears and found myself apologising frantically. Later, it wasn't quite so hard to have Ann slap me, but my hand was shaking so the scene faded out, and then it was Ann who was remorsefully apologising.'



When filming was completed, Joan presented Curtiz with an elaborately wrapped gift box that contained an oversized pair of shoulder pads. The two of them would subsequently work together on *Flamingo Road* (1949).

### BOX-OFFICE GOLD

Released in September 1945, *Mildred Pierce* was a box-office hit and a critical success that earned six Oscar nominations, including Best Picture and Best Actress for Joan, who once explained what the film had meant to her, 'I think I was getting ready for Mildred Pierce when I was a kid, waiting on tables and cooking. But there was not a single Crawford mannerism in my performance. I sailed into it with all the gusto I'd been saving for three years. The role was a delight to me because it rescued me from what was known at MGM as the Joan Crawford formula. I had become so hidden in the clothes and the sets that nobody could tell if I had talent or not.'

Mildred Pierce propelled Joan Crawford back to the top and gave her career a new lease of life that helped to sustain it for the next quarter of a century. The greatest compliment for her performance came from author James M Cain who sent Joan a first edition of the novel with the inscription, 'To Joan Crawford, who brought Mildred Pierce to life just as I had always hoped she would be, and who has my lifelong gratitude.'

# I know the face...

WALTER BRENNAN



**Born:** 25 July, 1894, Lynn Massachusetts

**Died:** 21 September, 1974, Oxnard California

**Screen debut:** *Webs of Steel* (1925) (uncredited)

**Screen credits:** 244

**Best known for:** With three Supporting Actor Oscars to his name Brennan is one of the most successful character actors in Hollywood history. His range and versatility saw him equally adept at playing sophisticated businessmen, country yokels, savvy sidekicks and grumpy old men. After losing most of his teeth in an accident in 1932 he was often cast as much older characters. In the Fifties Brennan found fame as a small-screen star in the sitcom *The Real McCoys* (1957-63). His final screen appearance was in the Western *Smoke in the Wind* (1975) released shortly after his death from emphysema at the age of 80.



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■ I'm hoping **Retro** readers can help me recall the name of a British children's TV drama from the late Seventies or early Eighties. The story centred around two teenage friends (a boy and a girl) who lived with their parents in a commune. I think there was only one series made, and I feel Simon Gipps-Kent played the boy. Does anyone remember it?  
**Sue Gray**

## AUCTION WATCH

A unique wooden box used as a prop in *King Kong* (1933) sold at auction recently for a huge \$187,500 (£152,270). The crate, which is marked Concentration No3 Gas Bombs, also includes a pineapple-shaped prop bomb made of wood.



## CATCH IT NOW



Last month saw the passing of original and uncompromising filmmaker David Lynch. Described by fellow director Steven Spielberg as a 'singular, visionary dreamer,' while Martin Scorsese said Lynch's work, 'made everything strange, uncanny, revelatory and new... he put images on the screen unlike anything that I or anybody else had ever seen'.

To commemorate Lynch's extraordinary talent, subscription channel Studiocanal Presents is currently streaming three of the director's key works; *The Elephant Man* (1980), *Mulholland Drive* (2001) and *Inland Empire* (2006). Available via Amazon Prime or Apple TV.

■ In *The Addams Family*, was Cousin Itt played by an actor or was it a puppet?

**Frank Cherry**

**Retro says:** The freaky family's hirsute relative was played by 3ft 11in circus performer Felix Silla. Italian-born Silla was also a stuntman, with more than 50 acting credits. He often doubled for children in dangerous scenes such as in *The Towering Inferno* (1974), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984), *Buck Rogers* (1979) and as a hang-gliding Ewok in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1983).

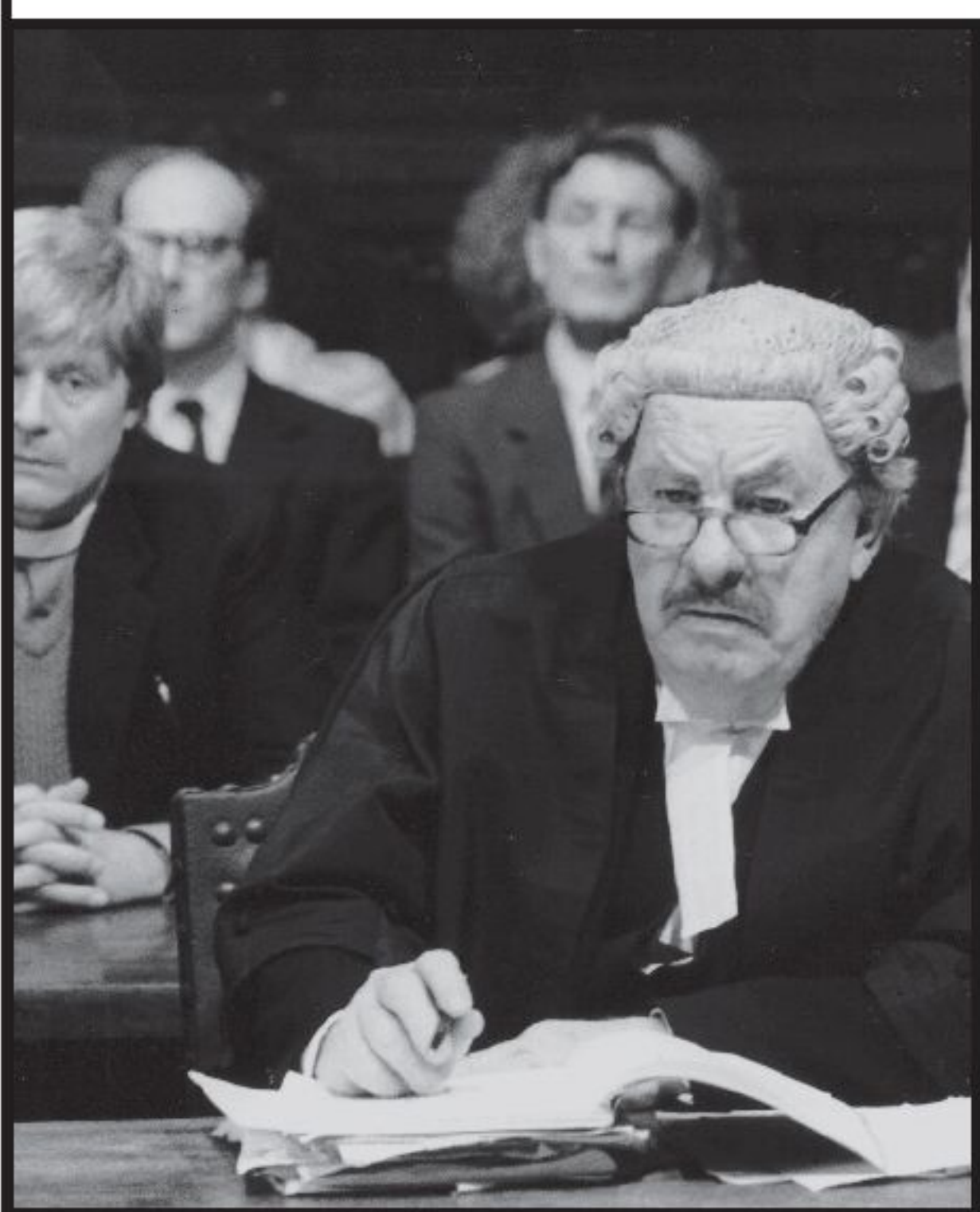


## 48 years ago... 1 March 1977

Bette Davis became the first woman to receive the American Film Institute's Life Achievement award in a lavish ceremony hosted by Jane Fonda.







■ Why do you mention so few actors from Down Under? As an Aussie in England it would be great to have some of my countrymen represented such as Leo McKern, Ed Devereaux, Vincent Ball and Charles Tingwell.

**Steven Christopher**

**Retro says:** *We have featured Rumpole of the Bailey and Skippy in the past but can certainly add some Antipodean stars to our list.*

■ **Retro 83** sparked off so many great memories for me. It was good to learn the shoe that Charlie Chaplin eats in *The Gold Rush* (1925) was made of liquorice. I'll hopefully be less nauseated when I watch it again. Thanks, too, for the mention of Joe Dallesandro, I was reminded of attending a late-night viewing of Andy Warhol's film *Flesh* (1968). The repeated removal of his trousers had the student audience enthusiastically and ironically shouting, 'Get 'em on!'

And finally, John Pertwee. He will always be 'my' Doctor. His years in the role, especially when he was working with the Brigadier and against the Master represent the high point of my enjoyment of the show.

**Maggie Cobbett**

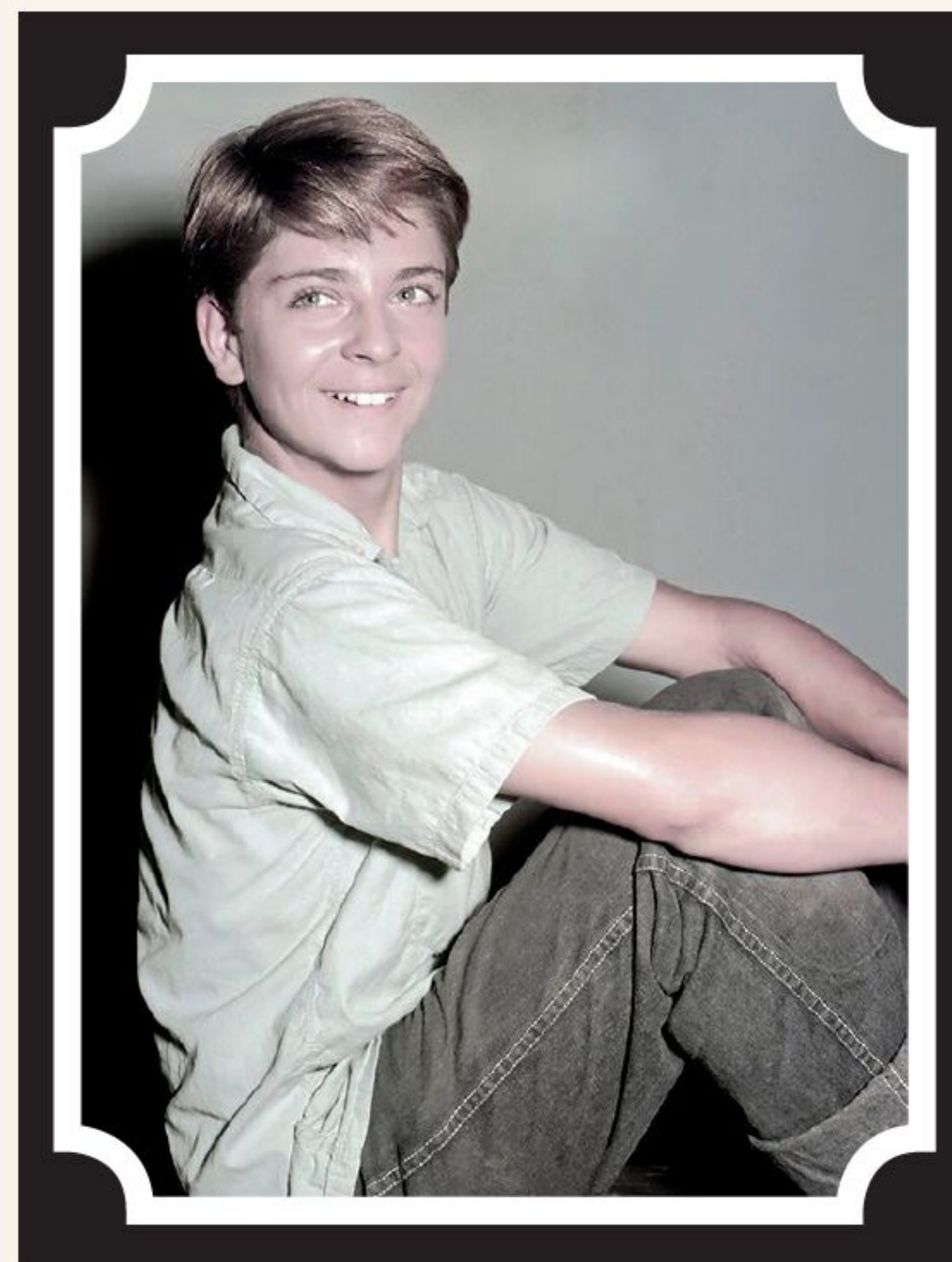


■ Could you please feature the Oscar-winning *A Touch of Class* (1973) which starred Glenda Jackson and George Segal? Both actors gave brilliant performances, and the film, about an affair between an American man and a British divorcee that doesn't run smoothly, merits a lot more recognition in my opinion.

**Alan Pryer**

**Retro says:** *The tagline alone sets this film up as something special; 'Not since Gable battled with Colbert and Hepburn battled with Grant has comedy been such fun.'*

## WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?



I wonder if you can tell me who was the young boy in the 1954 film *River of No Return* starring Marilyn Monroe and Robert Mitchum? I'd love to know what happened to him and if he carried on acting.

**William Hendrick**

The boy you're thinking of was Tommy Rettig, who began his career at the age of five after being talent spotted by an acting coach who lived in the same New York apartment building. He first toured with the stage production of *Annie Get Your Gun* and then moved into films from age nine. As well as playing Mark Calder in *River of No Return*, he was in *The Jackpot* (1950), *The Strip* (1951), *The Lady Wants Mink* and *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr T* (both 1953). He's probably best known, though, as Lassie's faithful human companion on TV (1954-57). Tommy struggled to make the transition into adult roles but later had a very successful career as a computer software engineer. Sadly he died of a heart attack in 1996, aged just 54.

**Retro says:** Is there a little-known star you'd like us to find out more about? Write to ask us to find out what happened to your favourites.



## 37 years ago... 9 March 1988

A tireless advocate for children's rights, Audrey Hepburn was appointed a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and embarked on a mission to try to tackle the famine in Ethiopia.



# You've got **MORE MAIL**

■ Can you tell me anything about the actor Danny Webb, who was very good in *Tales of the Unexpected*?  
**G Wood**

**Retro says:** We can't find a record of a Danny Webb in *Tales of the Unexpected*. Could you mean David Webb who appeared in 1983's *Clerical Error* (S6, E4)? David had a long career in the theatre and from the Fifties worked extensively on television in shows such as *Emergency Ward 10* (1960-61), *Dixon of Dock Green* (1964-74) and *Doctor Who* (1971). In 1976 he set up an anti-censorship pressure group championing the cause of the 'freedom of expression', promoting his belief that, 'So long as it's by and for consenting adults, nothing should be forbidden.' His final TV appearance was in the mini-series *Berkeley Square* in 1998. He died on 30 June 2012 aged 81.



## REEL LOCATION



■ I recently visited the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and it set me wondering if the impressive buildings have been used on film.  
**Roger Douglas**

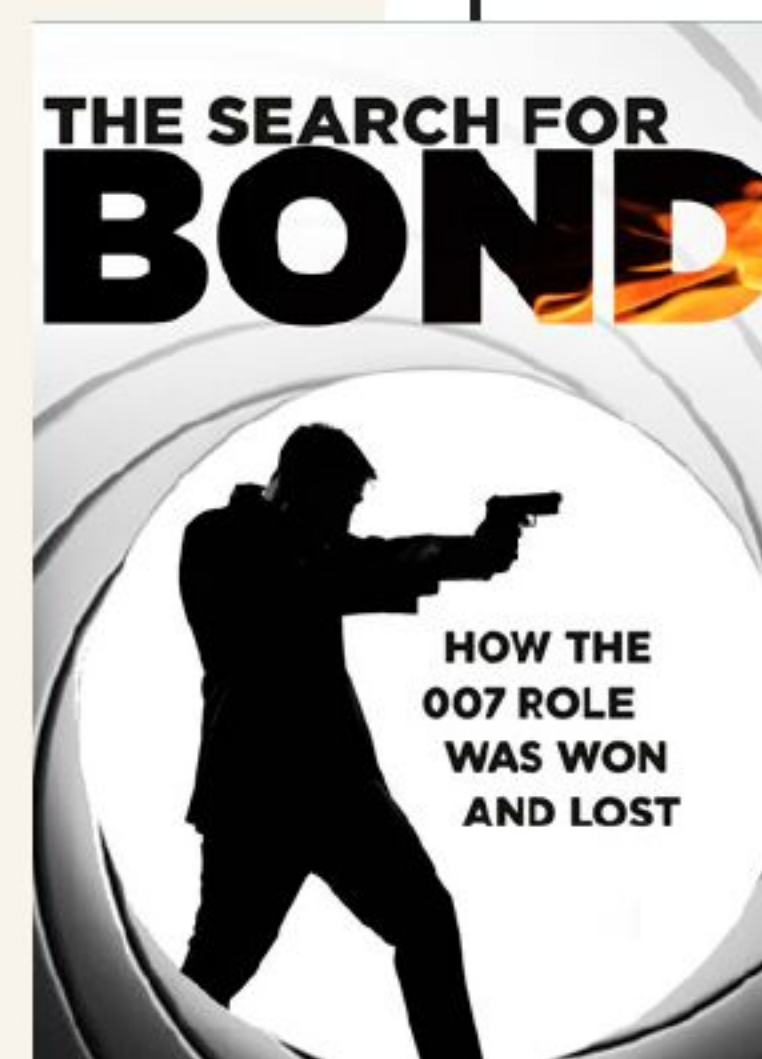
**Retro says:** The UNESCO World Heritage site is one of the most popular filming destinations in the world. The iconic building was first used in 1926's *Sons of the Sea* followed by *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1968). The site has also been seen in *Crime and Punishment* (1979), *Octopussy* (1983), *The Madness of King George* (1994), *Skyfall* (2012) and most recently *Bridgerton* (2020). *Indiscreet* (1958, pictured) is often mistakenly said to have been filmed there but it was shot on a full-scale replica of the Painted Hall, built at Elstree Studios as the real one was undergoing restoration.



## OUT NOW....

### BUY THE BOOK

Only six men have worn the famous Savile Row tuxedo of James Bond, yet hundreds came within inches of winning the coveted 007 role. For the first time, in *The Search for Bond*, Robert Sellers tells the extraordinary story of casting cinema's most famous secret agent, featuring exclusive interviews with actors who were considered, interviewed or screen tested for the role. RRP £20



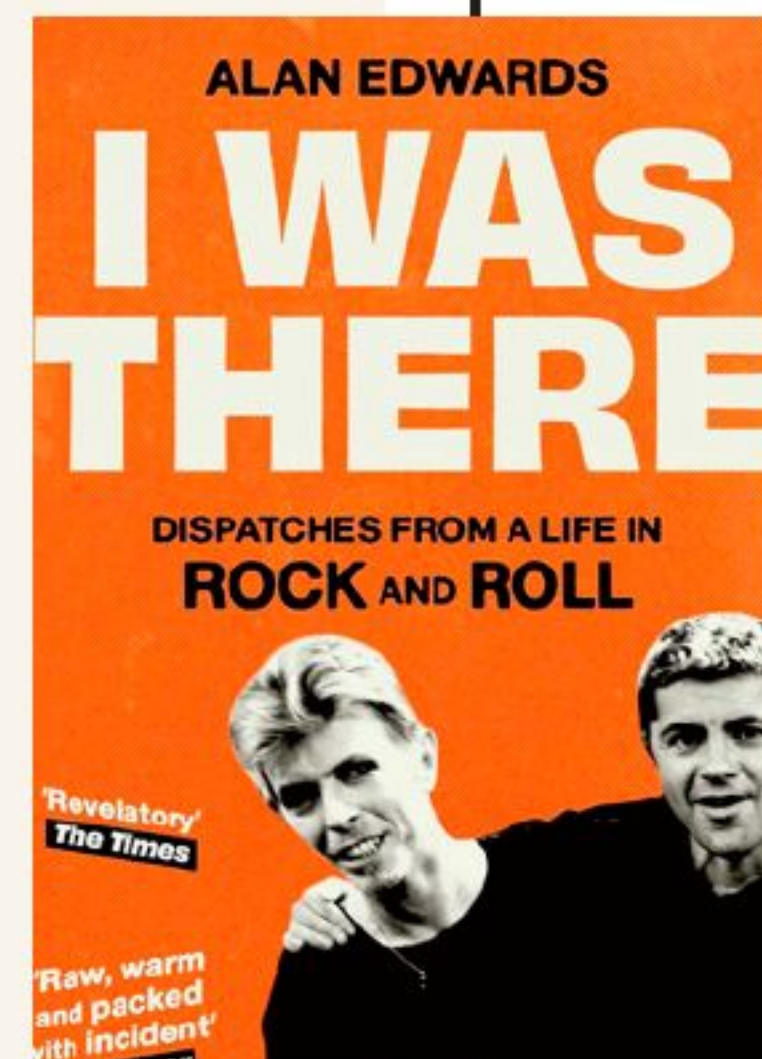
### WATCH ON BLU-RAY

Heart-warming *Now and Forever* sees Jerry (Gary Cooper) and Toni (Carole Lombard) as a pair of small-time crooks. After meeting Jerry's estranged daughter, Penny (Shirley Temple), they resolve to go straight but find that making an honest living isn't easy. Out 17 February RRP £16.99



### BUY THE BOOK

*I Was There* is music PR Alan Edwards' vivid, funny and insightful behind-the-scenes look at the brilliant artists he has worked with over five decades. He shares the inside track on the biggest names in music including David Bowie, The Rolling Stones, The Stranglers and Prince. RRP £10.99



### WATCH ON TV

Here they come! This *March* sees the return of The Monkees to British TV. Starring Micky Dolenz, Michael Nesmith, Peter Tork and Davy Jones, The Monkees followed the fun and often slapstick adventures of a struggling rock band trying to make it big with songs including *I'm a Believer* and *Last Train to Clarksville*. RRP £10.99







**Welcome to 1313 Mockingbird Lane... Chris Hallam tiptoes into the lair of *The Munsters*, TV's most weird and wonderful sitcom family**

**I**n September 1964, American TV audiences were introduced to a family they would never forget. They were *The Munsters* and they lived at 1313 Mockingbird Lane. A seemingly terrifying but ultimately warm-hearted assortment of supernatural freaks and ghouls, they arrived on British shores on the then little-watched BBC2 in April 1965. They quickly made their mark on TV history.

First up was Herman (Fred Gwynne), a clumsy, gentle giant with the extended forehead and features of Frankenstein's monster. His father-in-law, always referred to as 'Grandpa', was an elderly vampire in the style of Count Dracula. Something of a mad scientist, ➔

# Monster Mash

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Grandpa was younger than he seemed! Actor Al Lewis was only 41 when he first played the role – slightly younger than Yvonne De Carlo, who played his daughter, Lily.



Grandpa (Al Lewis) missed 'the old country' of Transylvania although sounded like a native New Yorker. His daughter, Herman's wife, Lily (Yvonne De Carlo) also had vampish tendencies while their son, Eddie (played by child actor, Butch Patrick) had the lupine features of a boy werewolf and a pet dragon named Spot. Finally, there was Lily's niece, Marilyn (played by Beverley Owen and later by Pat Priest), the white sheep of the family, who was secretly pitied by the Munsters for her (as they saw it) dismal looks, despite being a beautiful young woman. A crucial feature of the series was that the Munsters always considered themselves to be a perfectly normal American household and were oblivious to the terrifying effect their appearance had on everyone who met them. For example the family always attributed Marilyn's failure to hold on to a boyfriend to her poor looks (in the Munsters' eyes) rather than to the fact all her potential suitors were scared off by her family.

## SETTING THE SCENE

As the Sixties wore on, shows such as *Mister Ed* (1961-66), *The Beverly Hillbillies* (1962-71), *My Favourite Martian* (1963-66) and *Bewitched* (1964-72) had shown that audiences enjoyed nothing more than seeing the traditional sitcom turned on its head with a zany, unusual premise.

Animator Robert Emerson Clampett first had the idea for a cartoon series called *The Monster Family* in the Fifties, suggesting many of Hollywood's most famous horror characters such as Dracula, Frankenstein's monster and *The Wolf Man* could take part. The idea was revived by Allan Burns and Chris Hayward (who wrote for the *Rocky & Bullwinkle* cartoon) as *Meet the Munsters* a few years later. Universal Studios had by now sold the rights to many of the most classic monsters to TV, so a *Flintstones*-style cartoon featuring them now seemed very doable. In the end, the show was

filmed in live action as a couple of pilots, one in colour, one not. Ultimately, it was decided to film the whole series in black and white to retain some of the feel of the Thirties horror movies.

A few changes were made during this process. The original Eddie had actually been quite scary, a snarling, genuinely delinquent wolf boy. Actor Nate Derman was replaced by Butch Patrick and the character took on a more traditional all-American boy persona, despite his appearance. Herman's wife, Phoebe was renamed Lily with actress Yvonne De Carlo replacing original choice, Joan Marshall, in the role. This change was partly due to concerns over similarities between her and the character of Morticia in *The Addams Family*, a rival show being developed simultaneously. Lily was given a flowing white dress and lightning-white streaks in her dark wig to make her look more distinctive.

De Carlo was happy to be cast as Lily. A one-time Hollywood pin-up she had been in financial trouble since her stuntman husband had lost his leg in an accident while filming, *How the West Was Won* (1962). Despite never having met her, fellow cast members Fred Gwynne and Al Lewis (Herman and Grandpa) initially objected to her being given the part. 'We were not too keen because she was a bona fide movie star,' Lewis later admitted. 'We didn't think she would fit in with our brand of comedy. We were wrong.'

Gwynne and Lewis had worked together before, playing bumbling cops on the sitcom, *Car 54, Where Are You?* (1961-63). Bert Lahr, who had played the Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) had been briefly

considered for Grandpa but was thought to be too old. As Herman, Fred Gwynne, who was 6ft 5in, often struggled with the extensive make-over the role required and suffered frequent back pain and constant overheating as a result of having his arms, legs and torso padded with 40lbs of foam rubber.

## TWO OF A KIND

The first episode of *The Munsters* aired on 24 September 1964. By a strange twist of fate, the very first episode of *The Addams Family* had been shown just six days before. Both shows would run for about 18 months and would finish about the same time. Despite being superficially similar (*The Addams* were also an unusual, slightly supernatural family) the shows were ultimately quite different and there is no real suggestion either took inspiration from the other one. The humour of *The Munsters* was broader and, as a result, received generally higher ratings.

With the show proving a hit, *The Munsters* became an early example of a TV show that cashed in by selling related merchandise, for example a model-kit based around the hot-rod hearse the Munsters use to drive around, as well as

The Munster Koach was built by Hollywood custom car builder George Barris







Al Lewis' Grandpa developed into more of a 'mad scientist' character

squeaky toys, comics and a further set of models of both the characters and the Munster home.

## ENDURING APPEAL

One person, however, was unhappy with the show's success. Beverley Owen, who had been cast as Marilyn, had assumed the show would quickly flop and now felt trapped by a role and a contract that forced her to stay in Hollywood

and away from her fiancé. This time, Gwynne and Lewis were more supportive, Gwynne even letting her stay with his family for a short while.

Eventually, the young actress was released from her contract and flew home to marry her boyfriend. She was replaced by Patricia Priest, an actress of similar appearance, who took on the role from episode 14 onwards.

Ultimately, The Munsters ran for two seasons across 70 episodes, finishing in May 1966. This comparatively short run was largely down to the success of Batman (1966-68) on rival network ABC, which crushed The Munsters in the ratings. Cancellation only marked the beginning of the Munster story, however. The cast (minus Pat Priest) were all soon reunited for a full-colour film entitled Munster, Go Home! in 1966. With the series showing constantly in syndication, there have been numerous attempts to revive the show in TV or film form over the last 60 years, notably TV's The Munsters Today (1988-91) and a high-profile 2012 special called Mockingbird Lane. Despite their best efforts, however, none of these reboots have ever managed to match the original series for simple, ghoulish charm.



Butch Patrick (now 71) recorded a song called Whatever Happened to Eddie? in 1983



Pat Priest looked so similar to Beverley Owen, viewers barely noticed when she took over as Marilyn

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Patricia Priest (the second actress to play Marilyn) and Butch Patrick (Eddie) are now the only two surviving members of the original show's cast.



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**RETRO**

*Connections*

# The JOK and the D





# ER AMIE

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

In 2023, a play was produced about the friendship between Kenneth Williams and Maggie Smith entitled *A Shining Intimacy*.

## Chris Hallam examines the long friendship between Kenneth Williams and Dame Maggie Smith...

**O**n paper, they could hardly have been more different. She was one of the great British actresses of the last 60 years, a world-famous legend of stage and screen. He was best known for appearing in the Carry On films and for (among other things) voicing the cartoon, Willo the Wisp. But Maggie Smith and Kenneth Williams had far more in common than you might think. And for 30 years, they got on like a house on fire.

Kenneth Williams had been

captivated from the very first moment he saw her. The year was 1957 and he had been persuaded to appear in *Share My Lettuce*, a new revue based around a series of sketches written by Bamber Gascoigne, a Cambridge undergraduate and the future host of TV quiz show, *University Challenge*. Kenneth was 31 and feeling nervous. The cast of eight, for various reasons, wore colour-coded outfits. He was dressed in green, but he soon found himself

mesmerised by one of the other performers, dressed in orange, a slim, beautiful young woman with red hair and striking blue eyes.

The show demanded quite a bit of improvisation, a challenge the woman in orange rose to admirably. One second, she would be a lovelorn waitress in a railway station, the next a jaded streetwalker, a minute after that, a grumbling charlady moaning about the mess the other performers had left on the stage. Kenneth was blown away by her versatility.

### **RIISING STARS**

He wasn't the only one. At 22, Maggie was emerging as a major talent. Many men, including both of her future husbands, Robert Stephens and Alan Beverley Cross, were drawn to her. But Kenneth was not interested in her romantically. He and Maggie established a real chemistry when performing together. They quickly became the breakout stars of a hit show.

Kenneth and Maggie continued to forge a strong personal connection off stage too. Both were naturally very funny people and made a permanent impact on each other's sense of humour. The knack for delivering sharp, sardonic ➔



Kenneth Williams  
in *Raising the Wind*



Maggie Smith sings  
on the original cast  
recording of *Share  
My Lettuce*

Maggie won the Oscar for  
her performance in *The  
Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*





putdowns that Maggie in later life demonstrated as Lady Violet in *Downton Abbey*, owed a lot to her earlier friendship with Kenneth Williams. Maggie enjoyed the company of gay men, and it helped that there was no romantic or sexual element to their relationship. Kenneth was no threat and was the perfect person to accompany her on lingerie shopping trips to Fortnum's or to the cinema to see films such as *Inherit the Wind* (1960).

## OPPOSITES ATTRACT

Both, in fact, came from working-class backgrounds. Kenneth had been born in central London in 1926. His father, a cockney hairdresser, had once attempted to toughen him up by buying him a pair of boxing gloves. Maggie had been born 'Margaret' in 1934 to a lab technician and his Scots wife. She had mostly grown up in Oxford but, like Kenneth, never went to university.

In 1967, with Maggie on the verge of her Oscar-winning role in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and Kenneth close to the peak of his Carry On success, they were interviewed together on TV, both as was the fashion of the time, smoking furiously throughout. This would prove a rarity, however. Maggie disliked interviews and rarely did them.

One exception was Parkinson on which she appeared alongside Kenneth in 1973. Dressed in black, she overcame her initial nerves and joined Kenneth in reading a poem to fellow guest, Sir John Betjeman, the Poet Laureate. But the episode was dominated by a fierce row between Kenneth and host Michael Parkinson. It was a time of industrial unrest and Kenneth, who had right-wing views, launched unprompted into a lengthy tirade against socialism and the trade unions that Parkinson attempted to counter. The two men disliked each other at the time but later made up.



Kenneth appeared in all but five of the 31 Carry On films including *Regardless* and *Camping*



Kenneth would become a frequent guest in the years ahead.

Maggie was a very private person who when not acting preferred to avoid the limelight. Kenneth was the exact opposite. He was a gift to interviewers such as Russell Harty and Terry Wogan, even once standing in for Wogan when he went on holiday. A great raconteur, he relished the opportunity to appear on things like *An Audience with Kenneth Williams* (1983) or to read Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach* on *Jackanory*. He also loved showing off on radio panel shows including *Just a Minute*. It is difficult to imagine Maggie Smith doing the same.

Kenneth and Maggie's friendship was probably at its strongest in the Fifties and Sixties. Although they did work together after *Share My Lettuce*, their careers moved in different directions. Early in his career Kenneth had been invited by Orson Welles to appear on Broadway but turned him down, essentially because he wanted to stay in London where he would be close to his ageing widowed mother. He joined the cast of Carry On Sergeant soon after he met Maggie. He would probably have been horrified to have learned then

that he would end up being in 26 Carry On films (more than anyone else) and that he would be chiefly remembered for them. Most of his stage work is now forgotten.

## FRIENDS TO THE END

Maggie, in contrast, became a highly acclaimed actress and one of only a handful of British women to have ever won two Academy Awards for acting. But there was often a strong comedy element to her performances whether as Jean Brodie or in *Sister Act*, *Harry Potter* and *Downton Abbey*.

Their private lives were very different too. Filled with shame about his homosexuality, Kenneth never enjoyed an enduring romantic relationship. Maggie married twice and had two sons but was a widow for the last 26 years of her long life. By this time, her old friend Ken was long gone. He had succumbed to a (probably) accidental drug overdose in 1988, at the age of 62.

Among his possessions, was a note from the Fifties, an old friend expressing sorrow that he had been too ill to take part in *Share My Lettuce* the previous night. The author of the note said the performance had been miserable without him, but he should stay in bed until he was well. Underneath Maggie Smith had drawn a cartoon of herself holding a bouquet of flowers. It was a lasting memento of their enduring friendship.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Among Kenneth Williams' other close friends were Gordon Jackson, Stanley Baxter, Leslie Phillips, the playwright Joe Orton and Barbara Windsor.



# SCREEN CHIC MOVIE STYLE

## FILM: THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR (1968)

**ICONIC COSTUME:** An immaculately tailored grey three-piece plaid suit, accessorised with a blue shirt and tie, gold fob watch and gloves.

**HE WORE IT WELL:** Steve McQueen as millionaire playboy Thomas Crown

**WARDROBE BY:** Alan Levine, Ron Postal and Theadora Van Runkle

**SHOWSTOPPING SCENE:** Thomas looks effortlessly cool as he parks his Rolls-Royce in a cemetery and collects a huge bag of cash from the bin.

■ The Thomas Crown Affair was a deliberate departure for McQueen who was known for tough-guy roles. Now playing a romantic lead he needed a wardrobe to match.

■ More than \$10,000 worth of suits were tailored for the film and a lot of trouble was taken to get the fit just right. 'Sometimes we had to put 30 pairs of trousers on him to get the right ones to make his behind look great,' recalled Van Runkle.

■ The suits were accessorised with a \$2,225 Patek Philippe hunter watch, on a chain featuring the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity symbol.

■ McQueen said the wardrobe took some getting used to and he 'fidgeted at first'. The sunglasses, however, felt totally natural, so much so the Persol company launched a Steve McQueen branded collection featuring the blue tint.

■ Faye Dunaway's costumes were designed by Van Runkle, who had previously worked with Dunaway on Bonnie and Clyde (1967) and McQueen on Bullitt (1968).



**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

The Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow from the movie sold at auction in 2006 for \$70,200.



Over the course of her long, illustrious career Edith Head worked with the biggest stars of Hollywood's Golden Age, tackling more than 1000 films. As Amanda Hodges learns, it was no idle boast when she professed, 'If it is a Paramount film, I probably designed it.'

# Dressed for



## DID YOU KNOW?

Although known for principally dressing female stars, Edith said working with men was far easier. She was proud of her Oscar for *The Sting* (1973), and said choosing costumes for Paul Newman and Robert Redford was a pleasure. 'Just imagine, dressing the two handsomest men in the world, and then getting this!'

**D**oyenne of Hollywood designers, Edith Head once declared, 'What a costume designer does is a cross between magic and camouflage. We create the illusion of changing actors into what they're not. We ask the public to believe that every time they see a performer on the screen, he's become a different person.' No-one achieved this better than Edith, who amassed a staggering 35 Oscar nominations, clinching eight Academy awards (the highest number won by any female recipient).

Edith Claire Posenor, born 28 October 1897, left an indelible impression on the world of fashion and entertainment. She had a peripatetic childhood until her mother finally enrolled her in high school. During early years in Nevada, bereft of company, her innate creativity was satisfied by dressing up toads. 'I'd no other children for playmates. Later, struggling as a dress designer, I used

to tell myself anyone who can dress a horn toad can dress anything.'

Her penchant for sketching led her to study art and languages at the University of California, followed by further studies in Los Angeles. Afterwards Edith worked as a language teacher and married first husband Charles Head, but by summer 1924 economic necessity made her answer an advertisement for a sketch artist at Famous Players-Lasky Studios (which later became Paramount).

It was the silent film era, and Edith bobbed her hair in fashionable flapper-girl style. New boss Howard Greer was beguiled. 'A young girl with a face like a pussycat crossed with a Fujita drawing appeared,' her portfolio comprising the drawings of art colleagues. She was hired on the spot and soon proved to be a natural. 'Fashion is a language,' she'd say. 'Some know it, some learn it, some never will – like an instinct.'

Dark-haired, tiny and well presented, Edith's trademark

dark glasses were initially worn to perceive how colours might appear on film in black and white, but later remained as part of her signature style. At home she enjoyed bright colours but at the office wore sombre suits. 'I always wear beige, black or white,' she said. 'When I'm beside a star at a fitting, and she looks into the mirror, I don't want to be competing in any way.'

### HEADING FOR THE TOP

Edith spent years honing her talents, her tenacity leading her to become Paramount's head costume designer in 1938, a first for a woman in this male-dominated field. Biographer Jay Jorgensen says, 'For Edith the character always came first. She was driven to create a second skin for actors, her mission to help them effectively serve the needs of the character.'

When she scooped her first Oscar for *The Heiress* (1949) starring Olivia de Havilland and Montgomery Clift, this *modus operandi* was seen in practice. Set in pre-Civil War America, director William Wyler was a purist, insisting all clothes (even undergarments!) be authentic so diligent research was undertaken while de Havilland practised walking in cumbersome costumes of the era. ➔

# SUCCESS



Edith dressed Grace Kelly on four of her films



Edith and Wyler discussed how, as Catherine, de Havilland's evolving personality would be reflected in her clothes, starting lavishly as a rich man's daughter but with details such as excessive ruffles betraying nerves exacerbated by her father's cavalier treatment. Lack of sophistication appears when romantically susceptible but, by the film's finale, when she's found her voice, her new poise is reflected by the choice of a lavender chiffon dress.

'My motto is that the audience should notice the actors, not the clothes,' said Edith and Jay Jorgensen agrees. 'Just having beautiful costumes in a film was not what made good costume design. The advancement of character and the script, in harmony with costumes, was what won over Academy voters.'

Joan Fontaine said, with admiration, during Billy Wilder's *The Emperor Waltz* (1948), 'We always considered what was happening in the scene. Edith had to know what the movements were and whether the clothes were restrictive. She was interested in your best qualities and acting scope... there was nothing she wouldn't do to make you feel at home.' In a fascinating Paramount featurette from 1950 Edith appears showing the viewer how a simple change of dress subtly but profoundly alters the psychological balance of a scene.



Head won more Oscars than any other costume designer

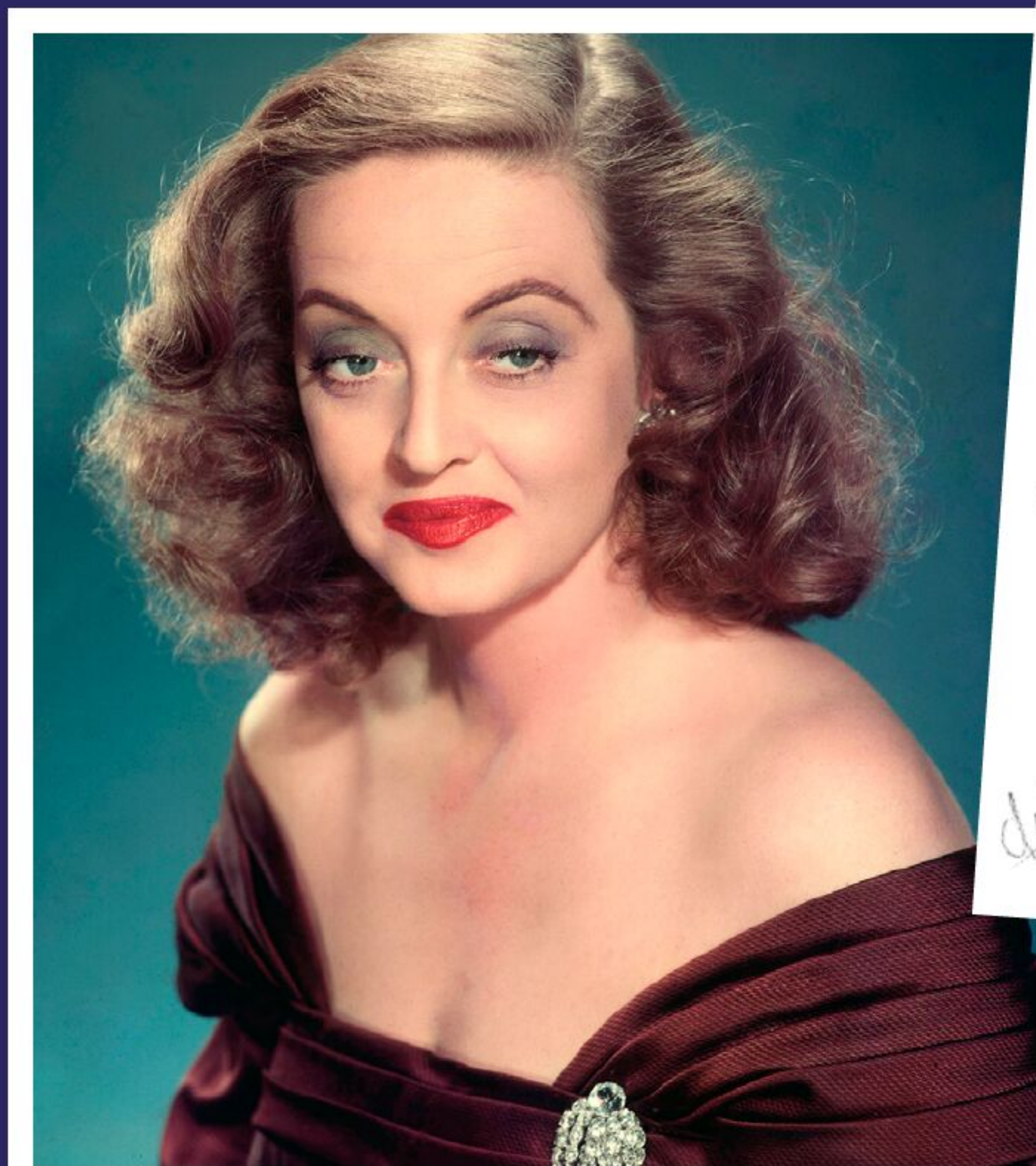
Edith's next Oscar triumph would be *All About Eve* (1950), director Joseph Mankiewicz's drama about volatile Broadway star Margo Channing who believes her assistant Eve (Anne Baxter) is betraying her. 'Just do what you think is right. I love your

work,' Mankiewicz instructed his designer.

Bette Davis, 'a small, disciplined cyclone' as Edith dubbed her, was cast and, although a Twentieth Century Fox production, Davis insisted on Edith making her costumes. The two women had a strong relationship, Edith wisely realising that Davis held firm opinions and jettisoned any potential arguments. In return Bette Davis appreciated her consummate skill. 'Not until we finally slip into the costumes does everything come together... If we're not comfortable, if they do not project the character, the costume designer has failed us. Edith Head never failed.'

## DRESSING MARGO

For the scene where Margo says, 'Fasten your seatbelts, it's going to be a bumpy night,' Edith designed a show-stopping brown silk gown trimmed with brown sable and a square neckline, but when Bette



The off-the-shoulder look for Margo Channing was a happy accident





Head called Elizabeth Taylor 'one of the prettiest human beings I've ever seen'



tried it on slipped off her shoulders. Disaster hovered but, happily, Davis liked this look and, as Jorgensen says, serendipity meant 'one of Edith's happiest accidents became one of her legendary designs.'

At a time when Oscars were given for both black and white and colour categories, Edith also won that year for Cecil B DeMille's vivid Biblical epic Samson and Delilah (1949), a less satisfying experience where she felt overlooked and research was difficult; proceedings also hampered by Hedy Lamarr's perceived lack of professionalism.

But Edith was nothing if not astute. Contemporary designer Sandy Powell says of her profession 'about 80% of what a costume designer does is psychological, only 20% is art,' and this reflects Edith's experience, as she deftly handled stars and directors, bolstering fragile egos and habitually navigating difficult demands. She wryly acknowledged, though, that

there were limits. 'You can lead a horse to water and even make it drink, but you can't make actresses wear what they don't want to wear!'

Edith was also pivotal on A Place in the Sun (1951), the film introducing teenage Elizabeth Taylor in a sophisticated new guise as debutante Angela Vickers. Edith knew the film would be long in production, wondering if the Dior New Look (full skirts, cinched waist) conquering the fashion world would remain in vogue; she gambled it would and minimised unpredictable details such as sleeves.

Fittings with Taylor, 'one of the prettiest human beings I've ever

seen,' proved positive as the star was gracious, her hourglass figure making her an ideal subject. Taylor is first seen in a dance dress of white satin with a tulle petticoat, her clothes signalling affluence; many of the character's dresses became widely popular. Frequently Edith's elegant designs proved trendsetting on and off screen and her advice was sought in many mediums, from fashion shows to radio and TV.

Another actress Edith showcased early in her career was Audrey Hepburn for whom she provided costumes in Roman Holiday (1953) and Sabrina (1954) both bringing Head Oscars. Quickly recognising Hepburn had the figure of a fashion model, Edith had just two days to envisage Princess Ann's wardrobe. She created brocade ballgowns and easy day wear, Hepburn happy in Rome's heat to wear a blouse with rolled up sleeves (masking her thin arms) teamed with a cotton gathered skirt and flat shoes.

Edith also costumed Grace Kelly in Rear Window (1954), one of many Hitchcock collaborations, eventually tallying 11 films with him. 'Every director has a language,' she'd say, 'for instance, Hitchcock does not like bright colour' unless pivotal to the story, such as the yellow dress from Marnie (1964.) She'd work on To Catch a Thief (1955), a favourite project, and called losing out on the Oscar (to Charles LeMaire for Love is a Many-Splendored Thing) her 'single biggest career disappointment.'

## QUEEN OF COSTUME

Happily, there were compensations. Edith said, 'Whenever asked which star is my favourite, I answer Grace Kelly. She's a charming lady, a gifted actress and a valued friend.' She and Edith frequently collaborated, being dressed in unusually dowdy manner for The Country Girl (1954) then sumptuously in To Catch a Thief.

In the late Sixties, with a takeover looming at Paramount, Edith moved to Universal Studios, Alfred Hitchcock's base, where she remained until her death in 1981. Her final film – Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid (1982) – released posthumously – utilised her knowledge of Forties fashions and was dedicated to her memory. After her death, Bette Davis graciously acknowledged, 'A queen has left us. The queen of her profession. She will never be replaced. Her contribution to our industry, to Hollywood, her elegance as a person, none who worked with her will ever forget.'



Edith Head made a cameo appearance, as herself, in a 1973 episode of Columbo, Requiem for a Falling Star, opposite her good friend Anne Baxter.

DID YOU  
KNOW?



Comedy historian Robert Ross pays tribute to some of the finest and funniest, but often overlooked, names in showbiz

# Forgotten Heroes of Comedy...



Character actress, spirited comedienne, and dependable woman of funny voices, Pearl Hackney was born in Burton upon Trent, in October 1916. She spent most of her formative years in Liverpool and made her first mark in showbusiness on the stage of the Windmill Theatre in London.

Having trained as a ballerina under the guidance of Anna Pavlova, from the age of 15 Pearl was working at the venue in the chorus. She had made her way up to principal dancer by the time she met an up-and-coming comedian by the name of Eric Barker. The couple married in 1936 and remained a near-constant fixture of light entertainment for decades afterwards. Their radio broadcasts together relied on a gleeful and natural shorthand of domestic bliss and knowing bickering. By the time of *The Eric Barker Half-Hour*, on BBC Television from 1951, the sketch show had developed into more of

a sitcom format, with the likeability of the married comic couple to the fore.

This suited Pearl's laid-back acting style perfectly. It was a quality she would bring to such popular programmes as *Are You Being Served?* (1974), and the Robin Askwith situation comedy *Bottle Boys* (1984-85). Pearl was brilliant as flustered housewives and frosty old maids; argumentative shop assistants and poker-faced post mistresses, and in a historic setting had an effortless tinge of the ration book about her. Her face could

**'Her face could personify stoic struggle and patriotic pride'**

personify stoic struggle and patriotic pride, and a sense that she had had a couple of cheeky Cockney evacuees unwillingly dropped in her lap. It was this comic fussiness she also brought to several episodes, as Mrs Pike, in

radio adaptations of *Dad's Army*.

In between looking after her ailing husband and being a supportive mother-in-law to Anthony Hopkins – the Barkers' daughter Petronella was married to the Welsh hellraiser from 1966 until 1972 – Pearl cropped up in

everything from *Coronation Street* (1973-80) to *All Creatures Great and Small* (1978-88). Rather incongruously she proved a minor muse for British exploitation film-maker Pete Walker, featuring in four of his films, as Carol's mother in *Cool it, Carol!* (1970); Mrs Gruber in *Four Dimensions of Greta* (1972); a woman at a demonstration in *Tiffany Jones* (1973); and a seance attendee in *Schizo* (1976). Rather neglected by British cinema by and large, Pearl does crop up as a wedding guest in the Peter Sellers sex comedy *There's a Girl in My Soup* (1970), and a train passenger in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1978), the spoof version starring Peter Cook as Sherlock Holmes!

Pearl outlived her beloved husband by 20 years, dying at the ripe old age of 92 in September 2009. They are reunited in the churchyard of St Mary's, in Stalisfield Green, Kent.

■ Visit the website of Robert Ross, Britain's Comedy Historian, at [robertross.co.uk](http://robertross.co.uk)



Performing on the Ed Sullivan Show. Guitarist Niki Sullivan (left) left the band in 1957

# NOT FADE AWAY

He was only in the spotlight for 18 months but, David Reid insists, Buddy Holly remains one of the greatest heroes of rock 'n' roll

**T**he circumstances surrounding Buddy Holly's tragic death, aged just 22, are well documented. It was a shocking event that cemented the singer and songwriter in people's hearts and minds. But we mustn't allow the legend of Buddy's death to overshadow the huge contribution he made to rock 'n' roll history.

Buddy Holly and the Crickets were fairly late arrivals to the forefront of rock 'n' roll. But their unique, self-penned sound was destined to influence and change popular ➤

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

Buddy only released three LPs during his lifetime: *The Chirping Crickets* (1957), *Buddy Holly* (1958) and *That'll Be the Day* (1958). The *Buddy Holly Story* compilation album (1959), the first of many posthumous records, was issued less than month after his death.



music ever after. Folk rock legend Bob Dylan, who caught one of Buddy's final shows, explained, 'Buddy played the music that I loved: country western, rock 'n' roll, and rhythm and blues. Three separate strands of music that he intertwined and infused into one genre. One brand.'

The Crickets' debut single, *That'll Be the Day* was released in July 1957 and slowly climbed the Billboard chart to make No.1 on 23 September. Buddy's debut solo record, *Peggy Sue* (also featuring the Crickets) did almost as well, peaking at No.3. The Crickets, now in demand, embarked on a relentless touring schedule and topped off their year by performing on the prestigious Ed Sullivan Show in December.

## THE REAL THING

*That'll Be the Day* became a No.1 hit in Britain where rock 'n' roll was all the rage due to the movie *Rock Around the Clock* (1956). While the film's star turn, Bill Haley and His Comets, had already played in the UK, Buddy was destined to make an even bigger impact.

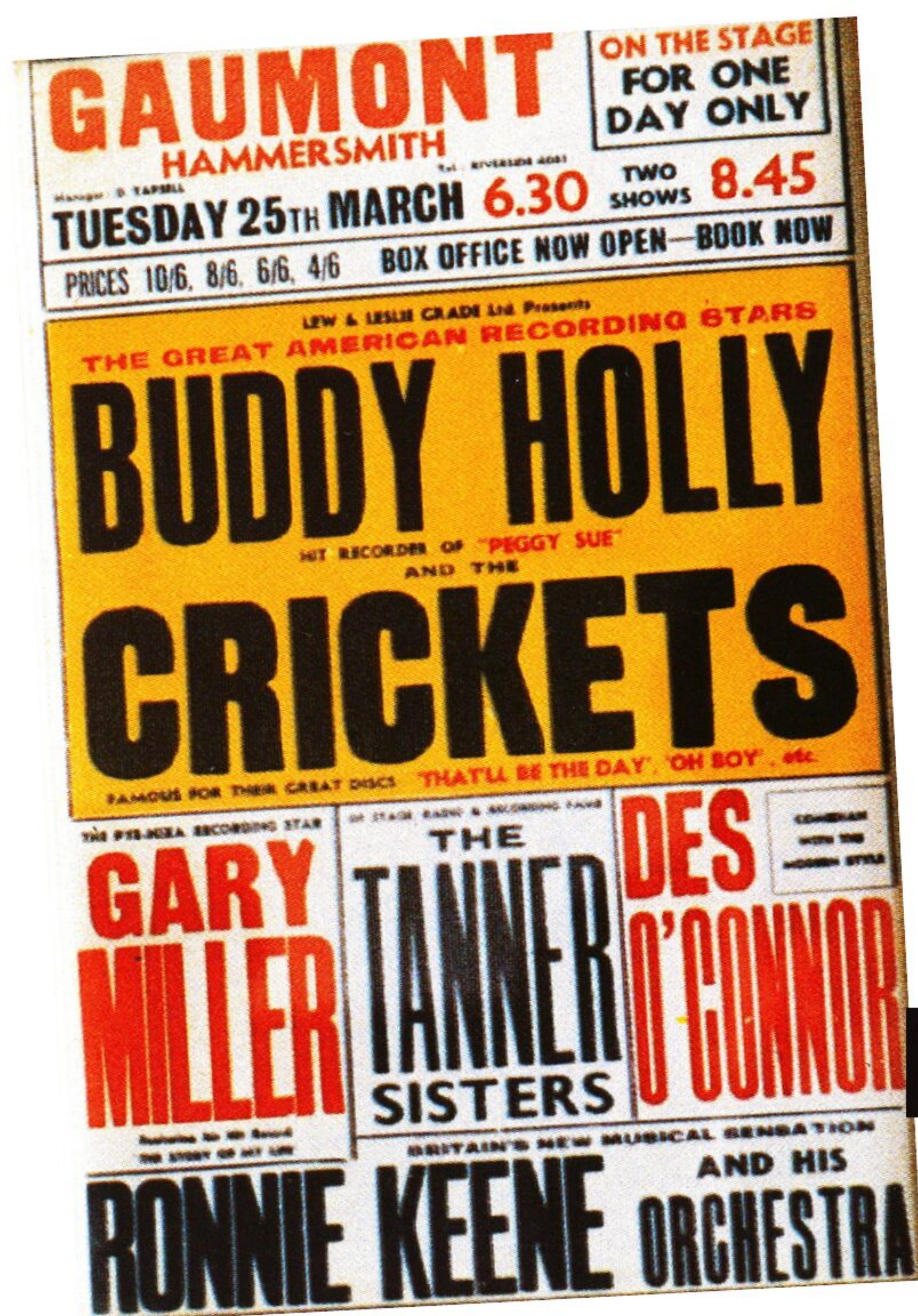
The Crickets' March 1958 British tour plus their appearance on Val Parnell's *Sunday Night* at the London Palladium TV

show had an indelible effect upon countless future stars. The Beatles' Paul McCartney later claimed his technical knowhow as a rock 'n' roll guitar player came from watching that TV performance, adding, 'Buddy Holly to us was amazing... he sang, played guitar and played the solos. He also wrote the stuff. So this was like all-inclusive one-man band and we really thought that was great. We thought *This is what we have to do.*'

Keith Richards of The Rolling Stones (who would cover Holly's *Not Fade Away* as their third single) was equally impressed because he felt Buddy was, 'self-contained... had a great band and didn't need anyone else'. And Eric Clapton stated, 'Of all the music heroes of the time, Buddy Holly was the most accessible, and he was the real thing... He was one of us.'

Buddy's looks also inspired, especially his trademark horn-rimmed spectacles. Previously self-conscious about his specs, John Lennon started wearing them with pride, while 11-year-old Reginald Dwight (later Elton John) ruined his perfectly good eyesight by wearing glasses in homage to Buddy. By the time the Crickets' UK tour concluded they had four singles simultaneously in the British Top 30: *Listen to Me*, *Oh Boy*, *Peggy Sue* and *Maybe Baby*. Guitar sales boomed in every town they played.

Born in Lubbock, Texas on 7 September 1936, Buddy grew



The Crickets played their final UK concert in March 1958



up captivated by country singers including Hank Williams and Jimmie Rodgers. In 1952, aged 15 he performed a regular slot on local radio as a duo, first with Jack Neal and later Bob Montgomery. Buddy formed a band with drummer Jerry Allison plus various occasional members, but they often played as a duo. Witnesses recalled that the combination of Buddy's impressively full-on guitar playing and Jerry's drums sounded bigger than most full groups.

In 1955 Buddy attended an Elvis Presley concert and immediately embraced rock 'n' roll. He supported both Elvis and Bill Haley, became close friends with Little Richard, and the following year signed a contract with Decca Records. Buddy and Jerry were already writing their own songs and had strong ideas about how they should sound. Unfortunately, Decca despised rock 'n' roll and wanted them to play country style. When they argued with producer Owen Bradley he described Buddy as,

'The biggest no-talent I have ever worked with.' Unsurprisingly, their contract wasn't renewed.

Back in Texas, Buddy approached Norman Petty, an independent producer, who immediately recognised his potential. Petty offered to manage the artist, in exchange for co-writing credits and control of the finances. Feeling he had nothing to lose, Buddy agreed, a decision he would later regret.

## CREATION OF A LEGEND

On returning from their triumphant British tour the Crickets continued their arduous schedule of touring and recording but Buddy was starting to think ahead. Rock 'n' roll was coming under constant attack from the conservative establishment and, partly due to a recession, record sales began to decline. Buddy envisaged a new career as a producer and songwriter. He planned to build his own studio and start a record company with the full support of his wife, Maria Elena, whom he'd married (against Petty's advice) in August 1958.

There was one big problem. Although they'd made a lot of money it was all under Norman Petty's control and he had no intention of handing it over. Buddy decided to hire a lawyer, fire Petty and relocate to New York. He expected the band to join him but Petty, acting to cut his losses, convinced Jerry and bassist Joe B Mauldin to stay in Texas and continue working with him instead.

Buddy and Maria Elena moved to Manhattan where, despite his difficulties, Buddy went into creative overdrive writing and recording a series of outstanding new songs. He was at his creative peak when he struck out on the road for the tour that would tragically prove to be his last.

Buddy's untimely demise certainly sparked the creation of a legend. If he had lived we probably wouldn't have Don McLean's heartfelt hit, American Pie, the

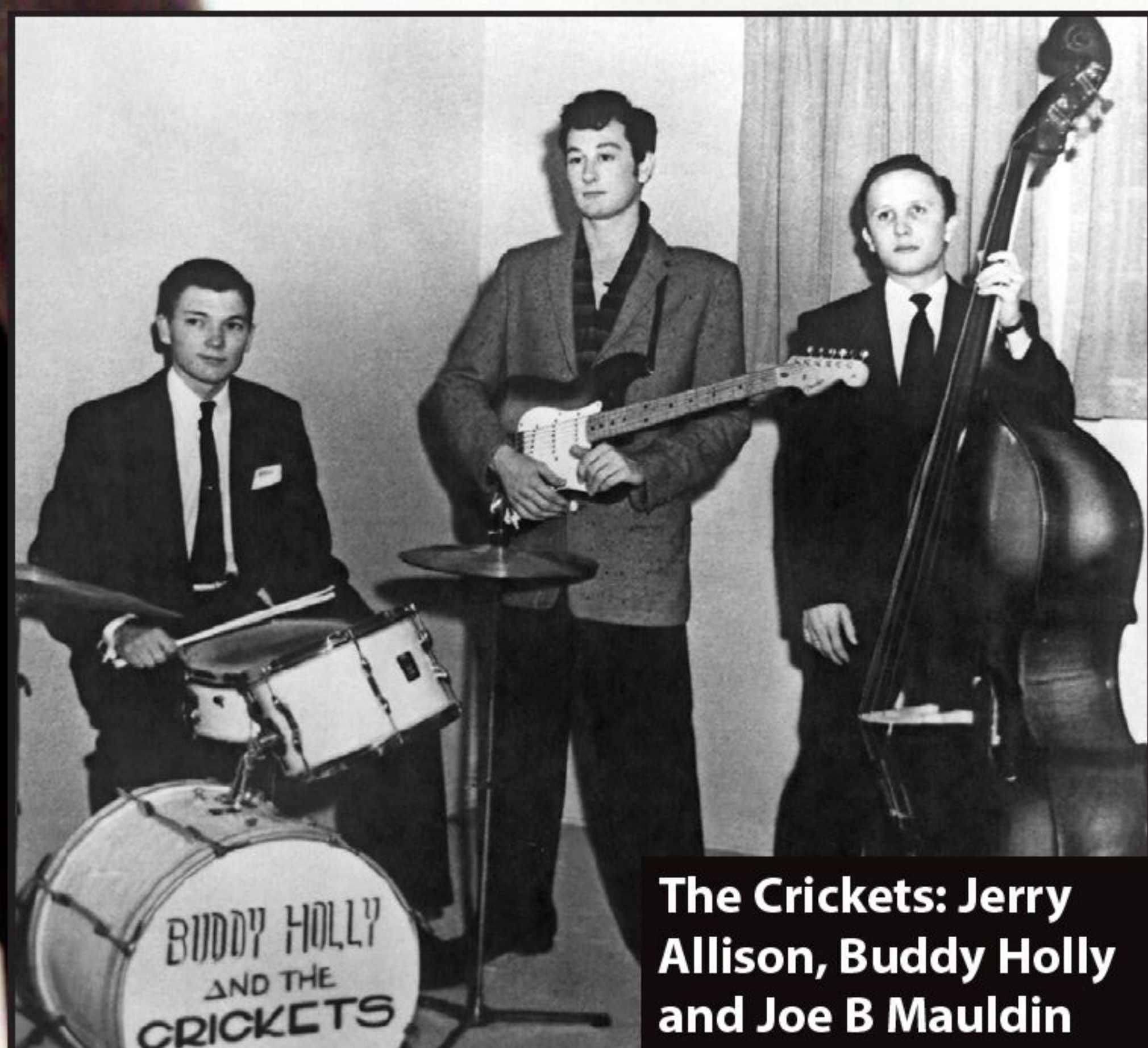
## The day the music died

As 1959 dawned Buddy was invited to headline yet another tour, the Midwest-spanning Winter Dance Party. He didn't want to do it – he didn't even have a band – but he did have a pregnant wife and (because of a dispute with his ex-manager Norman Petty), he was broke. Buddy recruited a totally new Crickets line-up and headed out on the road for what turned out to be the last time. Exhausted and tired of the freezing January temperatures, Buddy decided to charter a plane to speed him to the next stop. After playing to a crowd of 1000, Buddy and his fellow frontmen on the tour, The Big Bopper and 17-year-old newcomer Ritchie Valens, boarded the plane at Mason City Municipal airport. It was 12.55am on 3 February 1959. Their pilot, 21-year-old Roger Peterson, had already flown 17 hours that day. After take-off, when Peterson failed to radio in, the plane's owner sent out another plane on the same route. Within minutes they spotted the wreckage, less than six miles from the airport. The pilot and all three passengers had been killed on impact.



wildly inaccurate Hollywood biopic, The Buddy Holly Story (1978), or the successful stage musical that bears his name.

However, his legacy as one of the most innovative and influential musicians and songwriters of all time is undeniable and was firmly established while he was still alive. He made his mark on music history not because of but despite the crash that took his life.



The Crickets: Jerry Allison, Buddy Holly and Joe B Mauldin

DID YOU  
KNOW?

In 1991 Buddy's Fender Stratocaster sold at auction for \$110,000, but his less well-known Gibson J-45 acoustic fetched considerably more at \$242,000 due to a bidding war between an unnamed Lubbock man and Holly biopic actor Gary Busey.



**RETRO**

*Behind the scenes*



# DANGER MAN

The films of Buster Keaton are packed with jaw-dropping stunts – and he did them all for real, even risking his life, reveals Brian J Robb



Taking the leap  
in Three Ages



One of the defining images of silent cinema is Harold Lloyd hanging from a clock face above Los Angeles. Although Lloyd made a couple of 'daredevil' movies, they were the exceptions. For Buster Keaton almost every film, whether short or feature, included a death-defying stunt or two. They thrilled audiences in the Twenties, and they still thrill today, while provoking the inevitable 'How did he do that?' questions.

Keaton started very young on stage. One of his first lessons was managing an impressive pratfall safely. Legend has it that baby Joseph Keaton gained the nickname 'Buster' (meaning a fall) when he took a tumble downstairs, only to bounce back unhurt. Stage led to cinema when Keaton teamed with Fatty Arbuckle, making his debut in 1917's *The Butcher Boy*. By 1920 he was starring in innovative shorts, devising and directing his own pictures. Central to many were unbelievable stunts, several life threatening. In fact, during one stunt Keaton broke his neck but didn't find out for many years!

In 1922 short *Cops*, Keaton introduced one of his signature moves. The film is a massive chase through the streets of LA as hundreds of cops pursue an innocent Keaton. Trying to escape, he casually grabs the back of a passing car that pulls him along. It's a split-second gag, with Keaton

flying into the air like a rag doll. He liked it so much, he repeated it in 1922's *Day Dreams*, with a San Francisco cable car. Both takes had the strong possibility of going wrong or causing injury.

Keaton was happy to use cinema tricks (he's duplicated multiple times in 1921's *The Play House*), but when it came to stunts he wanted them as real as possible for greater impact. There was always danger, as he discovered making feature *Three Ages* (1923). One scene saw Keaton jump between two tall buildings (using forced perspective, the buildings appear much taller than they were). Keaton didn't quite manage the ambitious jump, failing to hold on and falling into an unseen net. He sustained injuries that saw him confined to bed for days. When he returned, he salvaged the failed stunt, building it into a new sequence where he fell to the ground, crashing through awnings on the way. Keaton always found a way to make the best of even a failed stunt sequence.

### WATER TORTURE

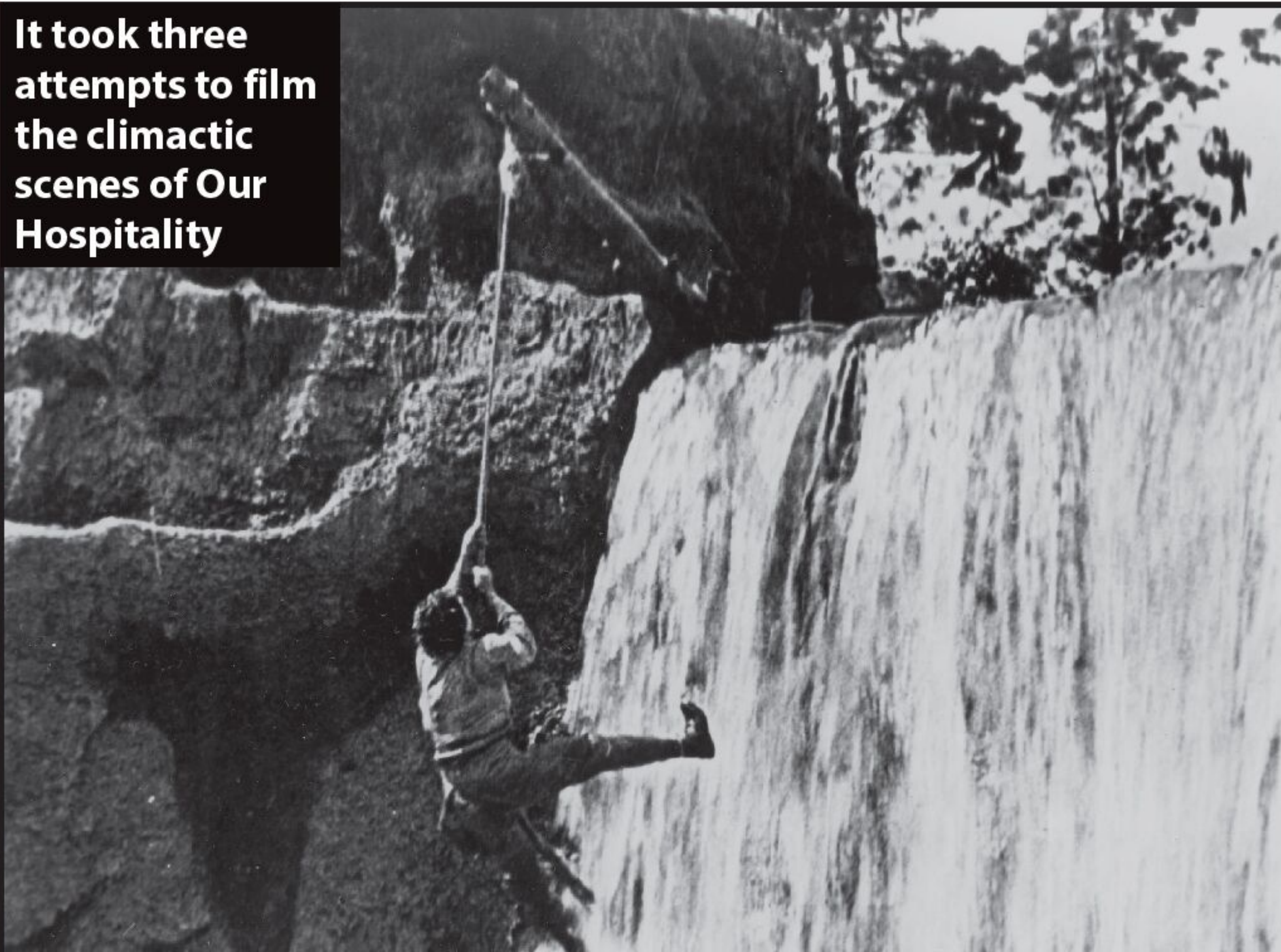
Each new feature saw Keaton develop more elaborate daredevil sequences. For 1923 Civil War drama *Our Hospitality*, Keaton built the film's climax around an impressive waterfall scene where he rescues Virginia (Keaton's wife, Natalie Talmadge) from a raging torrent. A combination of location and studio recreation, along with the subtle use of a dummy and a double, achieved a convincing stunt in which an upside-down

Keaton (hanging from a rope) grabs Talmadge as she tumbles over the waterfall, swinging her onto a safe ledge. It took three attempts to get right, Keaton nearly drowned, and he required medical rest afterwards. This scene demonstrated Keaton's growing skill in working stunt sequences into a drama, rather than as stand-alone gags.

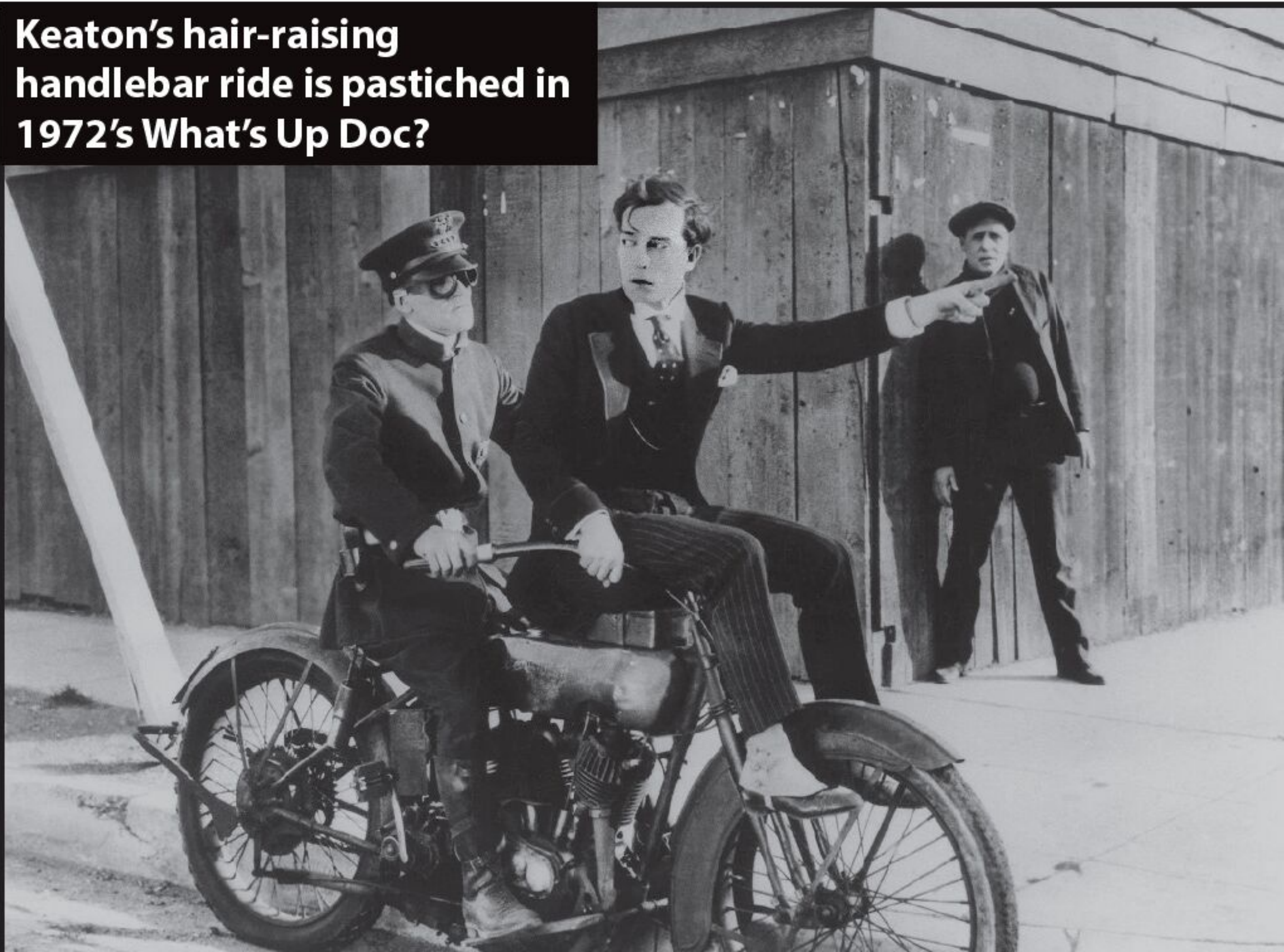
The following year, Keaton presented a series of dramatic stunts and gags in *Sherlock Jr* – the film he'd break his neck while making. A fantasy that sees a film projectionist imagine himself in dramatic film moments, one sequence saw Keaton grabbing a waterspout while swinging off a moving train. The waterspout drenches Keaton as he falls to the ground. However, the force of water was far stronger than intended, causing Keaton to strike his neck on a rail and he blacked out. Although he suffered blinding headaches, Keaton was back at work after a day off. It wasn't until 1935 when a routine x-ray showed Keaton had fractured a vertebra nine years earlier. (He reused the gag, soaking Marion Mack in *The General*.)

Later in *Sherlock Jr*, Keaton rides a runaway motorbike while sitting astride the handlebars. He careens through traffic as obstacles are thrown at him, from an exploding log, ditch-diggers shovelling soil, a stag party tug-of-war, a speeding train he almost collides with, and an incomplete bridge he must cross. It's a solid three-minutes packed with hair-raising incidents. It's also one case where Keaton 'cheated', filming ➔

It took three attempts to film the climactic scenes of *Our Hospitality*



Keaton's hair-raising handlebar ride is pastiched in 1972's *What's Up Doc?*





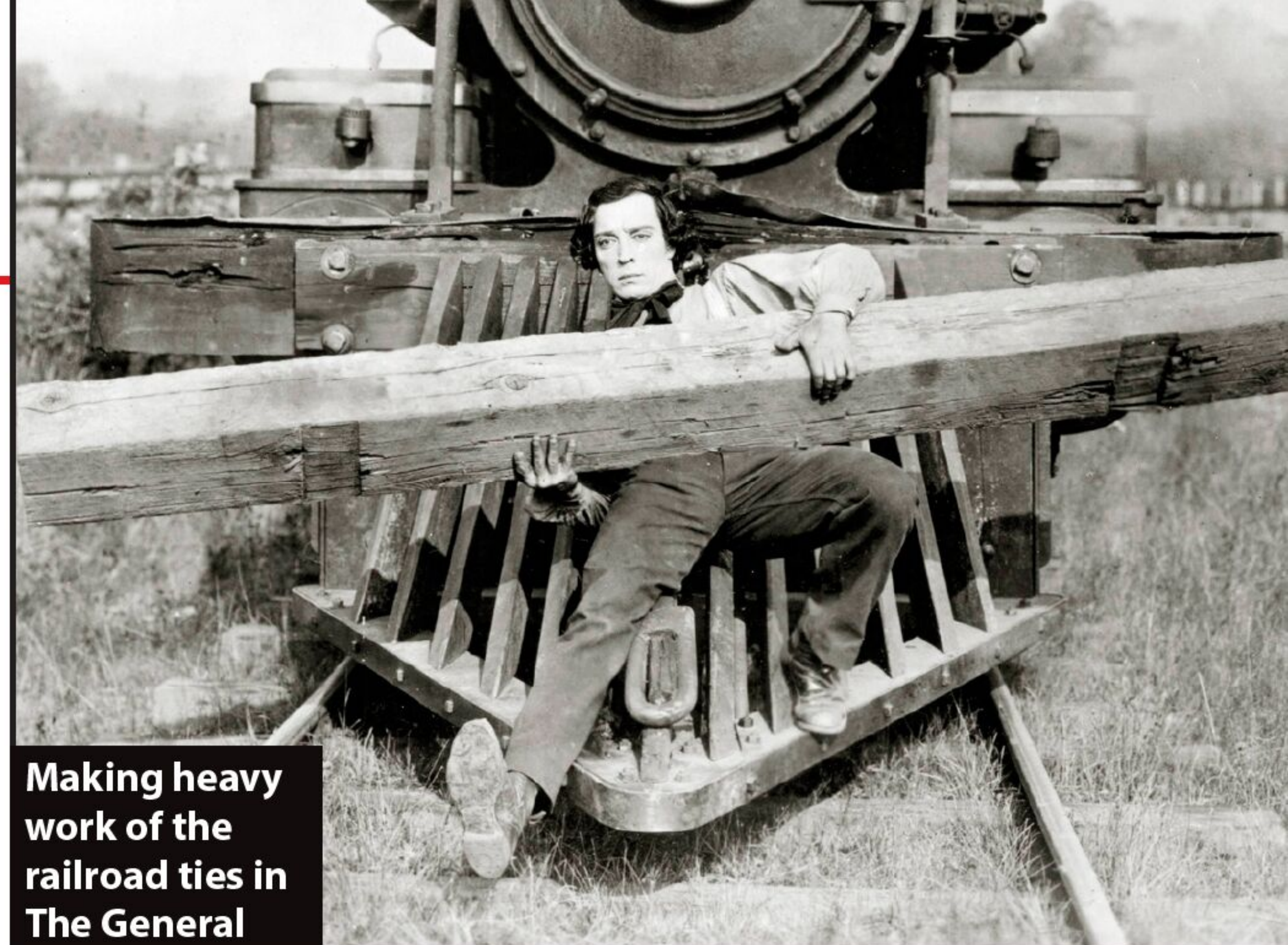
crossing the train tracks moment in reverse. Sherlock Jr is packed with fantastic action and stunts, more than any other Keaton movie.

## RISKY BUSINESS

Two of Keaton's most enduring films, *The General* (1926) and *Steamboat Bill Jr.* (1928), feature his greatest stunts. A Civil War comedy, *The General* sees Keaton chase the title locomotive (stolen by Union spies) with much of the film a spectacular train chase. His Union foes try to derail the pursuing train by dropping railroad ties onto the track. Keaton, clinging to the train's 'cowcatcher', skilfully dislodges one tie using another, juggling them to clear his path. This was achieved using lightweight prop ties that Keaton pretended were heavy. *The General* concludes with one of silent cinema's greatest ever stunts, when a train crosses a sabotaged bridge and collapses into the river –

luckily Keaton was not aboard as the stunt was done for real at full size!

*Steamboat Bill Jr.* includes one of Keaton's deadliest stunts amid a sequence during a hurricane. The last 20 minutes sees Keaton battered by the wind, blown through the streets in his hospital bed while avoiding collapsing buildings. In an iconic moment, the facade of a house falls on Keaton, with him only surviving as he's standing precisely where the empty window lands. Keaton lifted the gag from an earlier film, 1919's *Back Stage*, where a scenery flat falls on Fatty Arbuckle. Keaton tried a variation in 1920's *One Week* using a kit-built house. Naturally, Keaton went bigger and better – and deadlier – third time



**Making heavy work of the railroad ties in *The General***

out. The house frontage weighed 4000lbs and the window space was much narrower. Keaton could not deviate from his marks by one inch, otherwise he could have been killed.

Keaton was fortified in his fearlessness by fatalism as his studio was about to be closed, so if the stunt had failed, it hardly mattered!



**Split-second precision was needed for Keaton's deadliest stunt in *Steamboat Bill Jr***



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Another wild Keaton stunt, in *Seven Chances* (1925), sees him outrun and dodge multiple boulders as he flees downhill.



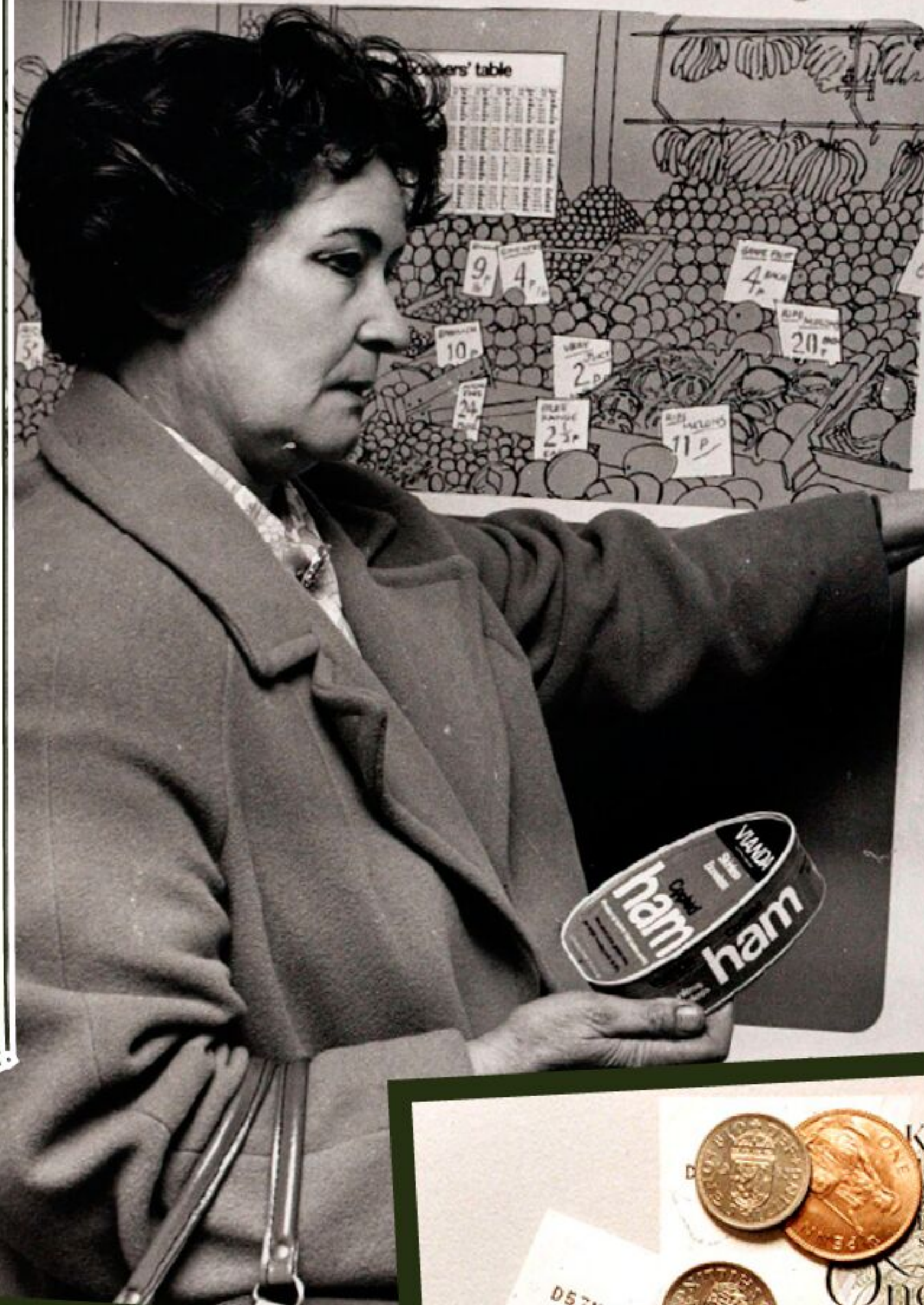
• 15 February, 1971 •

# BRITAIN GOES DECIMAL

Although stories such as the 50 Yorkshire children who were driven to a police station after refusing to pay 5p for a bus ticket (they had calculated the fare as 3p) made the headlines, decimalisation mostly ran smoothly and the Decimal Currency Board's job was done. And those Yorkshire kids? They were correct of course!



**'Every man who looks at his 10 fingers saw an argument of its use, and an evidence of its practicability.'** Sir John Bowring MP

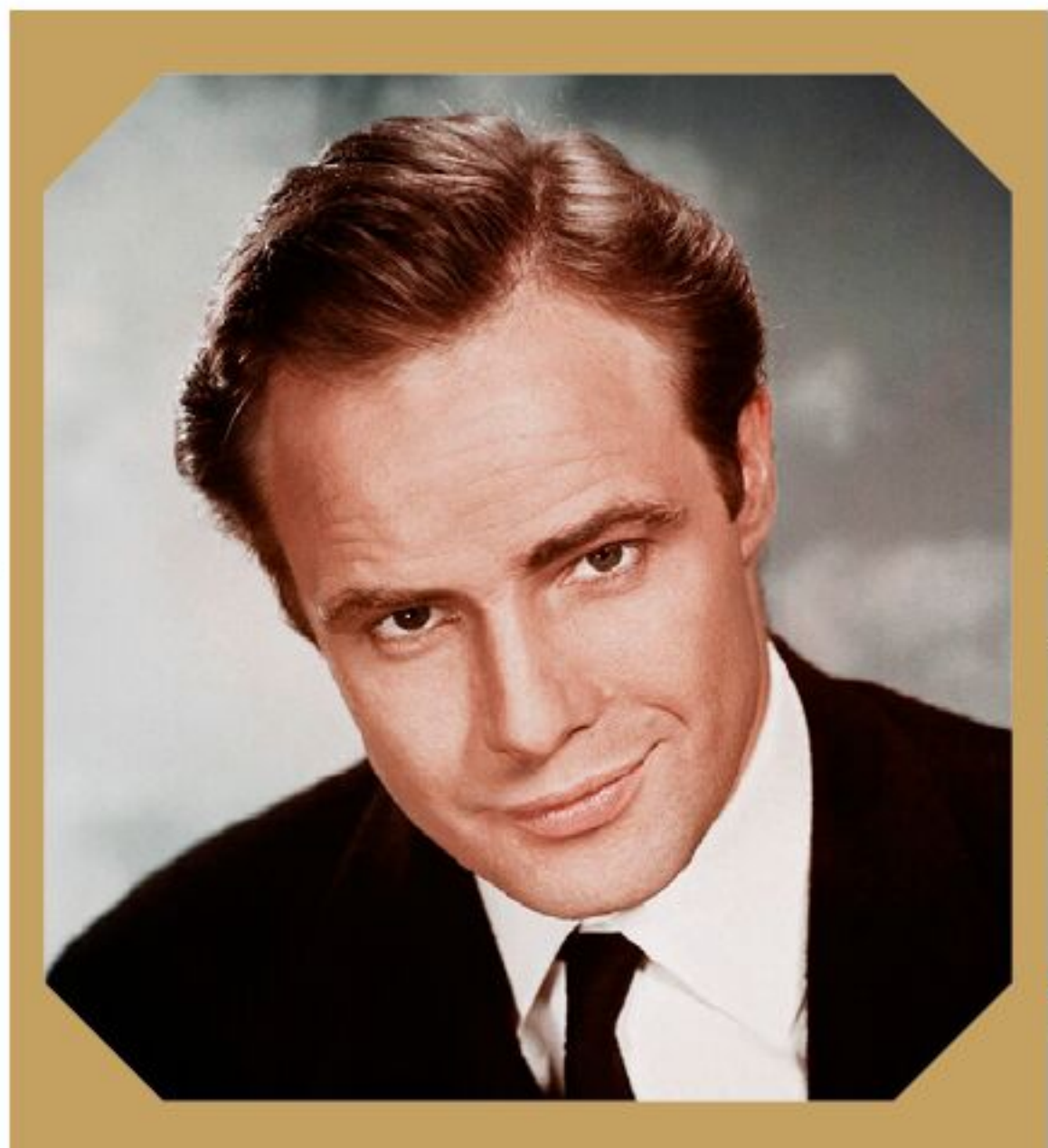
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the official table which keepers and manufacturers will be expected to use when changing their prices from £sd to £p. Some will be slightly more and others less, so that over a range of products neither the shopper nor the producer will gain or lose. For example 5d is shown against 2p (4d and 7d is shown against 2d) which is 0.2d more





## HOLLYWOOD'S LOST INTERVIEWS



**M**arlon Brando was once described to me as 'the Don Quixote of actors, always tilting at the system.'

And it was well said.

Brando is an actor who genuinely doesn't give a damn.

He is rarely interviewed, having overcome the gnawing insecurity which makes his colleagues court the columns.

He is the man who once sat for half-an-hour with Hedda Hopper, the late Queen of Hollywood tattle-tellers, saying nothing. Finally she said, 'Mr Brando – do you care to answer my questions?' 'I don't believe so,' replied Mr Brando.

Other actors return from working with him and talk about him endlessly. He does not talk about them. That is what being a star means.

He came to lunch with me, walking into the restaurant with that familiar, gladiator-stride; eyes wedge-shaped; nose, half-bruiser, half-Roman, like the prow of a dreadnought. Melon and coffee

Retro is privileged to publish the never-before-seen 'lost' interviews of renowned entertainment journalist Roderick Mann. Talking in 1966 Marlon Brando discusses Marilyn Monroe, fame, segregation and McCarthy-era politics

# 'Some people need the confessional'

made up his lunch (he was dieting, it seemed, and not feeling all that great anyway). He was interested in Formosa, which I had visited, and wondered how I had liked Bali? And Tahiti? Then...

'But of course you're really more interested in my sex life.'

'No.'

He considered this, sceptically. 'There is nothing more boring than talking about oneself,' he said. 'But when I'm filming they like me to do it. But I find it positively gagging the way some people are able to lay out their innards on the table, and make heart shapes out of them. I just can't.

'The trouble is that in this business if you're successful fairly young you receive so much adulation you can no longer

separate the real from the unreal. Everyone asks for your opinion and you find yourself giving it. You become an authority on astrology, Egyptology and God knows what else. And fantastically, there are hundreds of people who will listen to your opinion.

'Some people need the confessional. That's one of the strengths of the Catholic Church, after all. People want to talk.

'There used to be this TV show, the Mike Wallace Show, and people would go on and tell everything about their sex lives, their home lives, the lot. It used to amaze me.

'Look at Tennessee Williams. There's a man who has absolutely no qualms about talking. But he's a man without skin so he can do it. ➤



# ople nal'



Brando and Monroe  
had a brief affair in the  
Fifties but remained  
close friends



'Here we are now, you and I, in the curious position where conversation means money. You know what people want to read, so you give it to them. I'm guilty too. I open a paper, and I see two headlines: Girl disfigures man with putty knife, on one page, and opposite, The economic problems of Zambia. I know which one I read. Of course, so I'm caught up in it too.'

'Tell me this; is there one newspaper which could afford to ignore a story about Burton and Taylor wrestling naked in Leicester Square? No. Because people want that kind of stuff.'

'Is anybody surprised that the Sorensen and Schlesinger books on President Kennedy were outsold by the gossipy memoirs of his former secretary (Evelyn Lincoln)? Of course not.'

He eyed me for a moment. 'But don't misunderstand. I'm supposed to dislike the Press. It's not true. I have lots of friends who are newspapermen. I never mind talking about things I know. But that's all.'

How, I wondered, did he react to the charge that, by going sunwards, he had robbed the New York stage of one of its outstanding talents?

'I don't react at all,' he said. 'People always have to put labels on everything; outstanding; great; the best. What does it mean? Nothing.'

'I hate New York. I'll never go back there. I like the life in California; there's the sun and the desert, places like Death Valley. And two of my children are there (he has three). But for them, I might go somewhere else. I don't know. As it is, I just stay there up on the hill.'

'Also, that's where I work. This is a business, not an art form. Where there is art it's hard come by, believe me. It's the movie industry, after all. But it's no good talking to me about films. I don't see very many. And I don't like many I've done. Though *Streetcar* was all right.'

Where did he get his security? From his talent, or his money?

'There's no security in talent,' he said shortly. 'I know any number of



**Wild ones: Brando and his sister Jocelyn**



**Brando sympathised with the plight of *On the Waterfront* director Elia Kazan**

talented people who are insecure as hell, who are riddled with a pervading sense of emptiness.

'Not to be a success is a sin in the US, but most successful people in Hollywood are failures as human beings. Perhaps because they can't accept a pinch of success and leave it at that.'

'And insecurity lies all around. Marilyn Monroe's death – that stopped everyone, just for a moment. They thought: Oh God, here's a successful actress who had everything; money, beauty, adulation and a happy future – everything contained in the American Dream – and she fell. What hope is there for us?'

He swigged down a glass of water with a gulp. 'I think if I could act all alone in a room by myself, I'd prefer it. Then I could just mail my performance in. But not all actors are like that. Many need adulation.'

'It would be interesting, if actors could make a living by staying at home like that, to see how many would eventually drift to other

work. Quite a few, probably. Some genuinely don't mind being freaks at a sideshow; being chased down side streets and photographed. I hate it.'

We talked of his efforts, two years ago, to prevent his films being shown in cinemas where audiences were segregated.

'I couldn't get studios to agree to it,' he said. 'They said they had obligations to their stockholders. Of course,' he added dryly. 'I wanted actors to refuse to sign contracts unless there was a clause inserted about segregated audiences, but nobody was very interested.'

'Come to that,' he went on, 'nothing about mass reaction encourages me. We're all incredibly brainwashed. It's frightening to consider how unstable democracy really is; how easily it can be shaken. Look back on the Joe McCarthy era.'

'Everyone was petrified with fear. My sister (Jocelyn Brando, the actress) was black-balled for eight years and kept off TV for signing some liberal petitions. I'd signed them too, mostly, but they could make money out of me, so I wasn't black-balled.'

'Interesting, isn't it? When the Ku Klux Klan was being investigated recently, the liberals openly applauded the stoolpigeons, those who stood up and gave evidence about the Klan's activities. They were regarded as decent people who had seen the light. But during McCarthy, those same liberals were appalled when someone like Elia Kazan stood up and named names. That was considered despicable. Can you tell me the difference?'

Thus Marlon Brando, the most talented actor thrown up by the American theatre in a generation.

'Everything passes,' he said. 'Love, hate, fear – all the emotions. Nothing lasts for more than a short while. You love a girl so much you could cut your stomach open. A year later you never want to see her again. If you have learned that, it makes life easier, I suppose.'

*Interview written and edited by Roderick Mann*



# OBJECT of desire

## SILK SCARF

An iconic wartime fashion accessory, the silk scarf remains a popular and versatile way of adding colour and personality to a variety of outfits... while still hiding bad hair days

A prestige name for scarves was Jacqmar, a company founded in 1932 by Joseph 'Jack' Lyons and his wife Mary. Although based in Mayfair, the name, which combined the founders forenames (Jack-Mar) was deliberately French sounding as Paris couture houses were the chief market for their silk export business.

Jacqmar's range of scarves began as a way of using up silk offcuts, but they proved so popular the company made more.

**DURING RATIONING A SCARF REQUIRED TWO CLOTHING COUPONS.**



In 1948 Jacqmar introduced designs to commemorate the London Olympics and, in 1953, to celebrate the Queen Elizabeth's coronation.



**ACTRESS VIVIEN LEIGH APPEARED IN AN ADVERT FOR JACQMAR'S PROPAGANDA PRINTS.**

With the advent of the Second World War the company issued a series of morale-boosting propaganda scarves, decorated with regimental insignia, patriotic messages and popular wartime motifs. The scarves made an ideal gift for separated sweethearts or people wanting to 'do their bit' for the war effort.



During the war, women working in factories were encouraged to cover their hair for safety reasons and, with hats considered a frivolity, a scarf became a great way to hide a multitude of hairdressing sins.

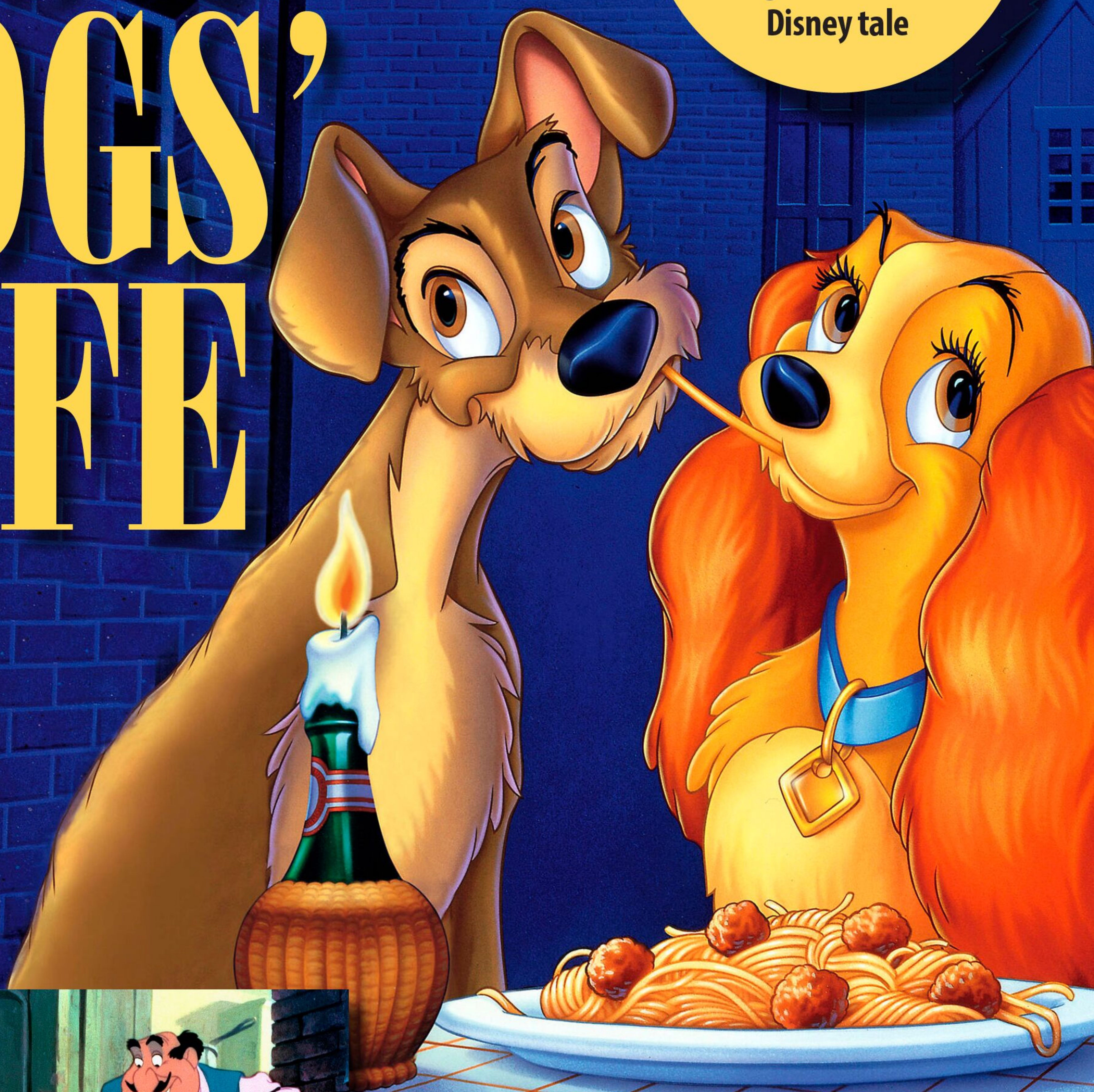


**RETRO**

*Behind the scenes*

# It's a DOGS' LIFE

As the Lady and the Tramp marks its 70th anniversary, Simon Button looks at the making of the animated Disney tale



George Givot  
voiced Tony the  
kind restaurateur





## DID YOU KNOW?

On screen Tramp doesn't ever refer to Lady by her name but rather by her nicknames: Pigeon (or Pidge for short) and Kid.

O

ne of the most beloved scenes in animation history almost didn't make it to the big screen. When *Lady and the Tramp* (1955) was in production, Walt Disney wanted to jettison the moment when the hero and heroine eat their way through the same strand of spaghetti until their snouts meet in the canine equivalent of an adorable kiss. He thought it was ridiculous rather than romantic.

Animator Frank Thomas, who was on Walt's team of so-called Nine Old Men and who had worked on such Disney classics as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Bambi* (1942), disagreed. Billed as Directing Animator, he drew the scene anyway and when Disney saw it he was won over.

The sequence went into the movie, which was presented in the new and glorious CinemaScope widescreen process that had revolutionised how films were made – even if the wider ratio delayed *Lady and the Tramp*'s release and sent the \$1 million budget soaring. No matter. At a final cost of \$4 million, it brought in an estimated \$6.5 million on its initial release in the summer of June 1955, and proved to be the gift that kept on giving – with numerous re-releases upping its worldwide tally to more than \$180 million.

The film took nearly two decades to reach the screen. In 1937 story artist Joe Grant sketched a storyline about his English springer spaniel named Lady, who Grant said was 'shoved aside' when a new baby came along.

Disney told him to develop it, so Grant and other illustrators spent the next few years refining it – including a version in which Lady was pursued by two suitors and the narrative never left the house. When Walt saw the storyboards he was unimpressed. He found Lady to be too sweet a character and he felt the story lacked action, and the project was shelved.

Then, in 1945, he came across a short story called *Happy Dan*, the Cynical Dog in *Cosmopolitan* magazine, and realised he'd found the perfect co-star ➔



Animators Frank Thomas and Ollie Johnston worked together on dozens of Disney films





for Lady in a scrappy, mongrel mutt who came to be called Tramp.

He bought the story from its author Ward Greene, but during the lean war years the studio cut back on feature film production. Then came *Cinderella* in 1950 and Disney was back in the movie business. It was Walt's brother Roy who urged him to put Lady and the Tramp into production in 1952.

### AN ORIGINAL STORY

The following year, Ward Greene's novelisation was published in a canny bit of advance promotion. It also provided a narrative template for the movie, with Walt putting a bit of his own life into it. The opening scene, he said, was inspired by the moment when he presented his wife with a puppy in a hatbox to say sorry for having forgotten a dinner date, although some historians have questioned whether the incident really



happened or if it was a bit of showmanship on his part.

Either way, in the movie the puppy became Lady – a pampered cocker spaniel who, like the dog in Grant's original treatment, feels she's being pushed to the sidelines when her well-to-do owners Jim Dear and Darling bring a baby into the house. After Jim's stern Aunt Sarah makes

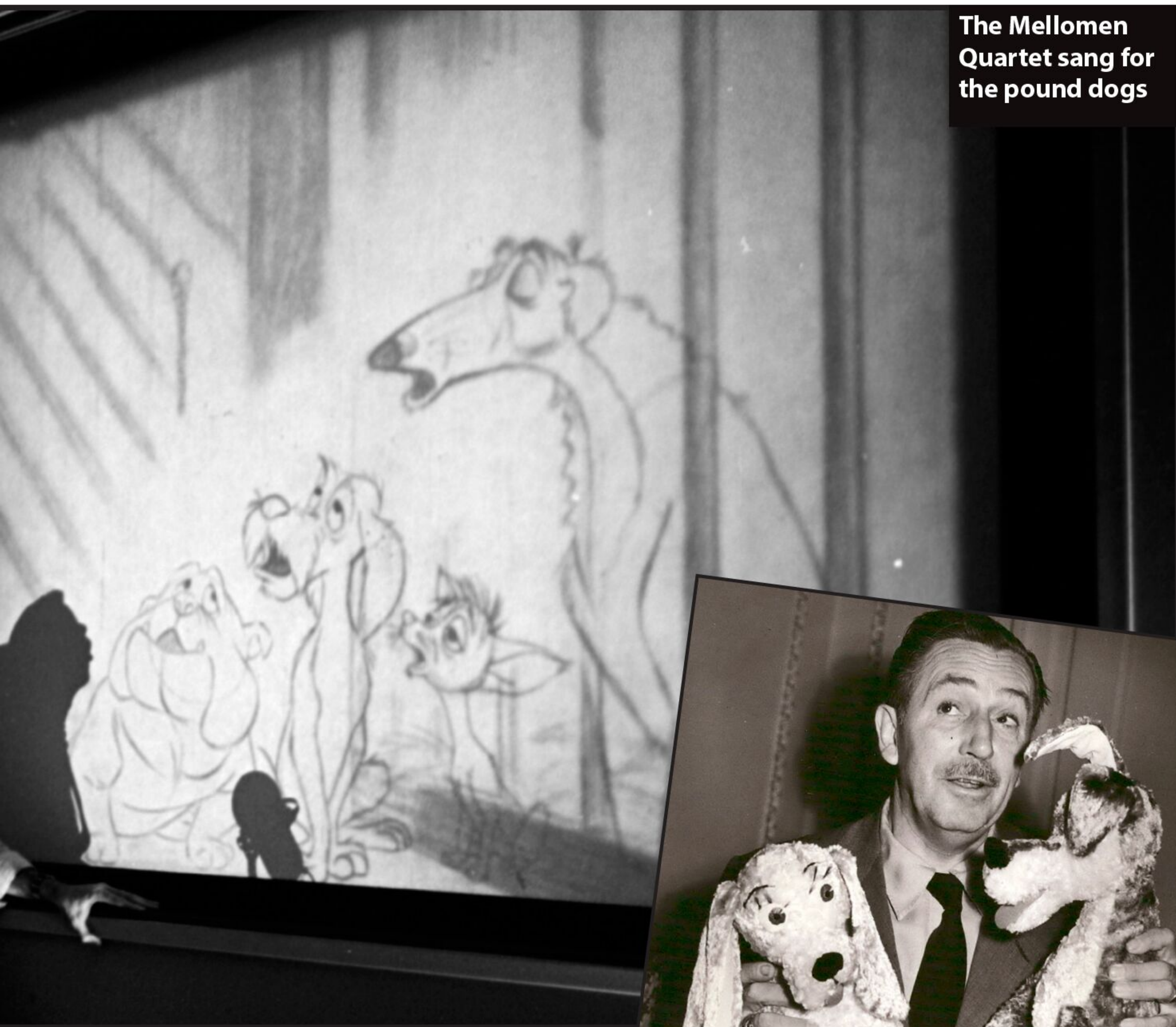


### The jazz singer

**B**orn in North Dakota in 1920, Norma Dolores Egstrom was abused by her stepmother and turned to singing as an escape. As a teenager, she got a job as a jazz singer on a local radio station and changed her name to Peggy Lee at the suggestion of the programme director. Performing on the club circuit, she was recruited by legendary band leader Benny Goodman and shot to fame in 1943 with the release of her million-selling single *Why Don't You Do Right?* More hits followed, then she broke into movies with the remake of *The Jazz Singer* (1952) and she was Oscar-nominated for the drama *Pete Kelly's Blues* (1955). Her signature songs included *Fever* and *Is That All There is?* but a musical about her life was a flop on Broadway and her later years were marred by poor health. She died of a heart attack at age 81.







The Mellomen Quartet sang for the pound dogs



He's a Tramp became one of Peggy Lee's best-loved songs



Walt introduced Disney's newest characters in London on 7 July 1953

Lady wear a muzzle, she flees and takes up with Tramp, a mutt from the other side of the tracks who becomes her protector as they go on a series of adventures and fall in love.

In early versions of the script, Tramp was called Homer, Rags, Bozo and Mutt. It was Disney himself who suggested Tramp, although some people at the studio worried that it carried negative connotations. He was, however, to be in Walt's words 'a neat-looking mongrel' because he was the film's leading man and therefore 'he's got to be a Cary Grant'.

There were other name changes; the Siamese twin cats were originally named Nip and Tuck before they

were renamed Si and Am, which was seen as innocent at the time but has since been deemed as racial stereotyping – prompting their musical number to be left out of the 2019 live-action remake.

It was meant to be a low-budget affair but the decision to make it in widescreen CinemaScope put paid to that. Still, Walt called it 'a fun picture to make' because, like *Dumbo* (1941) before it, it was a new story that could be tweaked as they went along, not a fixed narrative from an existing plot line. 'It was an original story,' he recalled, 'and as we made the picture and got to know the characters, we kept getting new ideas.'

Directors Hamilton Luske, Clyde Geronimi and Wilfred Jackson chose to show things from a dog's eye view, thus the faces of the adult characters are seldom shown. Background artists built models of the interiors of Jim Dear and Darling's house and shot reference photos from a low angle to give them an idea of the right perspective.

## STAYING ANIMATED

The animators had real dogs in the studio that they could study, and when it came to the rat that Tramp has a fight with, animator Wolfgang Reitherman kept rats in a cage next to his desk so he could study their behaviour.

For Disney, the film's setting of small-town America in 1909 was a return to his roots in Marceline, Missouri, where he grew up on a farm that his family moved to when he was four and which also inspired the theme park he was building in Anaheim, California. Both the film and theme park were a celebration of a simpler, more idyllic life.

While the animators were busy in the studio, Disney was more concerned with Disneyland (which opened just three weeks after Lady ➔

**DID YOU KNOW?**

A dream sequence where giant dogs take their owners for a walk was scrapped after test screenings because the audience deemed it too weird.



and the Tramp premiered) than what they were up to. Animator Frank Thomas recalled that Walt would pop into the studio, examine what the team were working on, and simply say, 'You're not in any trouble.' It was a tacit seal of approval from a man who had previously been enthusiastically hands-on.

Thomas and co, meanwhile, were very hands-on, working six days a week on a film that proved even more challenging when their boss decided during production that he wanted to cash in on the new CinemaScope craze.

## CINEMASCOPE

*Lady and the Tramp* would be the first animated movie to utilise the wider frame, meaning the team had to go back to the drawing board to expand backgrounds that had already been painted in the narrower Academy ratio. Using CinemaScope also meant there could be fewer close-ups and longer takes, since jump cuts would be jarring in a larger frame space.

Filling the wider canvas delayed the animation process but things were delayed even further by Walt's decision to take the animators off the film and put them to work on *Sleeping Beauty* (which was also in production at the same time but, because of the studio's traditionally long and painstaking development process, wasn't released until 1959) for six months. Walt felt they were becoming too focused on detail at the expense of the characters and after the hiatus he was thrilled because they returned to *Lady and the Tramp* with what he called 'new enthusiasm and whizzed right along to the finish'.

The team rose to all the challenges Disney presented them with, only to discover shortly before the film's opening that many cinemas weren't properly equipped to project CinemaScope movies. That meant them having to hastily



Peg was originally called Mame but Walt asked if he could rename her in Lee's honour

produce a second version in the more conventional format, causing even more work for the animators and layout artists.

Superstar singer Peggy Lee was top-billed in the voice cast when the film finally opened on 25 June 1955, marking the first time a performer of such stature had worked on an animated movie. Lee voiced *Lady's* owner Darling as well as the Siamese cats and a stray Pekingese named Peg. Animator Eric Larson studied the singer's body language as she prowled around his office to channel some of her spirit into Peg.

In addition, Lee had some input into the script, insisting that the bloodhound Trusty be allowed to live because his death, as had originally been plotted, would be far too upsetting for children.

Oliver Wallace, who'd won an Academy Award for *Dumbo*, provided the orchestral score. But Peggy, a skilled lyricist, co-wrote all the film's songs with composer, arranger and band leader Sonny Burke, including *The Siamese Cat Song*, *Bella Notte* and *He's a Tramp*. The latter became one of Lee's best-loved songs, not to mention

## The movies strike back

With cinema attendances declining in the early Fifties thanks to the advent of television, 20th Century-Fox fought back with the larger-than-life widescreen imagery of CinemaScope. Shown in a huge aspect ratio of 2.55:1, which was nearly twice as wide as the then-standard Academy ratio, Fox's *The Robe* (1953) was a Biblical epic and a box-office smash, as was that same year's *How to Marry a Millionaire*, prompting other studios to follow suit. Utilising the bigger canvas and stereophonic sound, the likes of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954) and the James Dean vehicles *East of Eden* and *Rebel Without a Cause* (both 1955) lured people away from their TV sets. But images could be blurry or distorted, problems which Panavision's superior lenses ironed out as it became filmmakers' preferred widescreen format.





a nice source of income thanks to cover versions by Anita Harris, Kenny Ball and His Jazzmen and even the St Winifred's School Choir.

### MONEY MAKER

Peggy was reportedly paid just \$4,500 for her contributions to the film, \$3,500 for the voice work and \$1,000 for the songs (which she had to split with co-writer Burke). When Lady and the Tramp was finally released on VHS and Laserdisc in 1987, she was paid an additional \$500 to help promote it.

After sales of the home video release brought in \$100 million for the studio, Peggy sued them for royalties and, in 1992, she won \$2.3 million in compensation. She'd stood her ground, telling a reporter, 'I'm not being a saint, saying I don't want the money – I want it. I think it's shameful that artists can't share

financially from the success of their work. That's the only way we can make our living.'

The money was just a drop in the ocean for the studio, which made a small profit off what was its highest grossing cartoon since Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs on its first release and a huge one after re-releases and home media sales.

Reviews were mixed back in 1955, with Variety calling Lady and the Tramp 'a delight' for both young and old audiences but The New York Times declaring it to be far too sentimental. Time has proven The New York Times wrong. In 2023 the US Library of Congress chose to preserve it in the National Film Registry for its 'cultural, historical or aesthetic' significance and that spaghetti scene remains one of the most famous and imitated in animation history.



# TOP 5

## BOX OFFICE GOLD...

### RICHARD BURTON FILMS



**Cleopatra (1963) \$724.2m**



**The Robe (1953) \$704.8m**



**The Longest Day (1962) \$449.7m**



**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (1966) \$274.4m**



**Exorcist II: The Heretic (1977) \$181.6**

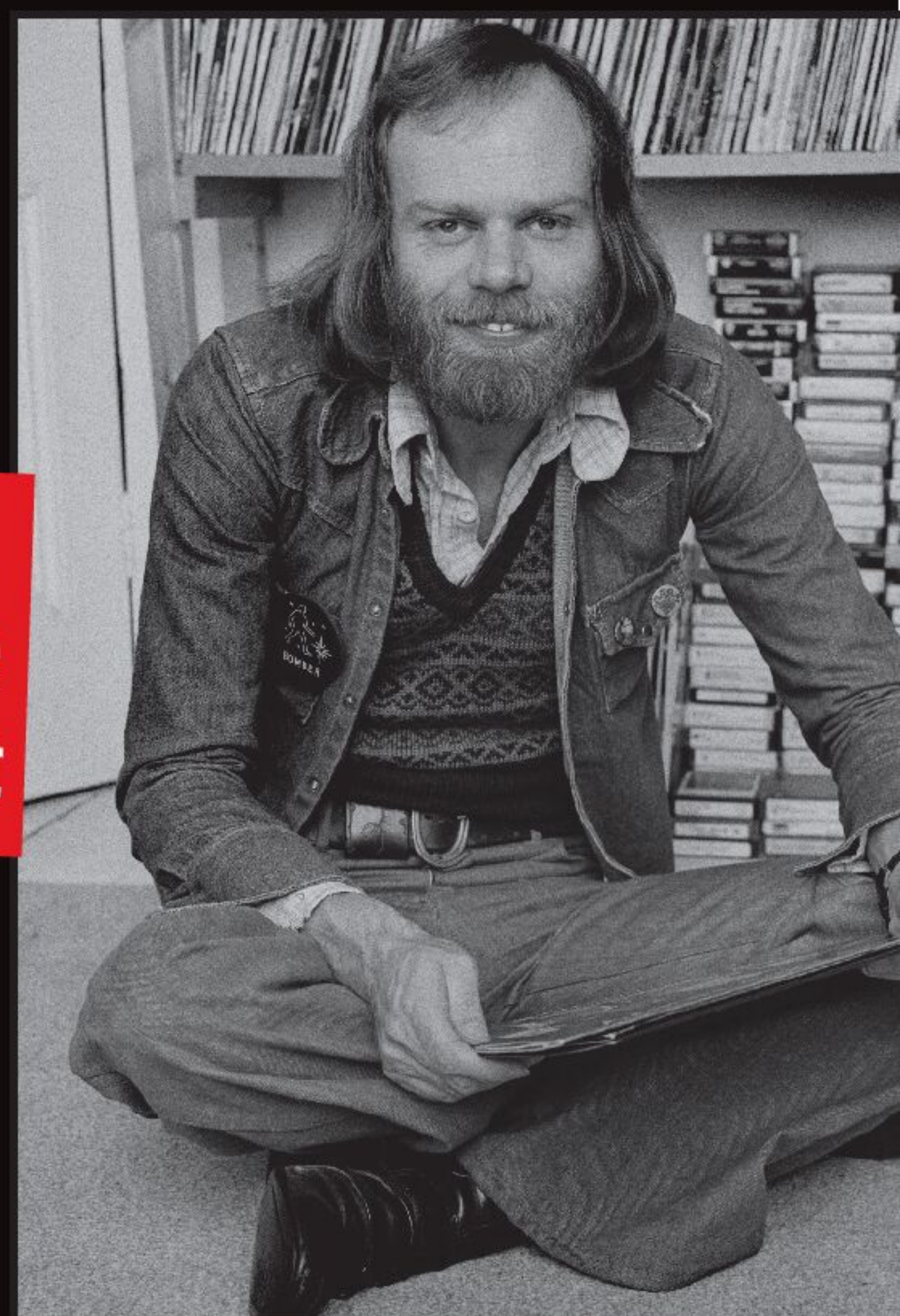
\* Adjusted domestic box office gross using current movie ticket price (in millions) according to [ultimate-movie-rankings.com](http://ultimate-movie-rankings.com)





# The revolution will be televised

Lin Bensley recalls  
the glory days of the  
Old Grey Whistle Test



Bob Harris now  
presents Sounds of  
the 70s on Radio 1



**I**t was early in 1971 that David Attenborough, then head of BBC2, and a man who knew something about wildlife and the laws of the jungle, commissioned an innovative new musical digest dubbed (rather obliquely) the Old Grey Whistle Test.

The chooglin' harmonica-led theme tune, Stone Fox Chase, was played by session musicians Area Code 615 over the animated 'star kicker' opening titles that set the tone for the musical milestones that followed. And much, if not most, of the credit for the show's success was down to Michael Appleton, who, as producer and director, envisaged a broad church open to all genres. To facilitate his aims, Appleton devised an appealing format that combined live performances with film clips, interviews and concert footage.

The programme was the first to give undiluted credence to the idea of showcasing popular music as a serious means of expression, and so set a revolutionary new precedent. In the past, Colour Me Pop and Disco 2 had tried, but OGWT was to prove a winning concept, abetted by a commendable series of presenters.

Consigned to a cramped studio measuring 10 x 7m, the first programmes were presented by Richard Williams, who, as the features editor for Melody Maker, the leading music paper of the day, was well-suited to the show's album-orientated brief. Most of the acts featured rarely, if ever, received mainstream coverage, and Williams felt privileged to oversee performances by such legends in the making as Curtis Mayfield, Dr John and John Martyn, while also being granted the opportunity to interview Captain Beefheart.

Due to increasing journalistic duties, Williams soon had to step aside and was replaced by 'Whispering' Bob Harris, whose engaging and soft-spoken demeanour further enhanced the show's popularity, though

he voiced his disapproval of Roxy Music and the New York Dolls because of what he perceived as their glam-rock affectations.

Courtesy of a bigger budget, the show was transferred to a much larger studio in Television Centre and began to host performances by more established acts, including War, Supertramp, Queen, Bob Marley and the Wailers, and Led Zeppelin. Now with more lucrative funding, Appleton was also able to stage occasional concerts at Shepherd's Bush Theatre with acts as diverse as Jackson Browne, The Tubes, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Rory Gallagher, and Eric Clapton, and viewing figures rose accordingly.

## PUSHING BOUNDARIES

When Harris left in 1978, Annie Nightingale took over as the show adapted to changing musical trends. Nightingale's enthusiasm for bands such as Talking Heads, The Ramones, XTC, Squeeze, and Iggy Pop was never in doubt, and she willingly championed punk rock and new wave, regularly featuring the likes of The Clash, PiL, X Ray Spex, Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet. Where once the programme's target demographic was predominately 'long hairs and weekend hippies', under Nightingale's stewardship it now aimed to reach a more inclusive audience. She helmed the documentary-style film; The Police in the East that followed the reggae-influenced three-piece on their 1980 world tour, and consistently maintained that she wanted to hear something different and innovative, never the same old, same old sounds year after year.

With Nightingale's departure in 1982, Mark Ellen, David Hepworth and Richard Skinner were invited to present the show in rotation. As with all the previous compères, Ellen and co each possessed an encyclopaedic knowledge of the music industry, and the

interviews they conducted were as entertaining as the live performances and often laced with tongue-in-cheek humour.

The more abrasive and opinionated DJ Andy Kershaw joined the team in 1984 and added a much-needed brio to the show whose title had by now been shortened to Whistle Test – a moniker that defied all logic. Kershaw's passion for music, especially music that knew no geographical borders or genre categories was instantly palpable, and he literally scoured the corners of the globe to bring such music to the attention of Whistle Test watchers.

All four presenters, though not without some reservations on the part of Kershaw, were prevailed upon to co-host the multi-venue Live Aid benefit concert in 1985, devised and organised by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure. All acquitted themselves agreeably, with the 25-year-old Kershaw conducting some of the most intelligent interviews throughout the whole proceedings.

Returning to the confines of Television Centre, normal service was resumed. 'We on the Whistle Test – the rock programme with A-levels – didn't give a toss about being hip,' quipped Kershaw. A veritable conclave of diverse acts ranging from the Bhundu Boys to Lou Reed, The Smiths and (Kershaw's favourite) Elvis Costello, continued to enliven the airwaves, but trouble was brewing.

According to those supposedly in the know, Whistle Test was no longer deemed 'cutting edge' or 'down with the kids,' and Janet Street-Porter promptly cancelled the show upon her appointment as the head of Youth Programmes in 1987. This ill-advised anomaly would not be rectified by the channel until 1992 with the launch of Later... with Jools Holland, which offered an equally eclectic mix of world music without prejudice. Cool for cats, eh?









**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

De Niro and Pacino have appeared together in *The Godfather Part II* (1974) (but never in the same scenes), *Heat* (1995), *Righteous Kill* (2008) and *The Irishman* (2019). Pacino and Hoffman were in *Dick Tracy* (1990), and Hoffman and De Niro in *Meet the Fockers* (2004) and its sequel.

# Gang of New York

**In the Seventies New York actors Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman and Al Pacino launched a Hollywood revolution. Adam Smith charts the early years of cinema's new Angry Young Men**



**Taxi Driver and Midnight Cowboy take inspiration from the lived experience in Sixties and Seventies New York**

**D**e Niro. Pacino. Hoffman. These three names have defined American cinema for over half a century. Between them they have won multiple Oscars, they have been inspirations for generations of actors, and their sideboards groan with lifetime achievement awards. With films such as *Taxi Driver* (1976), *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), *The Godfather* (1972), *All the President's Men* (1976), *Serpico* (1973), *Raging Bull* (1980) and *The Graduate* (1967), they were key to birthing what became known as The New Hollywood.

But more than that, they completely revolutionised what it was to be a film star. Before these three, movie actors had traded on glamour, a sense of magic and a tantalising, unbridgeable distance between them and the audience. They were unattainable, polished products of the studio system, creations of the 'dream factory', and repositories for the world's fantasies and aspirations.

## **NEW BLOOD**

By the mid-Sixties and early Seventies, the landscape of the movie industry – and society itself – was being redrawn. The very last generation of movie stars who bore traces of the old school – leading men such as Robert Redford, Steve McQueen and Paul Newman – were about to be rudely pushed aside by a generation of young actors for whom glamour and looking cool took a distant second place to grittiness, emotional reality and dramatic impact. They championed raw, unapologetically real performances that ➔





pushed the craft of movie acting in new, shocking directions and probed the anxieties of society at large. These were the industry's angry young men, and they were in a hurry.

But how did this happen? How did these three young wannabes become the avatars of a new Hollywood age? To answer that, we have to cut to New York in the Sixties. The main players in the revolution that convulsed Hollywood would emerge from The Big Apple. But the seeds of what was about to happen had been planted amid the palm trees and sun-drenched streets of Los Angeles.

In 1948 the 'Paramount Decrees' had split the studios from the cinemas, signalling the beginning of the demise of the studio system. The Hays Code, the voluntary censorship system that had strictly controlled movies' subject matter, was finally abandoned in 1968. Hollywood was at a crossroads, and the old guard didn't seem to have the faintest clue about how to make movies for its new audience.



**Pacino and Hoffman** represented a new kind of romantic hero

But, 3000 miles away in New York, the art scene was thriving – particularly the theatre – and a new generation of actors was champing at the bit. Al Pacino and Robert De Niro both had their roots in the city. They had been born three years apart, Pacino in 1940 in East Harlem and De Niro in 1943 in Greenwich Village. De Niro never graduated high school, wandering

around Europe for a while in his teens before, for reasons mysterious even to him, deciding on a career as an actor at the age of 19. Pacino too was a high-school dropout. He had wanted to be a baseball player as a kid but his obvious talent for performing had manifested at an early age. But he had drifted, working as a cinema usher, occasionally

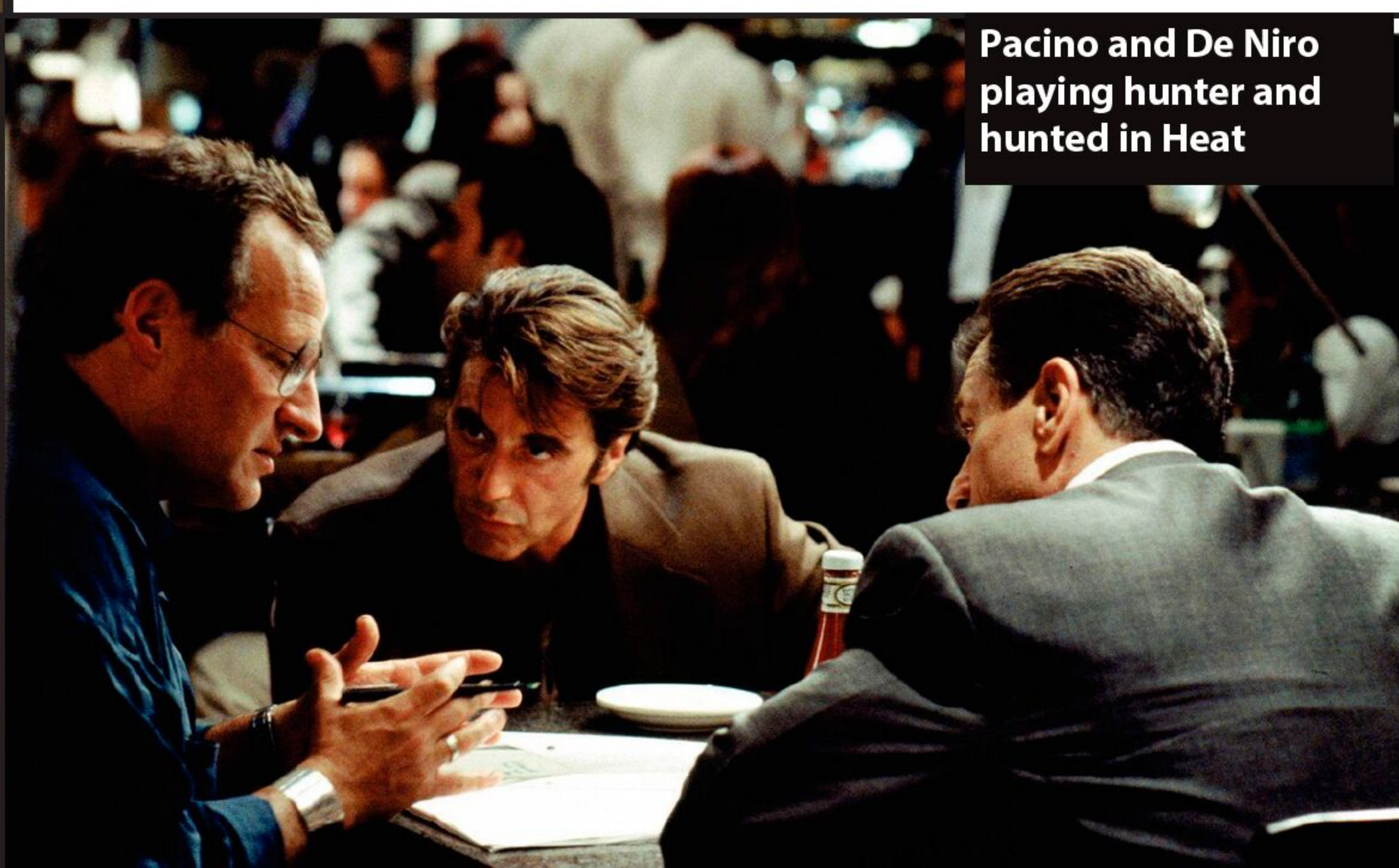
sleeping rough, before he was befriended by an acting coach, Charlie Laughton, who had told him, 'Al, you're going to be a big star.' Dustin Hoffman, born in 1937, had spent his youth in California and pursued an early acting career there but had moved to The Big Apple when he was 19, along with his friend Gene Hackman.

## THE METHOD

If there is a common thread to the early careers of these three scrappy, wannabe movie actors it is The Actors Studio. A kind of ground zero for the revolution that was about to hit Hollywood, the school championed the techniques of Russian theorist Konstantin Stanislavski, teaching what became known as The Method, a technique in which actors would channel their inner emotions, delivering raw, visceral performances that captivated audiences.



**In The Godfather Part II** De Niro plays Pacino's father as a young man



**Pacino and De Niro** playing hunter and hunted in Heat





And the Studio was more than a training ground. It was a hive of networking opportunities. Its pupils always seemed to be up for the best roles, and directors favoured its graduates for their films. All three attended the school and in the next few years, they would star in a handful of movies that would alter Hollywood forever.

Dustin Hoffman was the first of the group to break through with *The Graduate*, in 1967. Director Mike Nichols turned down Robert Redford in favour of Hoffman for the role of lost, lovelorn youth Benjamin Braddock.

It might be said that this was the moment that crystallised the arrival of the New Hollywood and opened the floodgates for the untried kind of star that Hoffman, De Niro and Pacino represented. Redford was handsome, smooth, cool. He was a box office certainty, a universally adored pin-up. Hoffman was short, nervy, not conventionally handsome, and a complete unknown. He was, above all, a risk.

Nichols' gamble paid off. *The Graduate* was a smash hit. Contemporary audiences recognised themselves in Benjamin, his confusion, yearning and sense of alienation from a rapidly changing world. They were qualities that a conventional star such as Redford, a fine actor though he was,

would have struggled to convincingly portray. 'I told Redford he could not play a loser because no one would ever buy it,' Nichols later said.

Hoffman followed *The Graduate* with groundbreaking roles in *Midnight Cowboy*, *Straw Dogs* (both 1971), and *Papillon* (1973). In all of them, he championed a new kind of everyman. His characters were cerebral, anxious and vulnerable – a world away from the tough guys and romantic leads that had

dominated cinema screens.

De Niro and Pacino's routes to success were slightly more circuitous. Both starred in minor films before they rocketed to stardom. Pacino made the sadly neglected drug-drama *The Panic in Needle Park* (1971) while De Niro appeared in a dozen low-budget efforts, the most notable being directed by Brian De Palma – *Greetings* (1968), *The Wedding Party* (1969) and *Hi, Mom!* (1970). But when the pair did break through, the transformative effect on cinema was as seismic as that of Hoffman.

De Niro had been introduced to Martin Scorsese, a fellow Italian American, by De Palma. The pair had grown up on the same streets of Little Italy, and soon forged a bond that would endure for decades. Scorsese cast him first in his lightly autobiographical *Mean Streets* (1973), but the real breakthrough came with his roles in *Taxi Driver* and *Raging Bull*. As tortured Vietnam vet Travis Bickle and then brutalised boxer Jake LaMotta, De Niro roared into the public consciousness playing a brace of complex, fragile characters who seem to teeter on the edge of self destruction.

He displayed an unprecedented dedication to total transformation for the demands of a role. He

worked nights as a cab driver on the streets of New York for *Taxi Driver* and gained 60 pounds to play the ageing pugilist. Every story in the press today about some young actor going to great lengths to nail a role is a backhanded compliment to De Niro's work with Scorsese.

## NOT JUST ACTORS

If Hoffman was a modern everyman, and De Niro a radical chameleon, then Pacino soon revealed himself as the era's tortured soul. Just as Mike Nichols had rejected the old Hollywood by casting Hoffman in *The Graduate*, Francis Ford Coppola resisted studio pressure to cast Warren Beatty in *The Godfather*, instead insisting on the unknown Pacino. It was a masterstroke.

Pacino embodied the harried, trapped character of Michael Corleone, a man struggling against his inescapable fate. He brought the character into even sharper focus in *The Godfather Part II* (1974), possibly his greatest performance, while in *Serpico* as a cop exposing corruption and *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975) as a bank robber who captures the public's imagination and sympathy, he again portrayed morally compromised, struggling men who seemed to channel something of the angsty, uncertain spirit of the age.

Today, these three titans are in their 80s, with their working lives gently drawing to a close. But their contribution to modern cinema is incalculable. Without their map to follow, the careers of actors such as Daniel Day-Lewis, Christian Bale and Joaquin Phoenix, all of whom dedicate themselves to the kind of committed, complex, gritty performances that De Niro, Hoffman and Pacino pioneered, could not have taken the course they did. These were not just actors, they were revolutionaries.

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

The trio have 25 Oscar nominations between them and five wins. De Niro has two (*Godfather II* and *Raging Bull*), Pacino has one (*Scent of a Woman*) and Hoffman has two (*Rain Man* and *Kramer vs Kramer*).



# Sunny June

Comedy historian  
Robert Ross charts  
the incredible and  
varied career of  
Dame June Whitfield



June played Terry  
Scott's screen wife  
for over 20 years



Absolutely  
Fabulous, with  
Jennifer Saunders  
and Joanna Lumley,  
introduced June to  
a new audience





**F**rom Eth Glum's adenoidal whines of 'Oh, Ron!' in radio sketch show *Take it From Here* (1948-60) to the gently undermining put-downs of Mother in sitcom *Absolutely Fabulous* (1992-2012), June Whitfield was the woman of British comedy for over seven decades.

In that time she patiently listened to the boastful bravery of Tony Hancock's *Blood Donor* (1961), battled bolshy brother-in-law Reg Varney in *Beggar My Neighbour* (1966-68), and even breathlessly cheated on Frankie Howerd in spoof single *Up Je T'aime!* (1971). No wonder frequent co-star Roy Hudd affectionately dubbed June 'the comic's tart!'

Born in Streatham 99 years ago, June made her stage debut at the tender age of three, following her enrolment into Robinson's Dance Studio. Both her parents were active in local amateur dramatics and would encourage young June's dreams of becoming an actress. Studying shorthand and typing as a back-up, June graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art at the age of 18 and was rarely out of work thereafter. Experience opposite chirpy comic personality Wilfred Pickles led to June's big break, when she was plucked, from the relative obscurity of regional theatre, by the Master himself. Noël Coward cast her as Sunny Claire in the tour and subsequent West End staging of his musical comedy, *Ace of Clubs*, at the Cambridge Theatre.

June's sunny demeanour was to enliven comedy for the rest of

her days, immediately finding her lifelong niche as the dependable female stooge who could take a custard pie in the face or shake her head with weary discontent or turn on a flirtatious giggle.

June was sparky, beautiful and brilliantly able to hold her own against the most powerful of comedy titans. Even as a fledgling ingénue she locked comic horns with diminutive gag-master Arthur Askey, bulbous and bilious comedian Jimmy Edwards, and youthful saucy boy Benny Hill. As part of that greatest of generations, June brought dignity and diligence to her women in uniform in *The Navy Lark* (1959), and *It Ain't Half Hot Mum* (1980), and even at her sweetest and, seemingly, most innocent, there was a subversion at play.

It was this quality of danger and deviousness that could be embraced for such out-and-out baddie roles as Penelope Fay, a ballroom dancing championship wannabe in *The Goodies* (1971), who treats the competition like a gangland war.

## GOLD STANDARD

Almost imperceptibly, June developed from wide-eyed girlfriend to matriarch. A comedy journey perfectly recorded across her four-film membership of the Carry On team. Having played the demure yet manipulative squeeze of hospital-bound Leslie Phillips in *Carry On Nurse* (1959), it was 34 years until June was the scowling, truculent Queen of Spain in *Carry On Columbus* (1992).

By then the 'alternative' comedy set had well and truly taken over the asylum. The cosy confines of June's domestic relationship with clumsy man-child Terry Scott had come to embody that sofa sitcom style that The Young Ones generation decimated. It had been a 20-year partnership, starting with the sketch show *Scott On...* (1968-74), and the feature film of *Bless This House* (1973) – with

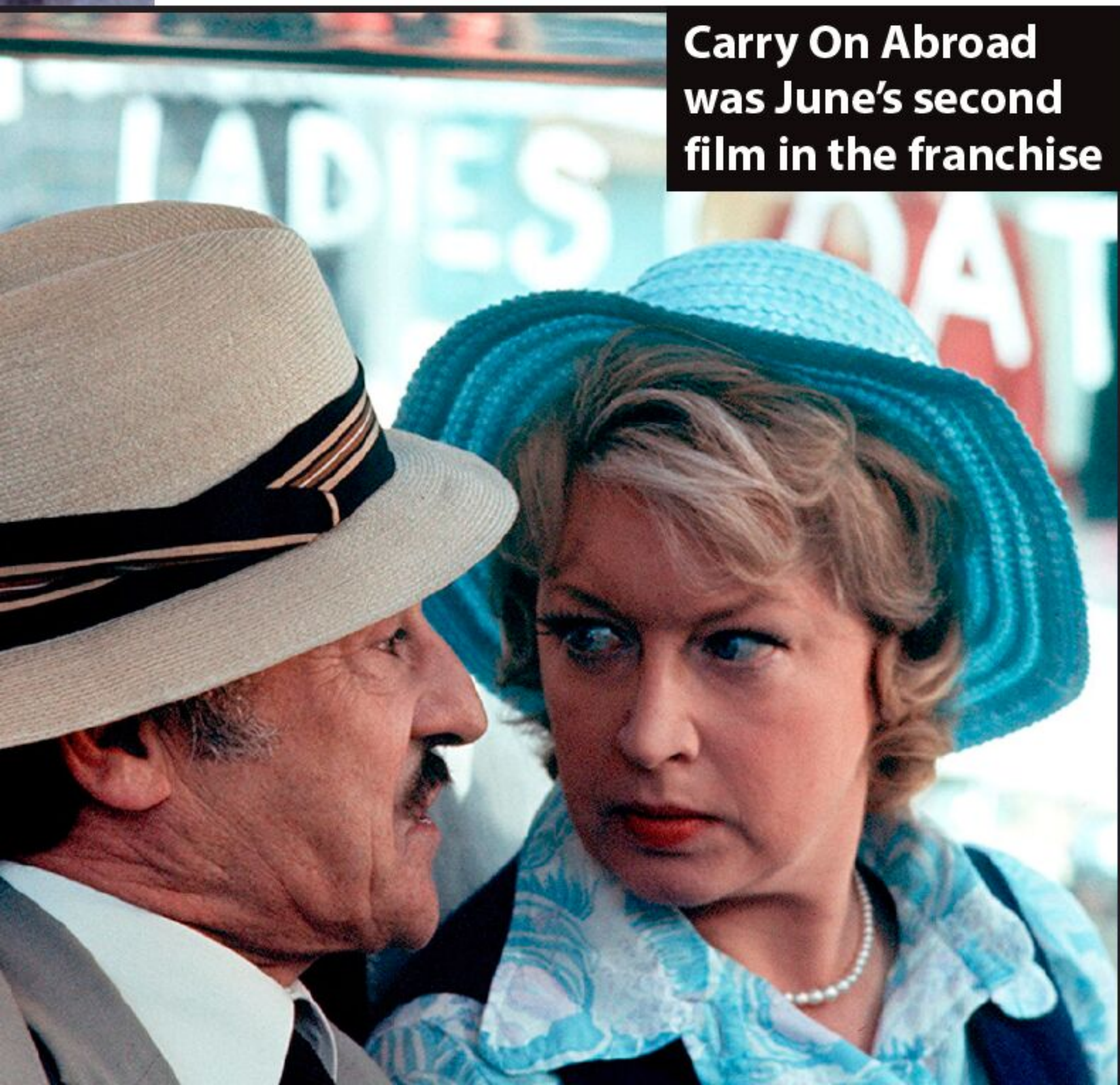
Terry and June moving in next door to Sid James, with hilarious results. The Terry and June team were rewarded with the series *Happy Ever After* (1974-78), which morphed into *Terry and June* (1979-87). So successful was it that some fans thought the actors were married in real life! Still, in the aftermath, June was never dismissed as a comedy dinosaur. No, with unforgettable appearances alongside Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders and Julian Clary – notably trying to seduce him in the camp and brilliantly titled *Terry and Julian* (1992) – June skilfully juggled fond nostalgia and cool relevance.

Even in her dotage June was continually in demand and delivering performances of charm, nuance and quality. Her soap credentials included a kindly nun in *EastEnders* (2015-16); and kindly May Penn in *Coronation Street* (2010). June joined the comedy collectives of Roy Clarke's *Last of the Summer Wine* (2001-10), and John Sullivan's *The Green Green Grass* (2007-09). For a decade she starred as Agatha Christie's Miss Marple in a run of 12 adaptations for Radio 4, and even went intergalactic as Minnie Hooper, a resourceful Old Age Pensioner, opposite David Tennant's Time Lord in *Doctor Who* (2009-10).

Just weeks before her death, at the end of 2018, June was still ready and willing to work. Although, at that stage in her long and laughter-filled life, she would 'prefer sit-down parts, dear!'

There was always something reassuring about having June Whitfield around. She was so, so good. As respected comedy scriptwriter and co-creator of *Take it From Here*, Denis Norden, once said, 'The greatest of showbusiness mysteries was how anyone could contemplate doing a comedy show without June Whitfield.' Undoubtedly, she is the gold standard.

Carry On Abroad was June's second film in the franchise







# Dying for a living

**Some stars seem to have made a career out of meeting sticky ends. Here's our rundown of the actors who have been doomed to die the most times on screen**

## **CHRISTOPHER LEE**

The actor with the highest movie mortality by far is Christopher Lee with 70 on-screen deaths. Throughout a career with more than 290 screen credits, Lee was felled by stakes, lightsabers, acid, bullets and fire. He died by stabbing, drowning, biting, falling and crushing. Dracula alone accounts for 10 of those deaths, and twice the Prince of Darkness was vanquished at the hands of his close friend Peter Cushing.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The highest number of deaths recorded in a single movie is *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003), thanks to the huge battle scenes which result in a whopping 836 deaths.



### JOHN CARRADINE

Appearing in more than 300 films, it's not too surprising that John Carradine managed to notch up 48 deaths among them. A veteran of Westerns and horror films, he was killed four times in 1939 alone in *Drums Along the Mohawk*, *Frontier Marshal*, *Five Came Back* and *Stagecoach*.

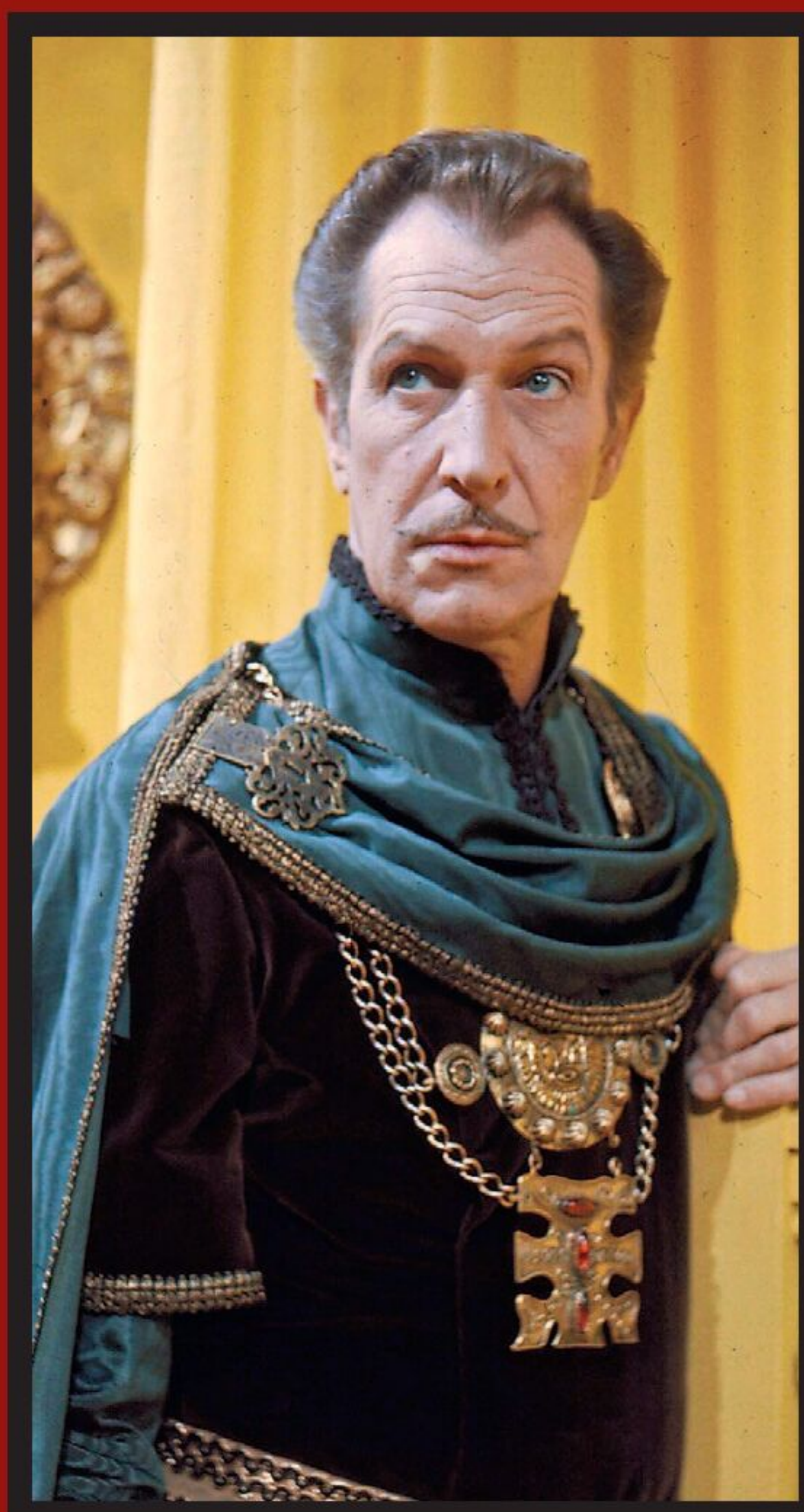


### DENNIS HOPPER

Specialising in villains and flawed antiheroes, it's no wonder that 48 of Dennis Hopper's characters met a violent end. He was shot by Kirk Douglas in *Gunfight at the OK Corral* (1957), by Ben Johnson in *Hang 'em High* (1968), Scott Glen in *Apocalypse Now* (1979), and Christopher Walken in *True Romance* (1993). He's also been crushed, stabbed, poisoned, beaten, decapitated and blown up.

### VINCENT PRICE

After first being bumped off by Boris Karloff in *Tower of London* (1939) Vincent Price died on screen a further 47 times. In 1962's *Tales of Terror* alone he bit the dust three times. In *The Comedy of Terrors* (1963) it's Karloff again that ends him. Even animated Price wasn't safe as his character, Professor Ratigan, in *The Great Mouse Detective* (1986) falls to his death from Big Ben.

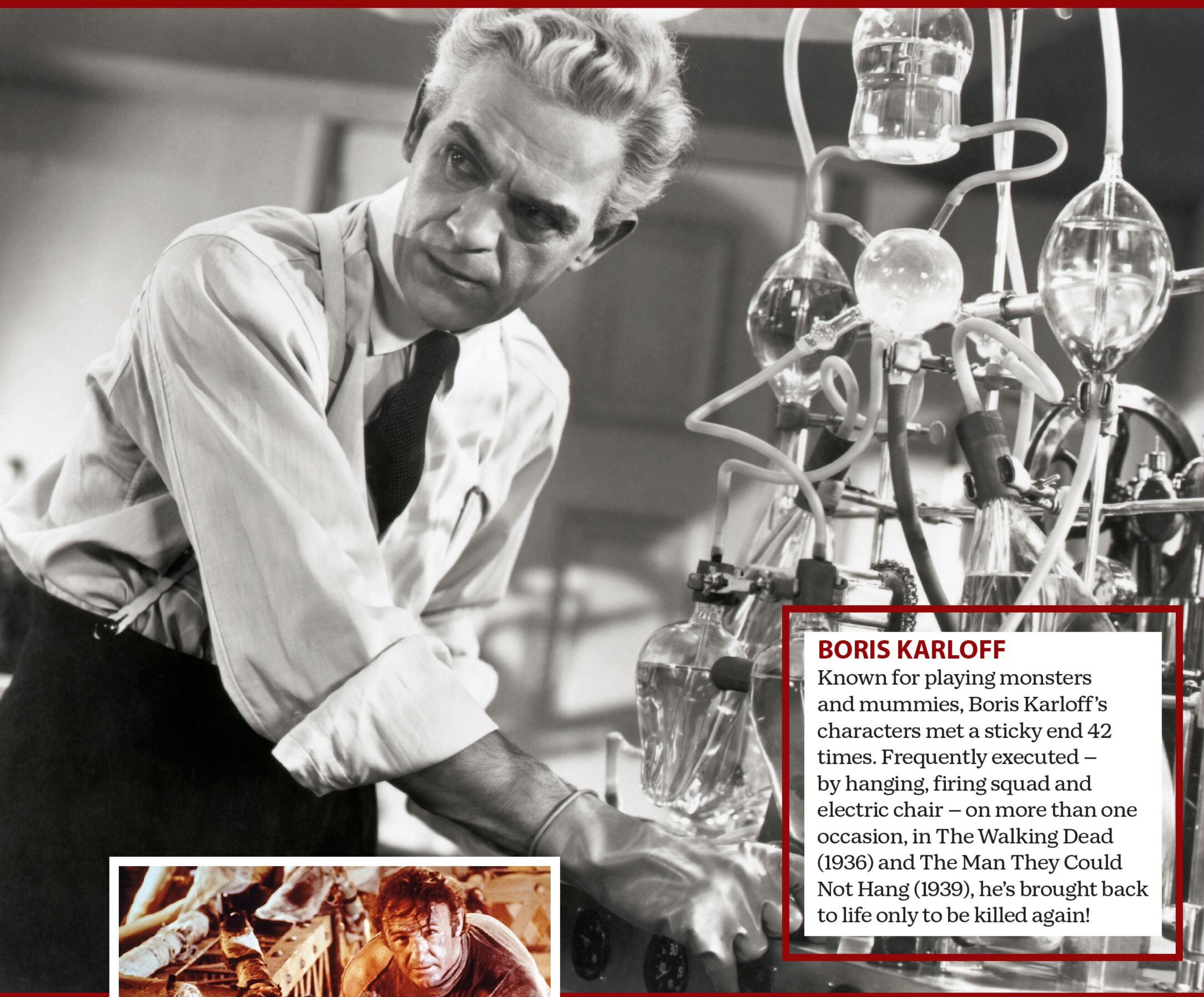


### JOHN HURT

Around 20% of John Hurt's 214 screen appearances resulted in his death. In a five-decade career he met his maker 43 times. Most dramatic is when he's killed by the creature incubating in his body in *Alien* (1979), and the most tragic is when John Merrick dies in his sleep in *The Elephant Man* (1980).







**BORIS KARLOFF**

Known for playing monsters and mummies, Boris Karloff's characters met a sticky end 42 times. Frequently executed – by hanging, firing squad and electric chair – on more than one occasion, in *The Walking Dead* (1936) and *The Man They Could Not Hang* (1939), he's brought back to life only to be killed again!



**SHELLEY WINTERS**

When it comes to actresses, Ms Winters takes the top spot with 21 on-screen deaths. She's murdered by Ronald Colman in *A Double Life* (1947), Robert Mitchum in *The Night of the Hunter* (1955) and Peter Finch in *Shattered* (1972). Her death in *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972) is one of the most tragic – and won her an Oscar nomination.



**JULIANNE MOORE**

With a reputation for playing strong female characters, Julianne Moore is another actress with a high body count. Her 18 deaths include horror flick *The Hand That Rocks the Cradle* (1992) where she is offed by a booby-trapped greenhouse, and *Savage Grace* (2007) where it's Eddie Redmayne that finishes her off.

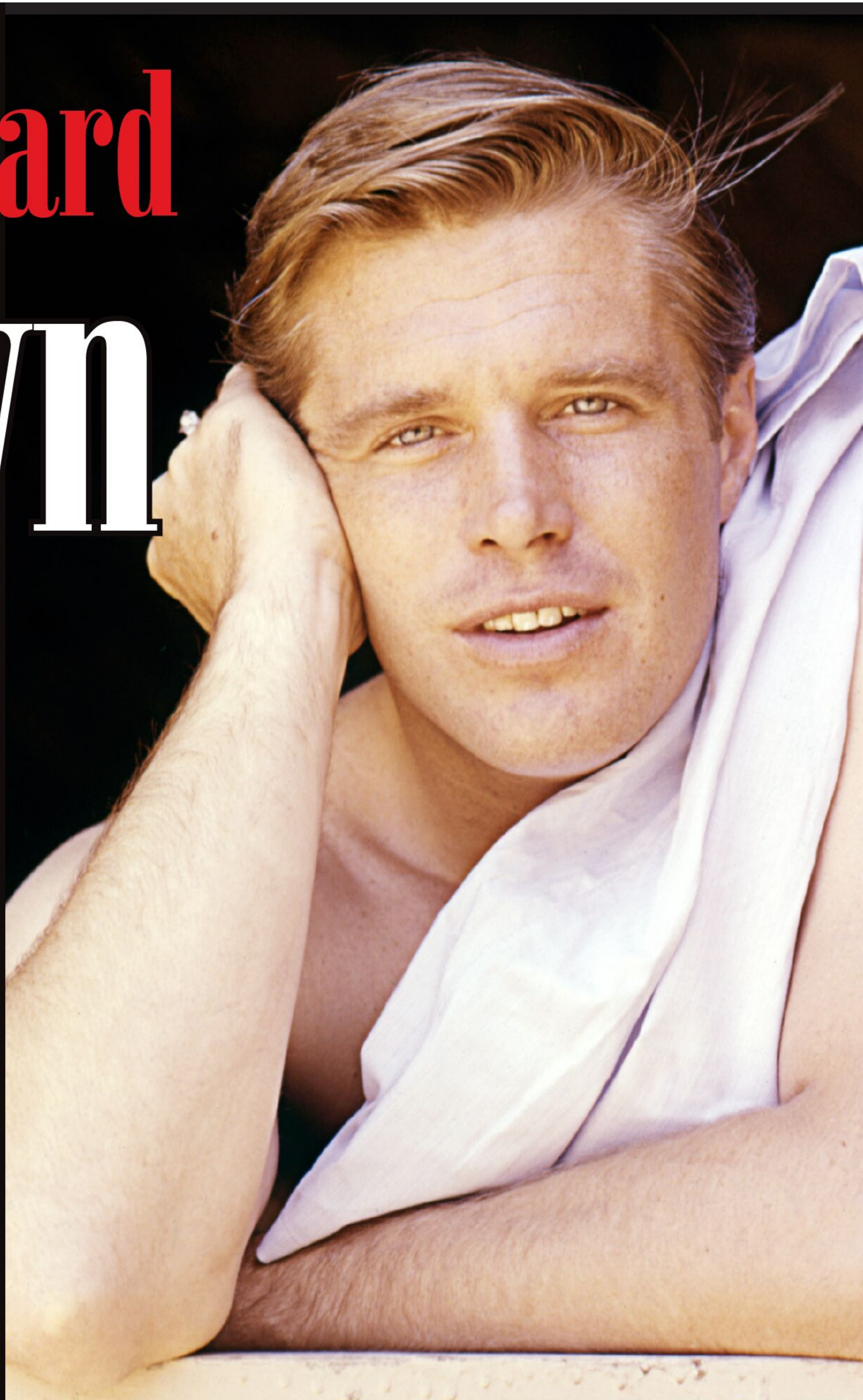


# George Peppard

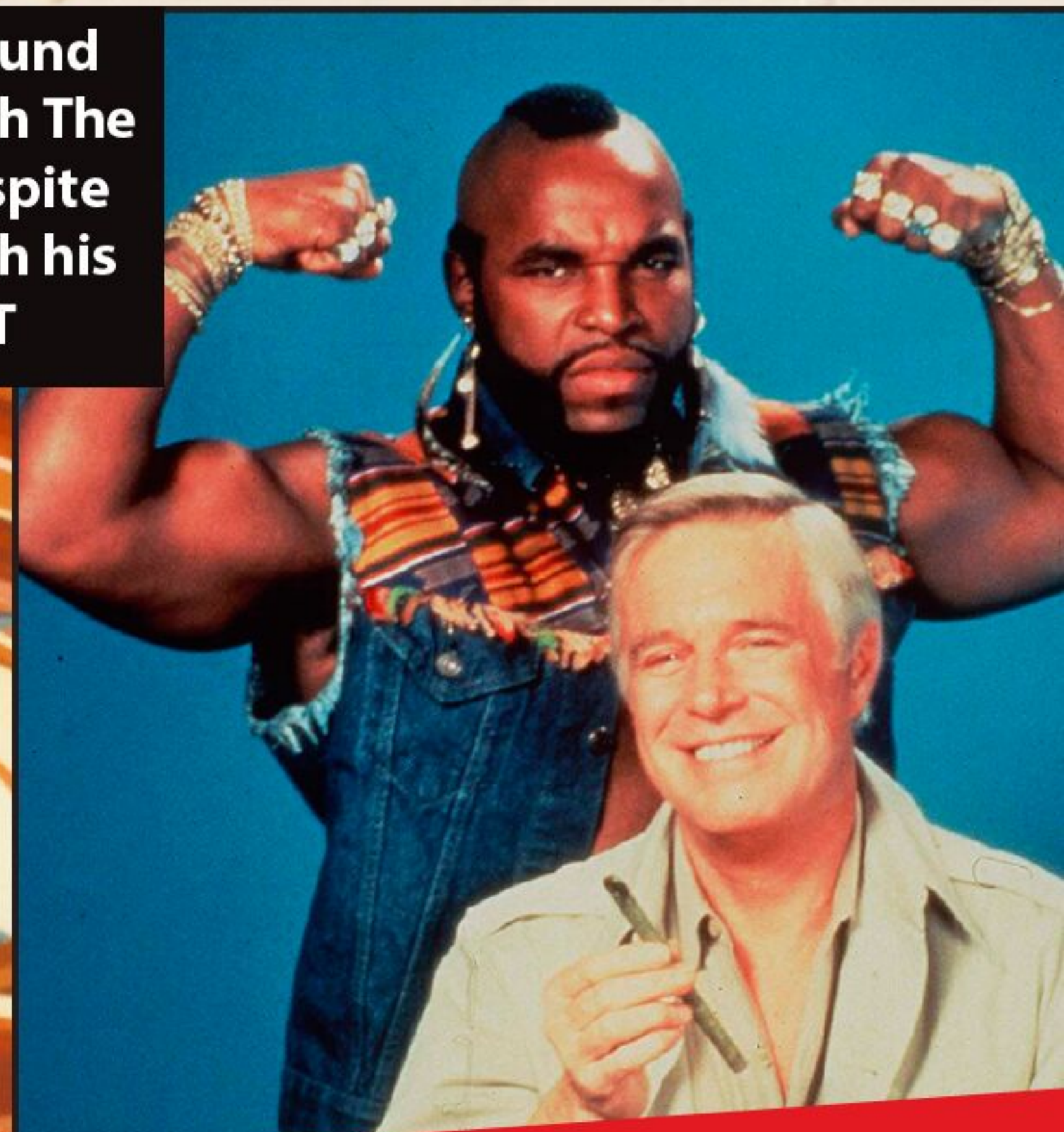
## His own worst enemy

**Stardom changed George Peppard and not for the better. Allan Hunter discovers a man forever chasing second chances**

**B**ecoming a movie star may have been the worst thing that ever happened to George Peppard. A handsome, baby-faced former Marine, Peppard began his career studying at the Actors Studio in New York with renowned coach Lee Strasberg. He performed at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and followed the Method school of acting favoured by Marlon Brando and James Dean. Then, the movies came to call. He was soon sharing the big screen with Gregory Peck in *Pork Chop Hill* (1959) and Robert Mitchum in *Home From the Hill* (1960). Even at this early stage, he was gaining a reputation for being hard to handle. On *Home From the Hill*, he constantly fought with director Vincente Minnelli and challenged Mitchum by demanding



Peppard found success with *The A-Team* despite friction with his co-star Mr T



**DID YOU KNOW?**

George Peppard was a heavy smoker, regularly puffing his way through two packs a day. He stopped smoking in 1992 when he was diagnosed with cancer and part of his lung was removed. He died of pneumonia in 1994, aged just 65.



to know, 'Have you studied the Stanislavski Method?' The older star dismissively replied, 'No, but I've studied the Smirnoff Method.'

Peppard's biggest break came when he was chosen to star opposite Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Director Blake Edwards had wanted Steve McQueen for the part of struggling writer and neighbour Paul but had been forced to accept Peppard. Producer Richard Shepherd later revealed, 'There wasn't a human being that Audrey Hepburn didn't have a kind word for except George Peppard. She didn't like him at all. She thought he was pompous.' Co-star Patricia Neal also discovered that stardom had gone to his head. She told one reporter, 'I had done scenes with George at the Actors Studio. I had a very good time, and I adored him, but years later, when I got *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, something happened. I was thrilled when I heard we were going to be in it together, but it wasn't long until I saw that since I last saw him he had grown so cold and conceited.'

Peppard enjoyed a few years of A-list stardom in the Sixties, appearing in the epic, all-star western *How the West Was Won*

(1962) and the glossy melodrama *The Carpetbaggers* (1964). Carroll Baker co-starred in both films and later told one interviewer, 'As I understand it, George Peppard later became a nice guy, a gentleman, but when we worked together back then, he was pretentious, egotistical, a brat and an asshole. He thought he was God's gift to women and the movies!'

## FAME AND ALCOHOL

Peppard met his second wife, actress Elizabeth Ashley, during the filming of *The Carpetbaggers*. In her memoir, she realised that Peppard's frustrations stemmed from feeling like a character actor trapped in a leading man's body. She wrote, 'I don't think it was possible to be a male movie star who looked like he did and got hot when he did and not be trapped by it.' Peppard wanted to be the best and fought over every word, gesture and camera angle. He didn't care who he might upset, declaring, 'I learned a long time ago that if I was going to predicate my feelings on other people's opinions, I'd have no life at all'. Peppard loved it when he could immerse himself in a part like flying ace Bruno Stachel in *The Blue Max* (1966). He acquired his pilot's licence

in preparation for filming and was taught to fly one of the replica Pfalz planes off screen.

His reputation as difficult grew as his career opportunities diminished. In 1965, he was scheduled to make *Sands of the Kalahari* but clashes with director Cy Endfield led to his replacement by Stuart Whitman. The same year, he was announced for a film version of the musical *Merrily We Roll Along* but it was never made. He became typecast as cops, cowboys and private detectives, invariably macho, belligerent and surly. He made Charles Bronson look avuncular. Television provided some solace with the hit series *Banacek* (1972-1974) but Peppard revealed his self-destructive nature once more when he refused to make a third series. He had divorced Elizabeth Ashley and was reported to have quit the show specifically to prevent her receiving a share of his television earnings.

In 1972, Peppard stood trial and was cleared on charges of attempted rape. He continued to work but felt his stardom slipping away. Later in the decade, he acknowledged his alcoholism and stopped drinking. Alcohol had become a way of taking the edge off any bitterness he felt about his professional disappointments. He famously said, 'You have problems, you think drink helps, then you have two problems.' Looking

Robert Mitchum clashed with Peppard on *Home From the Hill*



*Breakfast at Tiffany's* co-star Patricia Neal knew George from the Actors Studio but felt stardom had gone to his head







Peppard trained for a pilot's licence to be able to fly in *The Blue Max*

back in 1983, he also remarked, 'I was desperately unhappy, and my drinking made it worse. My marriages had failed, I wasn't seeing enough of my son, and I didn't like the way my career was going.'

His career should have been back on track when he was cast as Blake Carrington in *Dynasty*. His constant clashes with the producers over the characterisation led to him being fired after three weeks of shooting and replaced by John Forsythe. His fortunes were restored

when he was cast as Colonel John 'Hannibal' Smith in the rip-roaring adventure series *The A-Team* (1983-87) although he had little time for co-star Mr T and almost seemed to relish his reputation as someone to avoid. *A-Team* co-star Dwight Schultz recalled their first meeting when Peppard introduced himself with a handshake and the disconcerting greeting, 'I'm George Peppard and I'm not a very nice person.' Schultz didn't know whether to take him seriously. In the

light of his sobriety, Peppard half joked, 'I bet a lot of people thought when I did certain things, I had been drinking and now they found out it wasn't the booze at all. It was me.'

The *A-Team* revived Peppard's career and boosted his bank balance. 'Four California divorces and 25 years of alimony will see to it you have no money in the bank,' he explained. Peppard spent a lifetime fighting his demons and chasing second chances. In his final years, he seemed to find some peace returning to his first love of the theatre. He played Ernest Hemingway in *Papa* (1988), came to London to appear with Elaine Stritch in *Love Letters* (1990) and starred in a revival of *The Lion in Winter* (1992). Far from Hollywood, he finally found the career he had always wanted.



The *Carpetbaggers* introduced George to his second wife, Elizabeth Ashley

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Peppard finally had the chance to do things his way when he produced, directed and starred in the sentimental thriller *Five Days From Home* (1978). He also had a hand in the script, sold his car and remortgaged his Beverly Hills home to raise the \$1 million budget.



The Small Faces (l to r)  
Ian McLagan, Kenney  
Jones, Ronnie Lane,  
Steve Marriott

# Small Faces All or nothing

Sixty years ago, the Small Faces made their recording debut. Sean Egan traces a career that was all too short but all too beautiful

**T**he Small Faces seemed destined to make sweet music from the start. In January 1965, Ronnie Lane ventured to the J60 Music Bar shop in East London because he had decided to switch from guitar to bass. He was accompanied by his friend, drummer Kenney Jones. Steve Marriott, the impish salesman who served them, happened to be a singer and guitarist. The trio felt an immediate solidarity. They were all around 5ft 6in in height, East Enders and mods. Engaging in a jam on the shop's instruments, they also discovered a mutual love of rhythm and blues. Moreover, Marriott got a good discount for his new friend. The stage was set for the formation of one of the era's greatest and most innovative bands.

A fourth member was recruited in the shape of guitarist and keyboardist Jimmy Winston. Perhaps symbolically, Winston



was a head taller than his new colleagues: they never saw eye to eye figuratively or literally.

The band made up for their youth (Jones was just 16) with enthusiasm that saw them quickly mesh into a tight unit. They were also conferred a gravitas by Marriott's remarkable singing voice: pipsqueak cockney he might be, but his vocal delivery was as loud and gravelly as that of any of his American blues heroes. By June, they had graduated from scrabbling for low-level gigs to holding down a residency at the Notre Dame building off Leicester Square. At this point, their changing, ad hoc billings finally gave way to a proper name. Small Faces was the suggestion of a band friend who was amused by their statures. Although half-mocking, it fitted because a 'face' was the term for a particularly prominent and stylish mod.

## CHANGING FACES

It was at the Notre Dame that they were spotted by manager and promoter Don Arden. He put them with songwriters Brian Potter and Ian Samwell, who provided them with Whatcha Gonna Do About it. In truth, it was essentially a piece of Tin Pan Alley pap, but the Small Faces' class and inventiveness turned it into a classic, starting with Jones's crashing opening drum roll. The record made No.14.

Mordant, experimental follow-up I've Got Mine was in some senses even more impressive, not least because it was self-written, but it flopped. In any case, the band were soon distracted by bickering that saw Winston depart their ranks. His replacement was a keyboardist named Ian McLagan, whom they engaged sight-unseen after a favourable magazine mention. McLagan turned out to be not just a great addition musically but also symmetrically, being the same height as his new bandmates.

He was first heard on Sha-La-La-La-Lee in January 1966, another moon-in-June number from outside writers – in this case Kenny Lynch and Mort Shuman – retooled by the group into something far more substantial.

This rip-roaring, power-pop classic made No.3. Top 10 follow-up Hey Girl was just as good and, crucially, introduced the world to both the Small Faces' unique pop-soul hybrid and the Marriott/Lane songwriting axis that would be fundamental to their success.

The band's eponymous debut album (May 1966) was spotty but promising and by August they'd released what would be a No.1 single in the shape of the stately, anguished All or Nothing.

Their Christmas single My Mind's Eye had a melody appropriately based on a hymn and made No.4, but the band claimed Arden had rushed it out without their permission. It was one in a series of disagreements, the others mainly revolving around money. Before long, they dispensed with his services. They also switched to a hip and happening label called Immediate Records, who allowed the Small Faces their artistic heads.

Across 1967, the mod threads gave way to psychedelic finery as the group unveiled the likes of Here Come the Nice, an anthemic paean to a drug dealer that made No.12, and Itchycoo Park, a No.3 that, with lines like 'It's all too beautiful', took the mickey out of awed hippie phraseology. The pinnacle of their development, at least on single, was Tin Soldier, a searing psychedelic-soul top 10. It was deeply personal for Marriott. 'I wrote it for the girl who became my first wife,' he later reflected. 'I'd tried every trick in the book to pull her and couldn't, so I wrote her that song and she married me!'

The band's second album (June 1967) was confusingly also eponymous but had far more depth and layering than

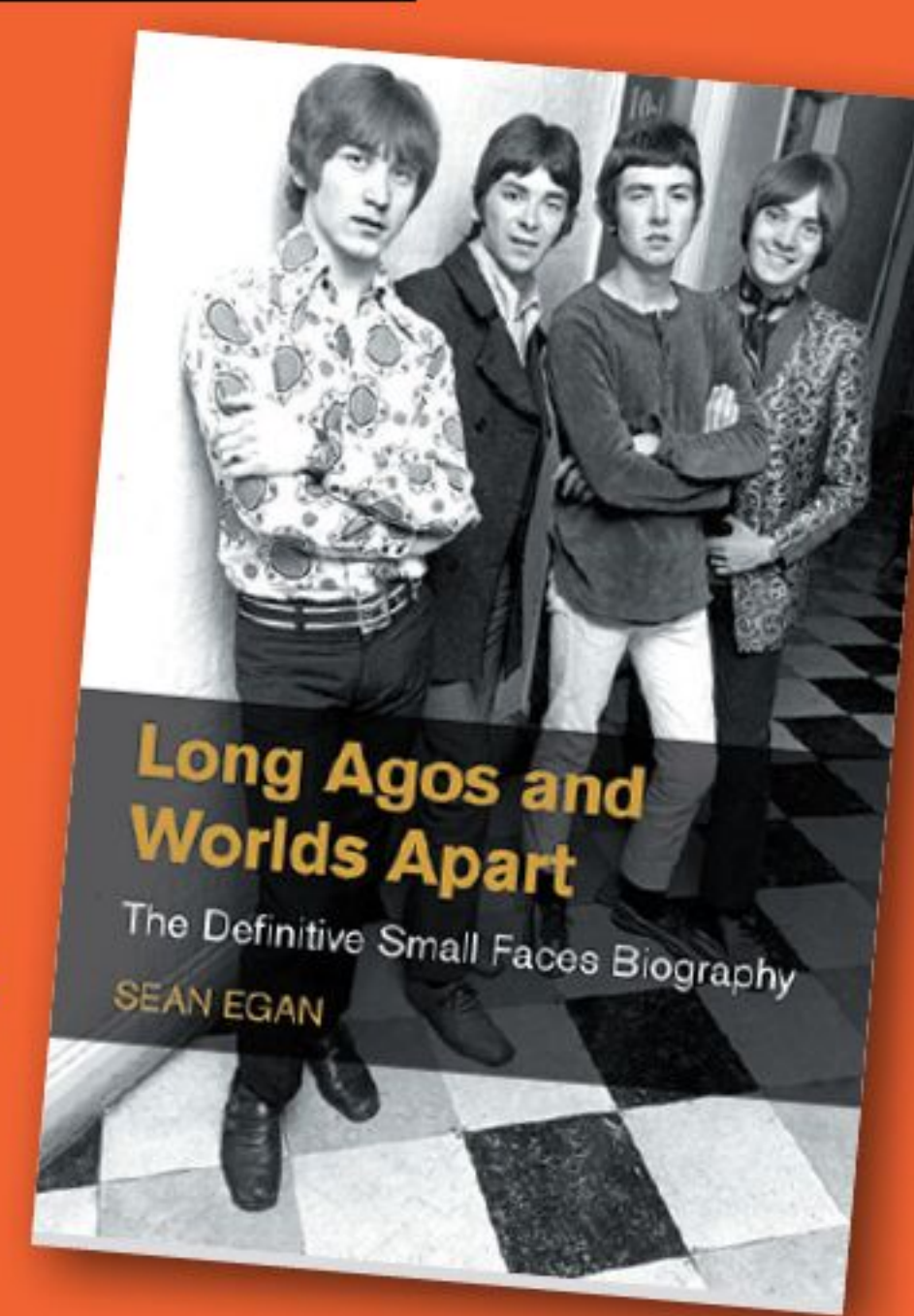
the first LP. It paved the way for their masterpiece, Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake (May 1968), a gloriously rich mixture of rock, pop, psychedelia and whimsy, the latter exemplified by the comedic cockney singalong Lazy Sunday and by the fairytale narrative suite on the second side, one of the first 'rock operas'. The album topped the chart and beat out the likes of The Beatles and The Rolling Stones to take the New Musical Express' Album of the Year award.

## PARADISE LOST

Trouble was brewing, however. In an action replay of the My Mind's Eye saga, the band claimed Lazy Sunday had been issued on single without their say-so. They were bitter about the novelty image its huge success (No.2) fostered just as they had been proving their increased sophistication. Marriott's confidence was shaken when experimental 1968 single The Universal – recorded on a home cassette recorder – was a failure. Meanwhile, his colleagues didn't go much on the heavier material he was presenting them and told him so. It all culminated in Marriott storming off stage at an Alexandra Palace concert on New Year's Eve 1968 and announcing he was quitting.

Marriott and his ex-colleagues subsequently did well in Humble Pie and the Faces respectively, but the Small Faces' potential lay forever unfulfilled (two late-Seventies partial reunion albums regardless). They left behind a compact but extremely powerful body of work that contains some of the most infectious and life-affirming music of that or any era.

■ Sean Egan is the author of *Long Agos and Worlds Apart: The Definitive Small Faces Biography* (Equinox Publishing). Retro readers can get 25% off the RRP using the code RETRO at the checkout, exclusively at [equinoxpub.com/home/small-faces](http://equinoxpub.com/home/small-faces)





David (Colin Campbell) joined the RAF and served as a navigator on Wellington bombers



Family gatherings usually ended in conflict

# A Family at War

Charles Rollings recalls the home-front saga that captured TV audiences in 1970 and helped launch the careers of a host of British stars



## DID YOU KNOW?

Many of the cast from *A Family at War* went on to become household names, among them Barbara Flynn, Wanda Ventham, Tony Anholt, James Beck, Talfryn Thomas, Richard Beckinsale, Lynda Bellingham, Tom Conti, Gareth Hunt, John Nettles, Lennard Pearce, Peter Childs, John Savident, Ray Smith, John Comer and Kathy Staff.

**W**hen Coronation Street scriptwriter John Finch pitched an idea for a series called *Conflict* to Granada Television in early 1970, he thought it would be rejected. *Conflict* was a 'tele-novel' about a Liverpudlian family, the Ashtons, during the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, but Granada's execs considered period dramas expensive and unpopular with viewers. Besides, after the Swinging Sixties, war had gone out of fashion.

But Granada was rethinking its stance on costume drama and to his surprise – and alarm – he was told to develop a 13-episode series in time for spring. This meant writing an outline for the entire series and six scripts, which had to be ready for broadcast in April. It soon became clear, however, that the saga would spread across three series and other writers would have to be enlisted, with Finch as script editor. The managing director of Granada, Denis Forman, also insisted on a title change – to *A Family at War*.

### FAMILY DYNAMICS

Eventually 18 writers would be engaged across the three series, which totalled 52 episodes. Finch himself wrote or co-wrote 29, with left-wing war novelist Alexander Baron contributing six and the remainder (among them 'kitchen sink' novelist Stan Barstow) one, two or three each.

The first series aired on the ITV network from 14 April to 4 August 1970 in the Tuesday 9-10pm slot. Series Two, six episodes longer, ran from 11 November 1970 to 17 March 1971, and was shifted to Wednesday to follow the week's second helping of *Corrie* – as was Series Three, with 20 episodes running from 6 October 1971 to 19 February 1972.

Its debt to *Corrie* was evident from the first instalment, *The Facts of Life*. Written by Finch and set in May 1938, it introduced the put-upon working-class patriarch and closet socialist Edwin Ashton (Colin Douglas); his petit-bourgeois wife Jean (Shelagh Fraser); their three sons – philandering stevedore David (Colin Campbell), left-wing Oxford undergraduate Phillip (Keith Drinkel), and well-meaning teenager Robert (David Dixon); their two daughters – capable schoolteacher Margaret (Lesley Nunnerley) and feisty Freda (Barbara Flynn); hard-nosed printer Sefton Briggs (John McKelvey), who is Jean's brother and Edwin's boss; Sefton's likeable son Tony (Trevor Bowen); David's dreary wife Sheila (Coral Atkins), and Margaret's wet boyfriend John Porter (Ian Thompson).

They are celebrating Edwin and Jean's wedding anniversary, but almost immediately they are 'at war'. Edwin is hoping for a promotion, which Sefton is withholding; Phillip has been fighting for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and wants to return; and David, who only married Sheila because she was pregnant, is denied a job by Sefton, so joins the RAF.

'Family' carried on as it had started. No joyful occasion went unspoiled by conflict and the impact of war – and Finch was dubbed a misery-monger. With most of it being shot in the same Manchester studios as *Corrie*, and guest appearances by *Corrie* regulars, it resembled a wartime prequel to the twice-weekly soap.

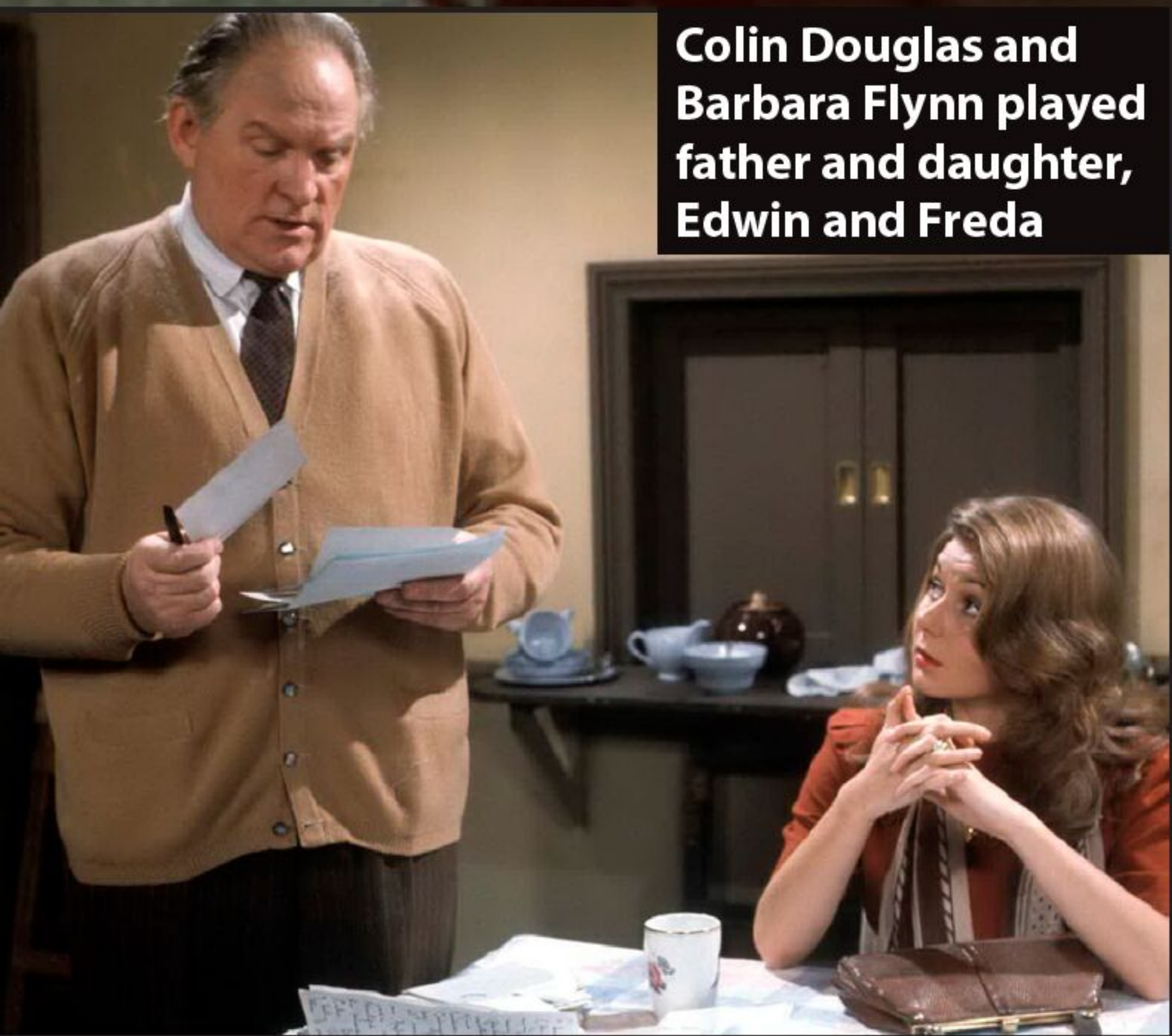
The budget for each episode was only £12,500 but the series was saved from looking cheap by Seventies décor resembling that of the Forties. Rushed filming often led to fluffed lines and the accidental intrusion of the sound-boom, and some episodes looked as if they'd been edited with a chainsaw. The second series suffered from the ITV Colour Strike of November 1970 to February 1971, when technicians walked out demanding a 5% pay rise for handling new equipment; as a result, eight episodes had to be shot in black and white. The third series coincided with the miners' strike. Power cuts led to some areas missing the final episode, which had to be repeated.

### TOP DOG

Despite these setbacks, the series regularly hooked 20-22 million viewers, at its peak attracting 26.1 million and knocking *Corrie* and *Morecambe and Wise* off the No.1 spot. Much of its success was due to its timely evocation of pre-war industrial strife and the sacrifices made in wartime, and its fearlessness in broaching difficult subjects. Just as evocative – and comforting – were the unforgettable opening and closing credits, showing a sandcastle (with Union flags) standing alone against the incoming tide, accompanied by the first movement of Vaughan Williams' 6th Symphony.

Family also proved a surprise hit abroad, being sold to 29 countries and often repeated. Such was its popularity that the theme music was rushed out as a single, using a recording by Sir Adrian Boult. The TV Times published a 64-page souvenir special, and each series generated a novel, published on both sides of the Atlantic. There was even talk of axing *Corrie* and extending *A Family at War* indefinitely.

It also rekindled an interest in the Second World War. No wonder Denis Forman called it 'the most cost-effective series ever made'.



Colin Douglas and Barbara Flynn played father and daughter, Edwin and Freda





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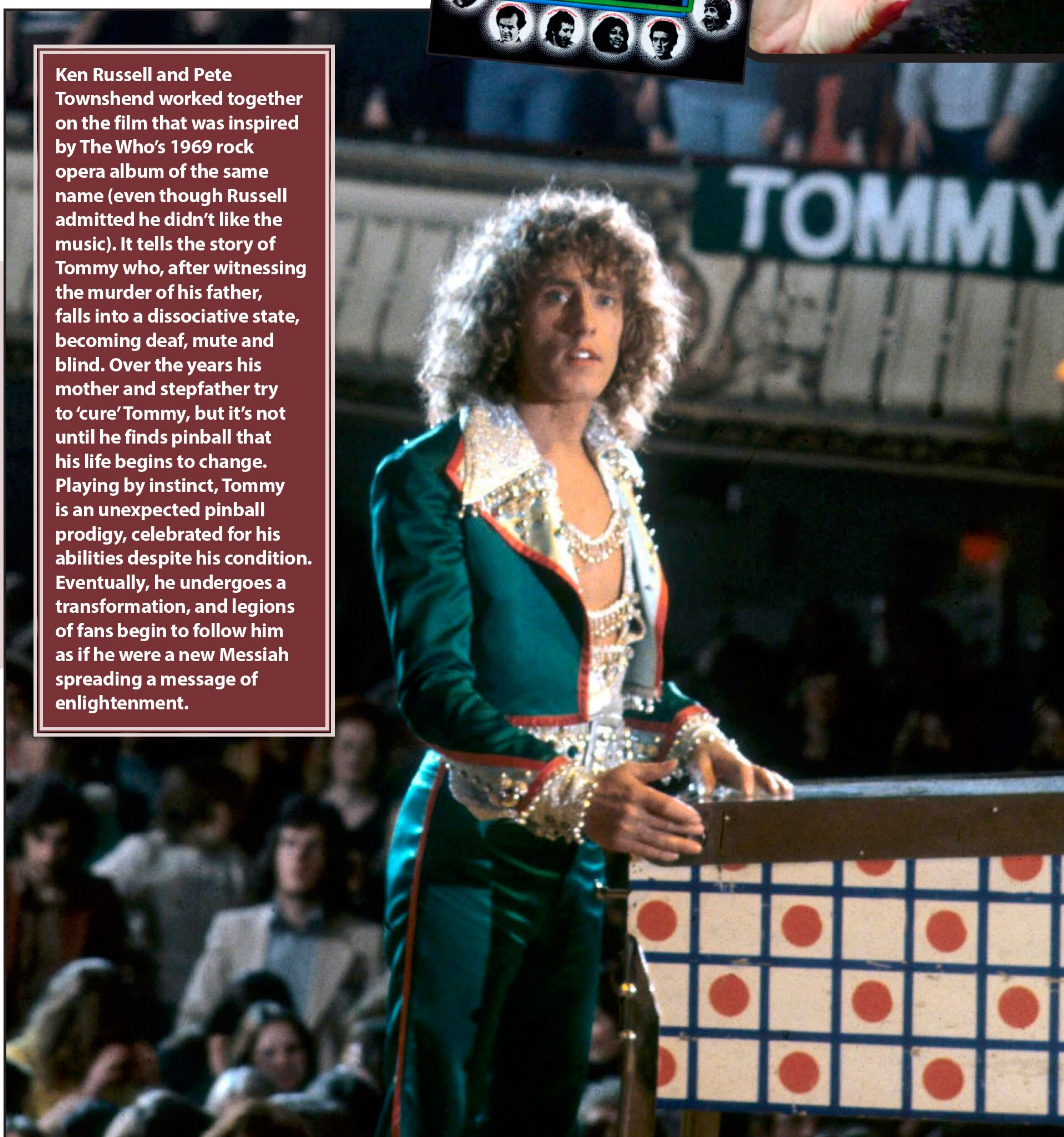
**The only way to enjoy  
anything in this life is to  
earn it first.** Ginger Rogers



# >>> MOVIE MASTERCLASSES No.40

Tommy (1975), the psychedelic rock opera that explored the psychological pressures of instant celebrity, turns 50 this year. How did that deaf, dumb and blind kid come to play such mean pinball?

Ken Russell and Pete Townshend worked together on the film that was inspired by The Who's 1969 rock opera album of the same name (even though Russell admitted he didn't like the music). It tells the story of Tommy who, after witnessing the murder of his father, falls into a dissociative state, becoming deaf, mute and blind. Over the years his mother and stepfather try to 'cure' Tommy, but it's not until he finds pinball that his life begins to change. Playing by instinct, Tommy is an unexpected pinball prodigy, celebrated for his abilities despite his condition. Eventually, he undergoes a transformation, and legions of fans begin to follow him as if he were a new Messiah spreading a message of enlightenment.



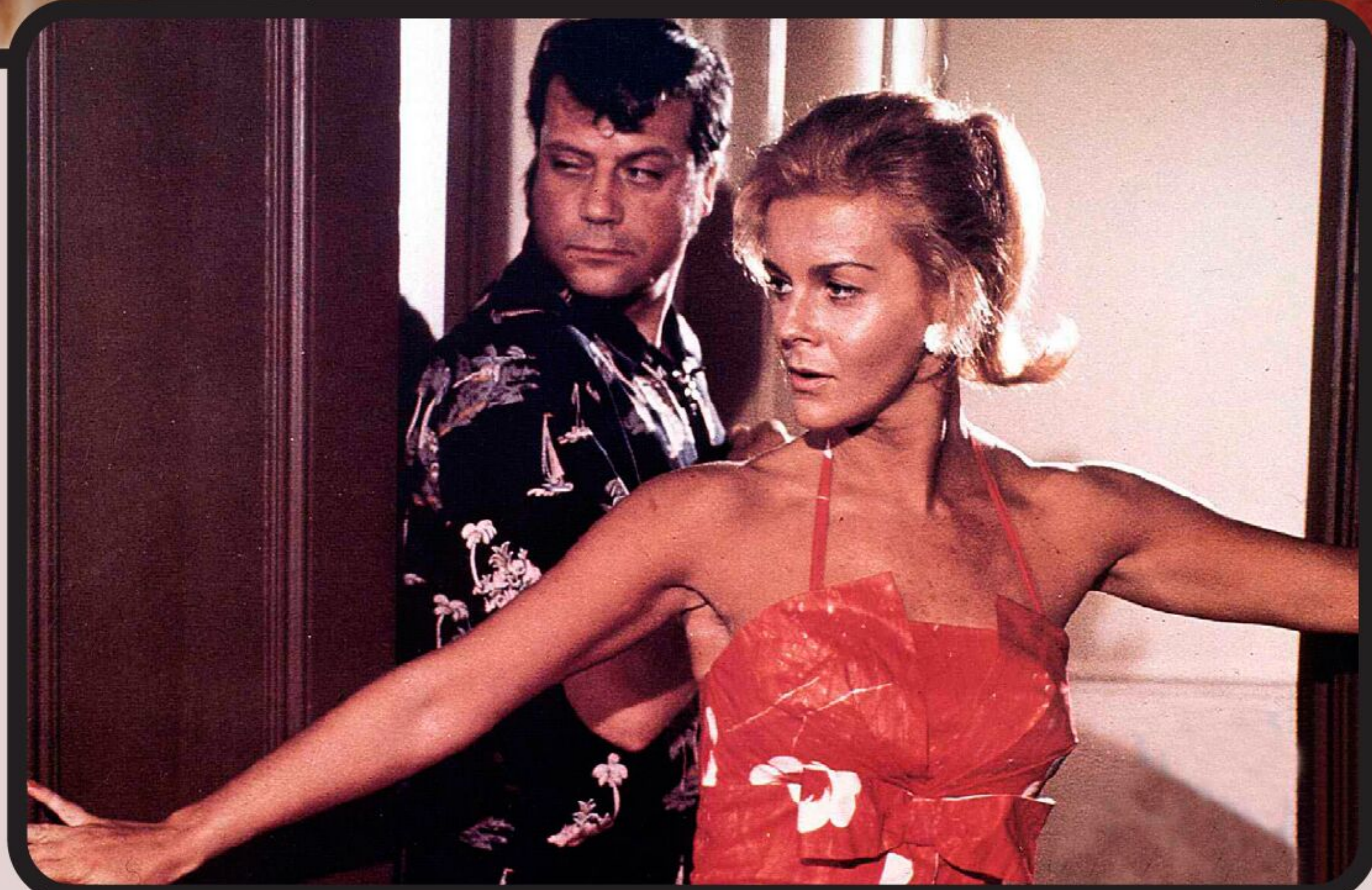




The film attracted an incredible cast including Oliver Reed, Ann-Margret, Robert Powell and Jack Nicholson as well as rock stars such as Elton John, Tina Turner (left), Eric Clapton and Keith Moon. The Who frontman Roger Daltrey was chosen to play the lead and the rest of the band appeared as themselves.

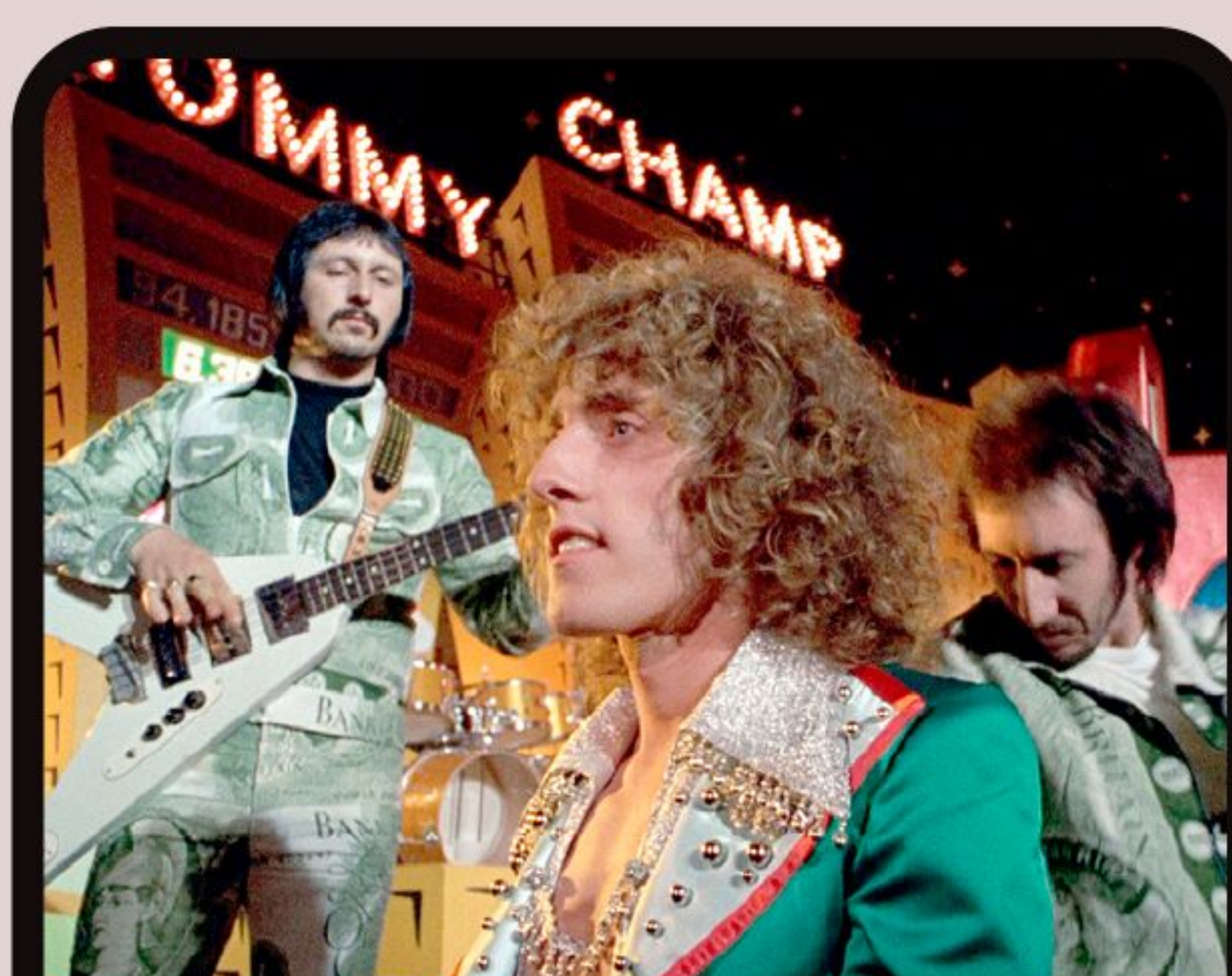
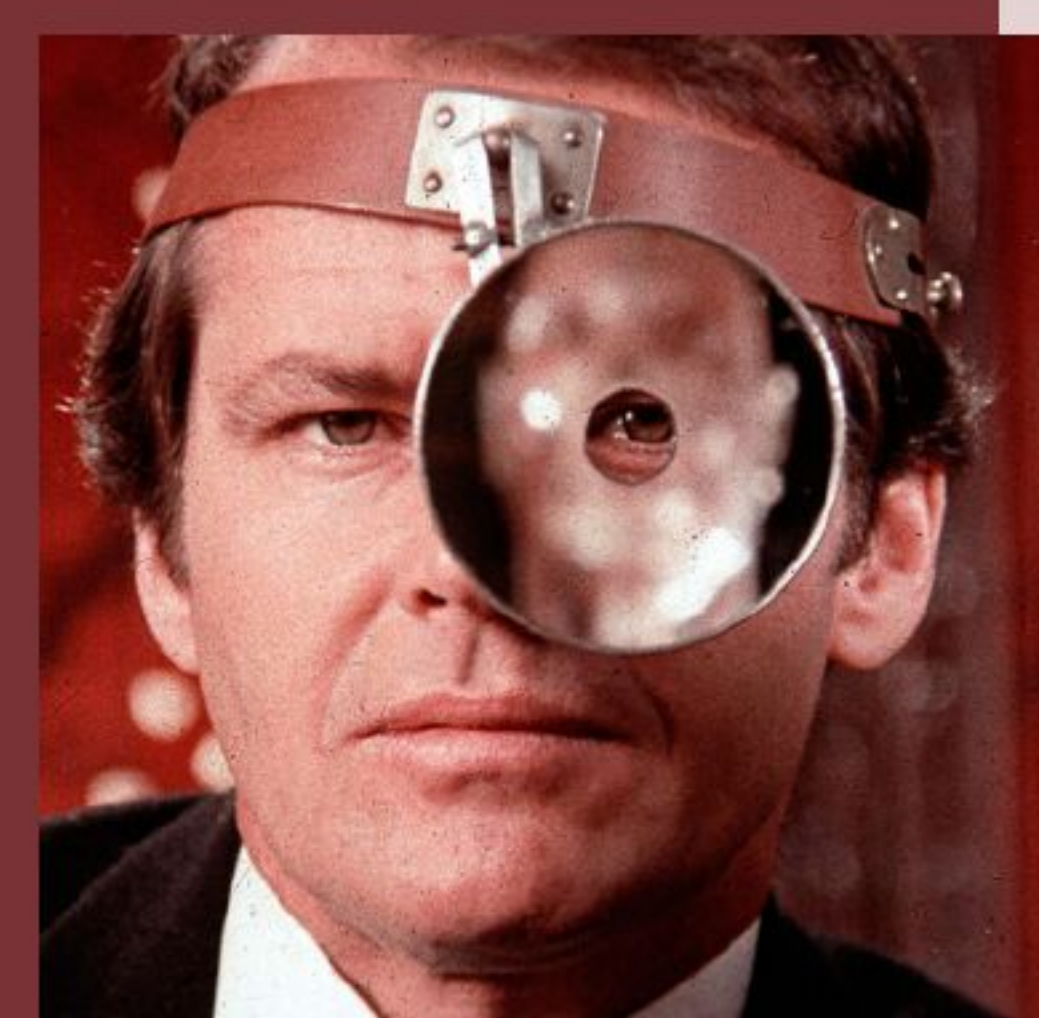


Elton John initially turned down the part of The Pinball Wizard. David Essex, who had played Tommy in the 1973 stage production was considered, but producer Robert Stigwood held out for John, who finally agreed on the condition that he could keep the oversized boots from his costume.



Ann-Margret was Oscar nominated for her role as Tommy's mother. She remains the only lead actress with an Academy nomination for a performance that is almost entirely sung. She recorded her songs in a single 11-hour session.

The part of the Dr A Quackson was originally slated for Christopher Lee but he was filming The Man With the Golden Gun (1974). Jack Nicholson was in London at the time and recorded his scenes in just 18 hours. Peter Sellers had originated the part in the stage production.



Tommy is Ken Russell's most commercially successful film, raking in \$27 million in the US alone within months of release. The accompanying soundtrack album reached No.2 on the US Billboard charts and No.21 in the UK.



Much of the film was shot in and around Portsmouth. While the film crew were in the area the pier caught fire and Russell shot footage of the real blaze and incorporated it into the scene where Tommy's holiday camp burns down.



When martial arts legend Bruce Lee inexplicably died, his many fans wanted answers

# Death of The Dragon

Bruce with his wife Linda and son Brandon



A black Mercedes pulls up in front of the Kowloon Funeral Parlour in Hong Kong and the assembled crowd surges forward. More than 15,000 people have gathered behind the police barriers or are looking down from nearby balconies as 500 VIP mourners arrive. A man opens the car door and a woman steps out. She is dressed from head to toe in white, the traditional Chinese colour of mourning. She is painfully thin, her eyes hidden by large, round sunglasses. Looking close to collapse, she is supported by the man as she enters the building.

The year was 1973, and the woman was 28-year-old Linda Lee. She was attending the funeral of her husband – the martial arts legend Bruce Lee. Five days before, the 32-year-old star of movies such as *The Way of the Dragon* (1972), had suddenly died.

Fans across the world were stunned. What had taken the life of a seemingly super-fit, healthy young man? Lee was known to follow a strict diet and intense fitness regime.

It didn't take long for conspiracy theories to surface. Had Lee been poisoned by a jealous lover? Was he



the victim of a gangland killing? Or did a curse hang over the star and his family?

Bruce Lee's action movies were hugely popular. At the time of his death, *Enter The Dragon* (1973), his first major film co-produced with a Hollywood studio, was due to be released. However, questions about Lee's health had been raised earlier in 1973. In May, he collapsed with a seizure at the Golden Harvest film studios in Hong Kong. He was rushed to hospital, where he was treated for cerebral edema – swelling of the brain.

Two months later, on the evening of Friday 20 July, Lee was at the home of the Taiwanese actress Betty Ting Pei, along with Raymond Chow, his producer and business partner. The trio were looking over the script for *Game of Death*, the movie Lee was currently working on. After Chow's departure, Lee developed a headache, so Ting gave him an Equagesic – a painkiller containing aspirin and the tranquilliser meprobamate.

Lee went for a nap, but when he didn't come down to dinner, Ting went to check on him. Unable to wake him, she phoned Chow, who returned but was also unable to rouse the star. An ambulance was called and Lee was rushed to hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

The autopsy showed that excess fluid had caused Lee's brain to swell by 13%. But doctors didn't know the cause. Had he suffered an allergic reaction to the Equagesic? The drug, as well as traces of cannabis, were found in his system.

An official verdict of 'death by misadventure' was recorded. Only, some fans didn't buy this explanation, especially when contradictions surrounding Lee's final hours came to light, only days after his passing.

Raymond Chow, keen to avoid any scandal, had told the press Lee was at home with his wife Linda when he was struck down. However, when it became known that he was

in fact at Ting's apartment, rumours began to circulate that Lee and the actress had been having an affair. Some fans even blamed Ting for Lee's death. After all, she had given him the Equagesic.

Other people alleged Lee had wanted to end his relationship with Ting and, in a jealous rage, she had poisoned him. In a later interview, Ting said she had received death threats from angry fans at the time. She would also claim she and Lee had been lovers for more than a year before he died.

## GANGS AND TRIADS

Another allegation was that Ting was a willing assassin for organised crime syndicates.

It was said that, when Lee was a teenager in Hong Kong, he had become involved in street gangs and beaten up the son of a powerful triad leader. Worried for his safety, Lee's father had sent him to the US to continue his studies.

Other stories linking Lee's death to the triads included that he had refused to pay them for protection on his film sets, or that Chinese movie makers were worried his new career in Hollywood was going to have an impact on the popularity of their own films.

No evidence was ever produced to implicate Betty Ting Pei or to back up theories of a gangland hit, yet still the rumours persisted.

Someone else who fans suspected of being involved in the star's untimely end was Raymond Chow. Lee and Chow had co-founded Concord Production Inc, the company that helped make some of Lee's most famous movies.



George Lazenby and Betty Ting Pei starred in *The Shrine of Ultimate Bliss* (1974)

The pair were known to have a rocky relationship, and it was said Chow was fearful of losing his star to Hollywood. Also, with Lee out of the way, Chow would have complete control of the company, as well as owning all the rights to Lee's films.

When Chow released *Enter the Dragon* just one month after Lee's death, it smashed box-office records, making it one of the most profitable martial arts movies ever.

Although there was no evidence that Lee had been murdered, the conspiracy theories kept coming. However, some people believed Lee's fate had been sealed much further back in time.

It was rumoured his family was under a curse that afflicted male offspring. His parents had lost a son before Lee's birth, so when Lee came along, his mother gave him a girl's name, 'Sai Fon' or 'Little Phoenix'.

It's thought that a nurse at the hospital in San Francisco where Lee was born, gave him the name Bruce.

Belief in the curse was reinforced for many when Lee's 28-year-old son, Brandon, was accidentally shot dead in 1993 while on the set of the movie *The Crow*.

Most recently, researchers have put forward a credible theory that Bruce Lee died from hyponatremia, where the concentration of sodium in the blood becomes dangerously low. An excessive intake of liquid can dilute sodium levels, increasing the risk of swelling of the brain.

Linda Lee reported that her husband followed a high-fluid-based diet of carrot and apple juice. On the day he died, he also used cannabis, which increases thirst. And he was seen drinking excessive amounts of water throughout the afternoon and evening.

Ironically, one of Bruce Lee's most famous quotes was 'Be like water.' Was it water that ultimately killed him? Even more than 50 years on, Lee's death remains contentious, but it seems we may finally be getting closer to finding out for certain why Bruce Lee died.





The Beatles were less than happy with their cartoon counterparts

The *Yellow Submarine* film wasn't the Fab Four's first animated venture. JD Savage revisits the much-maligned TV cartoon series that John Lennon complained turned the band into *The Flintstones*

# Cartoon capers



## DID YOU KNOW?

In the first episode, the group visits what looks suspiciously like an octopus's garden in a yellowish diving bell (if not a submarine) predating a couple of Beatles songs.

**T**he Beatles' movie *Yellow Submarine* (1968) is a much-loved time capsule from the Flower Power era. The dimension-hopping adventure perfectly captures its psychedelic and pop-art vibes, underscored by a soundtrack of great Beatles songs. Yet their earlier foray into animation with co-producers King Features left the band wary of getting involved.

Quality wasn't exactly the hallmark of executive producer Al Brodax, the man behind several animated TV series based on King Features Syndicate comic strips. For instance, he'd churned out 220 Popeye cartoons in just 18 months.

Fortunately for him, by 1964, The Beatles' manager Brian Epstein was indiscriminately signing off on a flurry of marketing tie-ins, from dolls to hairspray. When Brodax tracked him down at New York's Plaza Hotel, where the group stayed for their historic appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on 9 February 1964 – watched by a reported 73 million viewers – he was receptive to the producer's proposal of a Beatles TV cartoon series. Contracts were soon inked.

The Beatles had a busy day on 29 July 1965. Not only did they attend the London premiere of their live-action movie *Help*, but they also participated in a sneak preview of the cartoons at Soho's TVC animation studios. After the screening, actor and comedian Lance Percival, who'd voiced both Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney, found himself awkwardly fending off complaints. Ringo objected that the cartoons made him 'the dum-dum' while an equally disgruntled Paul grouched that his voice was too high-pitched. Meanwhile John Lennon disappeared under a table with a bottle of wine.

The series aired on Saturday mornings on the ABC network, targeting sleepy-eyed, cereal-scoffing American kids. Sponsored

by the AC Gilbert toy company, Quaker Oats and Mars Candy, it debuted on 25 September 1965 to instant ratings success.

The Beatles' cartoon personas were created by 21-year-old London-based designer Peter Sander who, by exaggerating popular perceptions of the band, gave each a distinctive look. John was the assertive leader, Paul the cheerful, neat-haired heartthrob, and Ringo the sad-eyed, ever-punning clown, complete with a goofy 'hu-hu-hu, yeah' laugh.

### TIME HEALS

The voice acting left something to be desired. It was assumed American kids couldn't decipher Liverpudlian, so only Ringo spoke with an approximation of the Scouse accent – mixed with a hint of Brummie. American voice actor Paul Frees voiced John, who sounded like a member of the British aristocracy, and George, whose bizarre, hybrid accent resembled Peter Lorre – if the soft-voiced actor had been born in Tipperary to Mexican parents!

Each half-hour episode featured two cartoon shorts bookending a couple of singalongs. These oddball adventures, each named after and featuring a Beatles song, whisk the band worldwide. Typical escapades include battling vampires in Transylvania, crossing paths with cowboys in the Wild West, and encountering a leprechaun in an Irish cabin.

In the singalong segments, Ringo provides slapstick as

a substitute props man or decorator, setting the stage with a loose, often punning depiction of whatever one of the other Beatles requests. If John says the song has a lot of punch, Ringo brings on a boxing kangaroo that knocks him for six. The viewers are urged to sing along with gusto, with lyrics helpfully provided on screen.

The series ran for three seasons from 1965-67, showcasing the suited, family-friendly Fabs, an image the band had already outgrown when the first series aired. Yet the final episodes dared to dip into post-moptop experimentalism, featuring John's trippy, anarchic *Tomorrow Never Knows*. The band fall down a well in an ancient stone circle, emerging in a Mesoamerican 'inner world' to perform the track for its stereotypical natives. It was a far cry from typical Saturday morning fare. After all, how often did Yogi Bear urge young viewers to 'surrender to the void' while quoting from the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*?

Initially, The Beatles disliked the crudely animated cartoons, which didn't reach British audiences until 1976, when Granada became the first ITV region to air them. When the band discovered *Yellow Submarine* would also be produced by King Features, they only agreed because they believed it would fulfil their contract to make a third movie. Fortunately, this time the animation team wanted to create something more artistic and contemporary – while also steering away from a Disney-like approach, which, ironically, Paul had hoped for.

Over time, at least half the band softened their stance on the series. In 1972, John Lennon said he, 'got a blast' from watching the cartoons on US television. Decades later, in 1999, George said he'd, 'always kind of liked them' – they were so silly and bad they were good, and the passage of time had made them more fun.



Lance Percival provided the voices of Paul and Ringo



# EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

**I**magine turning up to Saturday Morning pictures at your local cinema only to find comedy legends Margaret Rutherford and Alastair Sim in the front row. The pair were probably watching their latest film, *The Happiest Days of Your Life* (1950) in which they were hilariously pitted against one another as rival headteachers forced to share a school.

Locked in conflict, it seems the antagonism wasn't just for the cameras. 'I found doing the film a bit tiresome,' said Rutherford. 'Film actors are, by nature, more complicated than stage actors. Mr Sim is a brilliant actor but most competitive.'

Despite the friction, the pair had a lot in common. Both had taught elocution and came to acting comparatively late. Sim made his stage debut aged 30, while Rutherford made her first film at 44. Both were exceptional character actors and at the height of their fame at the same time. He made 61 films between 1935 and 1976, while she made 59 between 1936 and 1970. They only appeared together twice on screen – their second pairing was *Innocents in Paris* (1953).

The film also features Richard Wattis and Joyce Grenfell in roles that are strikingly similar to those they play in another school-based comedy, *The Belles of St Trinian's* (1954), where the headmistress is none other than Alastair Sim.







**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

Alec Guinness's performance in *The Ladykillers* (1955) was inspired by Sim in *Dulcimer Street* (1948) – to the extent that many people mistakenly believe Alastair played Professor Marcus.



**RETRO**

*Behind the lens*

ANAVISION

# Luck and ambition

Pioneering ad man, maverick filmmaker, caustic commentator on the British film industry... Steve Green checks out the visionary career of director Alan Parker



## DID YOU KNOW?

Alan Parker wrote several songs for Bugsy Malone, but his partners decided to instead hire actor-composer Paul Williams, fresh from Phantom of the Paradise (1974), who also dubbed many of the young actors' singing voices.

**A**lan Parker's standard self-deprecating response when asked to explain the secret of his success was, 'I'm just a yobbo who got lucky.' He was part of an extraordinarily imaginative new wave of London-based advertising agency creatives in the early Seventies, before becoming one of the home-grown movie directors who prompted Colin Welland's famous rallying cry at the 1982 Oscars, 'The British are coming!'

Born into a working-class Islington family in 1944, Alan was academically driven but harboured no artistic aspirations other than an interest in photography. Ray Connolly, whose screenplay for *That'll Be the Day* (1973) is thematically echoed in Alan's 1991 film *The Commitments*, told the *Observer* in 1982 that growing up on a council estate ensured that the filmmaker remained 'almost defiantly working-class in attitudes'. 'I'm a pretty up front character; outspoken, vulnerable, volatile', Alan told Jonathan Hacker and David Price during an interview for their study *Take 10: Contemporary British Film Directors* (1991). 'Sometimes I wish I could be more guarded, but it's not my nature.'

After leaving school aged 18, Alan joined an advertising agency in Fleet Street, where, after a brief period languishing in the mailroom, he talked himself into a junior copywriting post that saw him script more than 300 ads in his first

year – 'Most of them were not very good,' he recalled in an essay for the film festival, Camerimage, 'but I was nothing but industrious'.

After a brief interlude in the London branch of a major American agency run by a 'New York thug' given to hurling coffee cups at office walls, Alan's much-vaunted good luck led him to leading agency Collett Dickenson Pearce (CDP), 'a wonderful, creative environment', where his colleagues initially included David Puttnam and Charles Saatchi. 'Commercials were in their infancy and so I nervously asked if we could have a budget to experiment on 16mm film in the agency basement. The empty, cavernous space was as big as a car park – in fact it was a car park except that they had forgotten to build a ramp down to it, and so it became our own film studio.'

### A FISH TO WATER

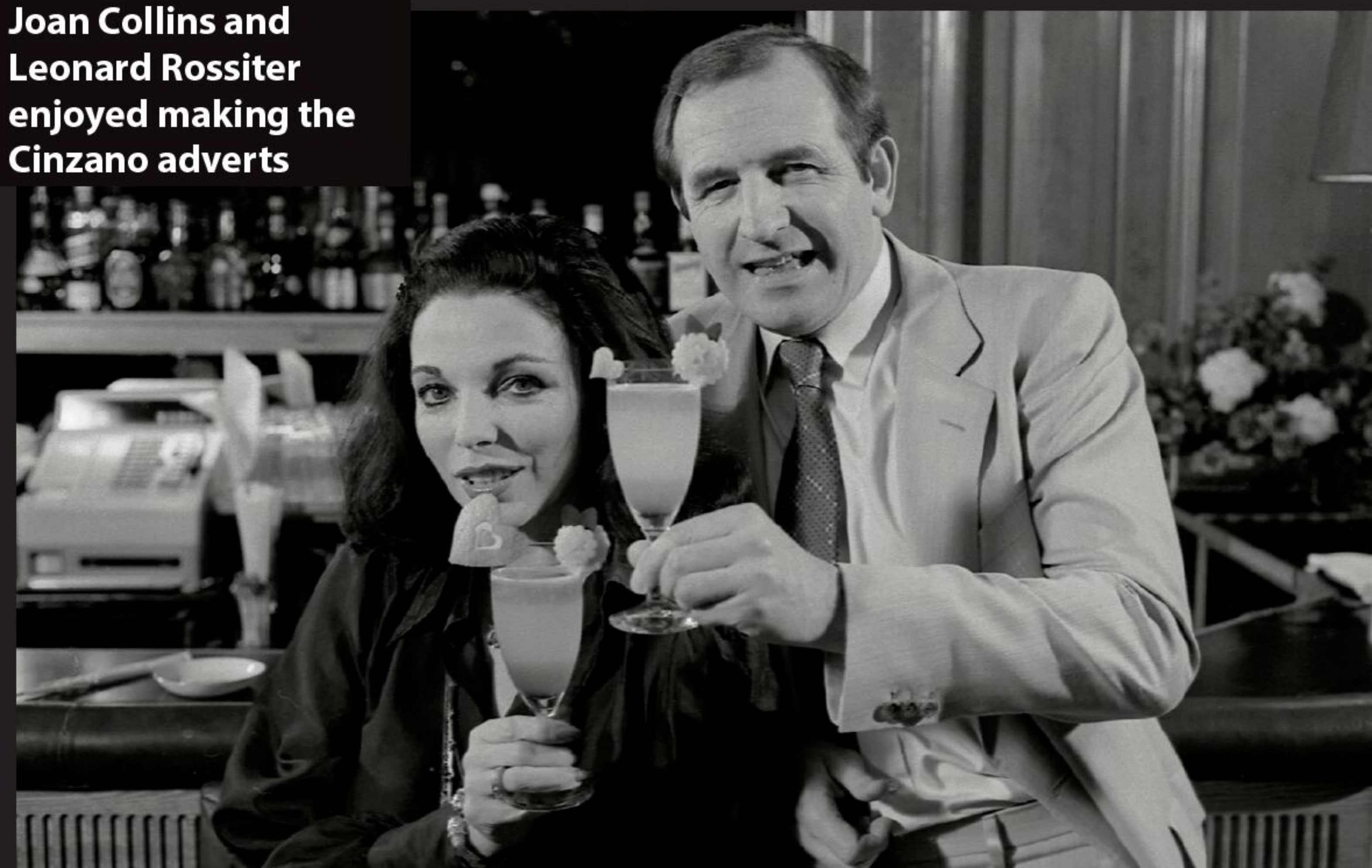
'Everyone seemed to know how to operate something except me. Because of my ineptness, it was suggested that, as I had written the scripts, I should be the one who said "Action" and "Cut" – after all, any fool could do that. And this I duly did. I've always said that directing is a crash course in megalomania and so I rather took to my new job. From that moment on, I was hooked.'

The turning point in Alan's eventual transition from ad man to filmmaker came in 1970. First, he was contacted by David Puttnam (who'd left to set up ➔

Bugsy Malone was Scott Baio's film debut, but co-star Jodie Foster already had 11 years in the limelight



Joan Collins and Leonard Rossiter enjoyed making the Cinzano adverts





as a photographer's agent) and persuaded to produce his first full-length screenplay. The result was *Melody* (1971), a romantic comedy set in a London comprehensive and reuniting the stars of *Oliver* (1968), Jack Wild and Mark Lester. Directed by Waris Hussein, arguably best known these days for his work in 1963 on the first Doctor Who serial, the film incorporated seven songs from the Bee Gees library (including the 1969 release *Melody Fair*, which provided the film's title). Eager to broaden his skill set, Alan grabbed the opportunity for some uncredited direction with the second unit, including a montage of sports day activities.

## EXPANDING HORIZONS

In October of that same year – with CDP's encouragement and partial financing – he founded the Alan Parker Film Company with agency colleague Alan Marshall ('a gruff North Londoner, he had a sparse, colourful vocabulary, but a highly sophisticated, innate understanding of film, from which everyone benefited, not least of all myself'). Over the next six years, this acclaimed production house would create an estimated 600 commercials, ranging from a pastiche of *Zulu* (1964) in which besieged soldiers are persuaded to try Silk Cut cigarettes, to a much beloved series of 10 ads for Cinzano vermouth (1978-83) featuring Joan Collins as the ill-fated paramour of Leonard



Music features heavily in many of Parker's films whether in *Fame* (above) or *The Commitments* (right)

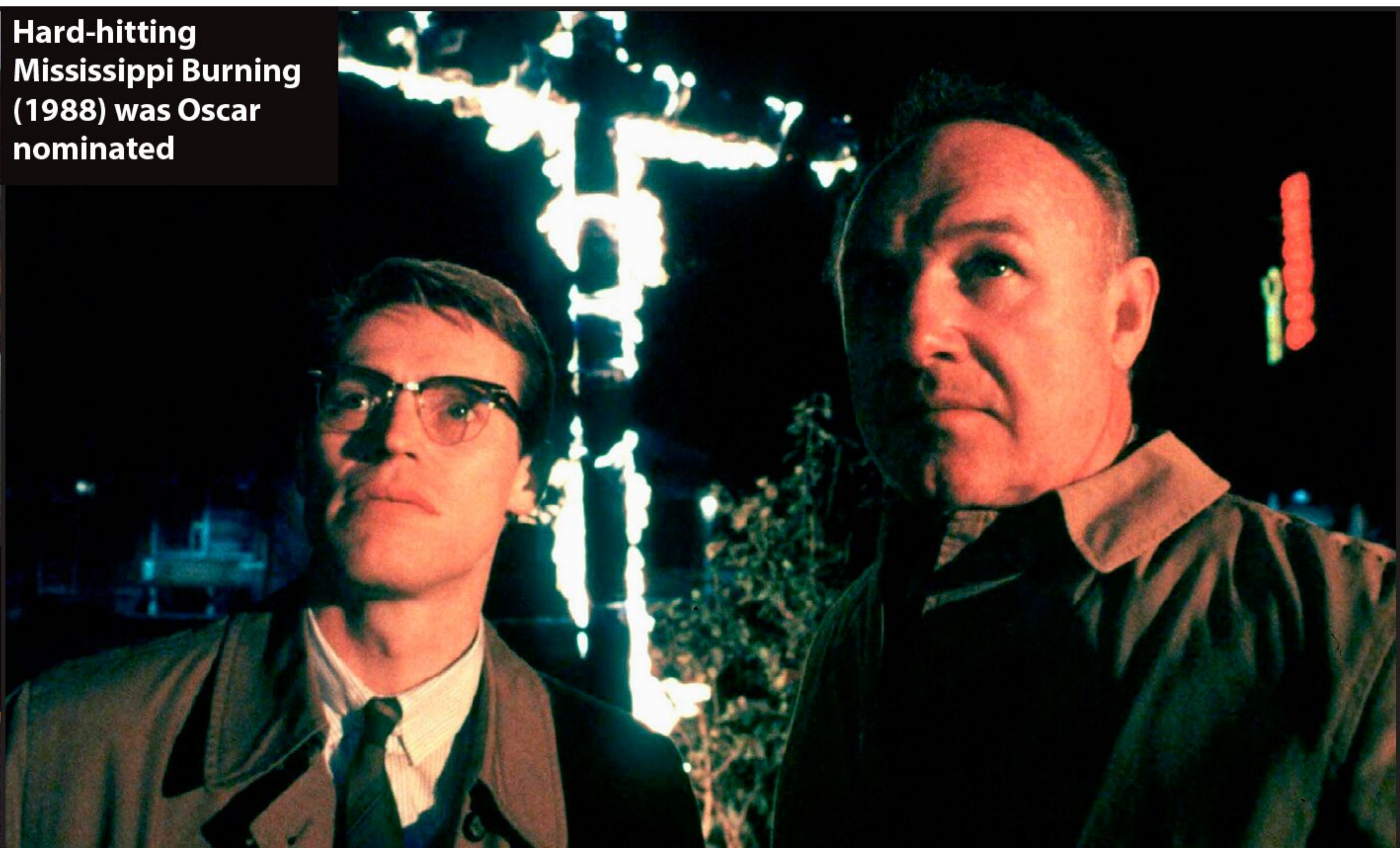
Rossiter, who reportedly suggested Alan revive an old music hall gag which continually had his co-star reaching for a towel.

'As our company became more successful,' Alan told *Camerimage*, 'we were shooting a new commercial every week, sometimes two a week. It became a wonderful film school for me as I learned my craft, shot by shot, lens by lens, week in and week out.'

Meanwhile, the seeds were being sown for Alan's move to the big screen, even if it would offer a surprisingly low viewpoint. He revealed the origins of *Bugsy Malone* (1976) for its 2003 release on DVD: 'In 1974 I had four small children and to keep them occupied on long (and mostly boring) car journeys, I would invent a story for them. It was a world of gangsters and showgirls set in New York City, a



Parker was no stranger to superstars, seen here with Madonna on the set of *Evita* in 1996



Hard-hitting *Mississippi Burning* (1988) was Oscar nominated





long time ago, and a long way from where we lived. On my eldest son Alex's insistence, it was peopled with kids, just like the four of them sitting in the back of the car.'

### GROWING BELIEF

Having now directed three short dramas and a Jack Rosenthal play for the BBC, Alan's confidence in tackling a feature film increased, although he and Alan Marshall failed to hook either Rank or EMI, the UK's main sources of film finance at that time, with their sales pitch, "It's a fusion of two genres – the Hollywood musical and the gangster film," I would enthuse. "Oh [cough], and it will have a cast entirely of kids, average age 12." Needless to say, we were always politely shown the door.'

Fortunately, their ongoing ad revenue underwrote a year's pre-production, then David Puttnam brought his talents to the game. A trip to Los Angeles resulted

in a crucial US distribution deal with Paramount and a meeting with Jodie Foster, only 12 but already an industry veteran, 'She thought it sounded like fun to be surrounded by kids instead of adults for once. But at the time she was a tad more excited about her next job, playing a hooker with De Niro in Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*.'

Ironically, both of Miss Foster's performances ended up in competition at the 1976 Cannes Film Festival, although Puttnam told the *Guardian* in 2007 he 'had to fight tooth and nail' to ensure *Bugsy Malone* became the official British entry. His perseverance paid off, 'the audience went berserk,' he revealed. Alan was carried out of the cinema shoulder high.

The movie's success sparked an exodus of UK ad men to Hollywood – Alan's chief competitor Ridley Scott (*Alien*, 1979; *Blade Runner*, 1982), his brother Tony

(*Top Gun*, 1986), Hugh Hudson (*Chariots of Fire*, 1981), Adrian Lyne (*Flashdance*, 1983) – and led, several months later, to Alan's next project with Puttnam, the violent prison drama *Midnight Express* (1978). Despite allegations of anti-Turkish racism, the film proved his career breakthrough, grossing more than \$40 million on a \$2.8 million budget and earning Oscars for screenwriter Oliver Stone and composer Giorgio Moroder (Alan had to be content with a best director nomination, although he'd picked up a BAFTA two weeks earlier).

### AVOIDING PIGEONHOLES

During the subsequent quarter-century, Alan produced a dozen dramas and one documentary, and pretty much all they had in common was how little they shared in subject matter. From a marital crisis (*Shoot the Moon*, 1982) to supernatural horror (*Angel Heart*, 1987), wartime racism (*Come See the Paradise*, 1990) to grim poverty (*Angela's Ashes*, 1999), historical satire (*The Road to Wellville*, 1994) to moral dilemma (*The Life of David Gale*, 2003; Alan's final film), he seemed determined never to repeat himself, besides the constant desire to shine a spotlight upon the core humanity of his protagonists.

'I've never understood the philosophy that a director should make 20 versions of the same film throughout his career,' he told Hacker and Price. 'But, every country I go to, and every journalist or critic I talk to, seems to have a different theory on the thematic constancy of my films.'

'I never look at different stories and consciously think of thematic continuity. In the end it can only be subconscious. All I know is that when an idea or a book or a script comes along with the magic ingredient, you know it immediately.'

DID YOU  
KNOW?

Joan Collins said on her Instagram account that the Cinzano campaign with Leonard Rossiter was her favourite assignment – 'and the wettest'. Wetter than her iconic lily pond catfight with Linda Evans in a 1983 episode of *Dynasty*?





# Reel obsession

Ann Baxter from Sutton Coldfield shares the seven movies that she'll watch time and time again

**T**he first film I ever saw in a cinema was **TOMMY THE TOREADOR (1959)**

(1) starring British pop idol Tommy Steele. I was four years old and I went with my mother and her sister. It sparked in me a lifetime love of film and, of course, still brings back happy family memories.

My favourite Dickens adaptation for the big screen is the 1935 version of **DAVID COPPERFIELD (2)**, helped by marvellous performances especially WC Fields as the ever-optimistic Mr Micawber, Roland Young as an oily Uriah Heep and Basil Rathbone as the cruel Edward Murdstone.

I always associate 1949's **LITTLE WOMEN (3)** with Christmas as it often seemed to be on TV over the holiday period, but I'll happily watch it any time. Wonderful colour cinematography and heartwarming acting from Margaret O'Brien as the sweet but doomed Beth, and Elizabeth Taylor as snobbish Amy.

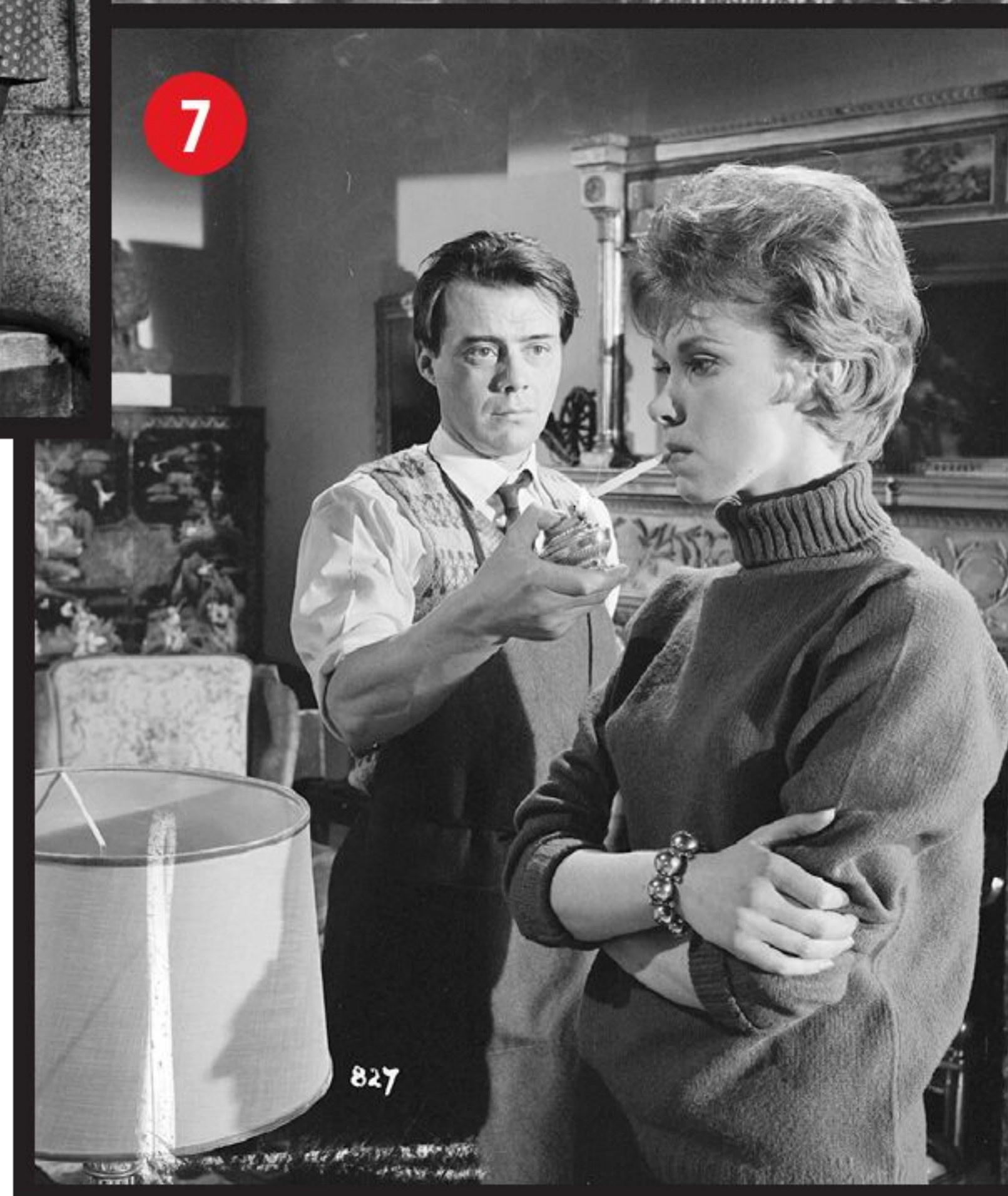
Michael Winner and Oliver Reed made several films together, the first was **THE SYSTEM (1964) (4)**. Oliver Reed is at his peak (a far cry from his later dishevelled

image). Filmed on location in Devon, the seaside setting enhances the story of young people looking for fun and excitement in their lives.

I had already seen the Play for Today version of **UP THE JUNCTION (1968) (5)**, which was considered quite shocking for the time, and this film pulls no punches either. Hylda Baker had already proved herself to be a fine character actor in Saturday Night & Sunday Morning and here she is just as effective. Look out too for Maureen Lipman in an early film role.

**SHAKESPEARE-WALLAH (1965) (6)** is a wonderful Merchant/Ivory film, set in India and concerning a travelling theatre company. The story is based loosely on the real company run by Felicity Kendal's father Geoffrey, and she, her sister Jennifer, and both parents feature. The film includes wonderful scenery and a handsome leading man, Shashi Kapoor, who was Felicity's brother-in-law. Look out for an early appearance of Madhur Jaffrey who later found fame teaching Indian Cooking on TV in the Eighties

Last but not least, my favourite film of all



time is **THE SERVANT (1963) (7)**. Each time I watch it I see something new. Who can fault the performances of Dirk Bogarde, Sarah Miles and James Fox but especially Wendy Craig in a role so far removed from her future sitcom work?

Tell us your magnificent seven films and why they mean so much to you. Contact details on page 3



**BUTTERFIELD 8 IS 65 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR. HOW MUCH DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THIS ROMANTIC DRAMA?**

**Are you a movie buff?**



- 1** Which of the lead actors won their first Oscar for the film?
- 2** Gloria falls in love with a married man, played by Laurence

- Harvey, but who plays his wife?
- 3** The film also stars which of Elizabeth Taylor's husbands as Gloria's friend

- Steve Carpenter?
- 4** In the opening scenes Gloria wakes up in Weston Liggett's apartment. What happens to upset her?

- 5** The film is based on a book of the same name – what is BUTterfield 8?
- 6** What becomes of Gloria at the end of the film?

## Who am I?

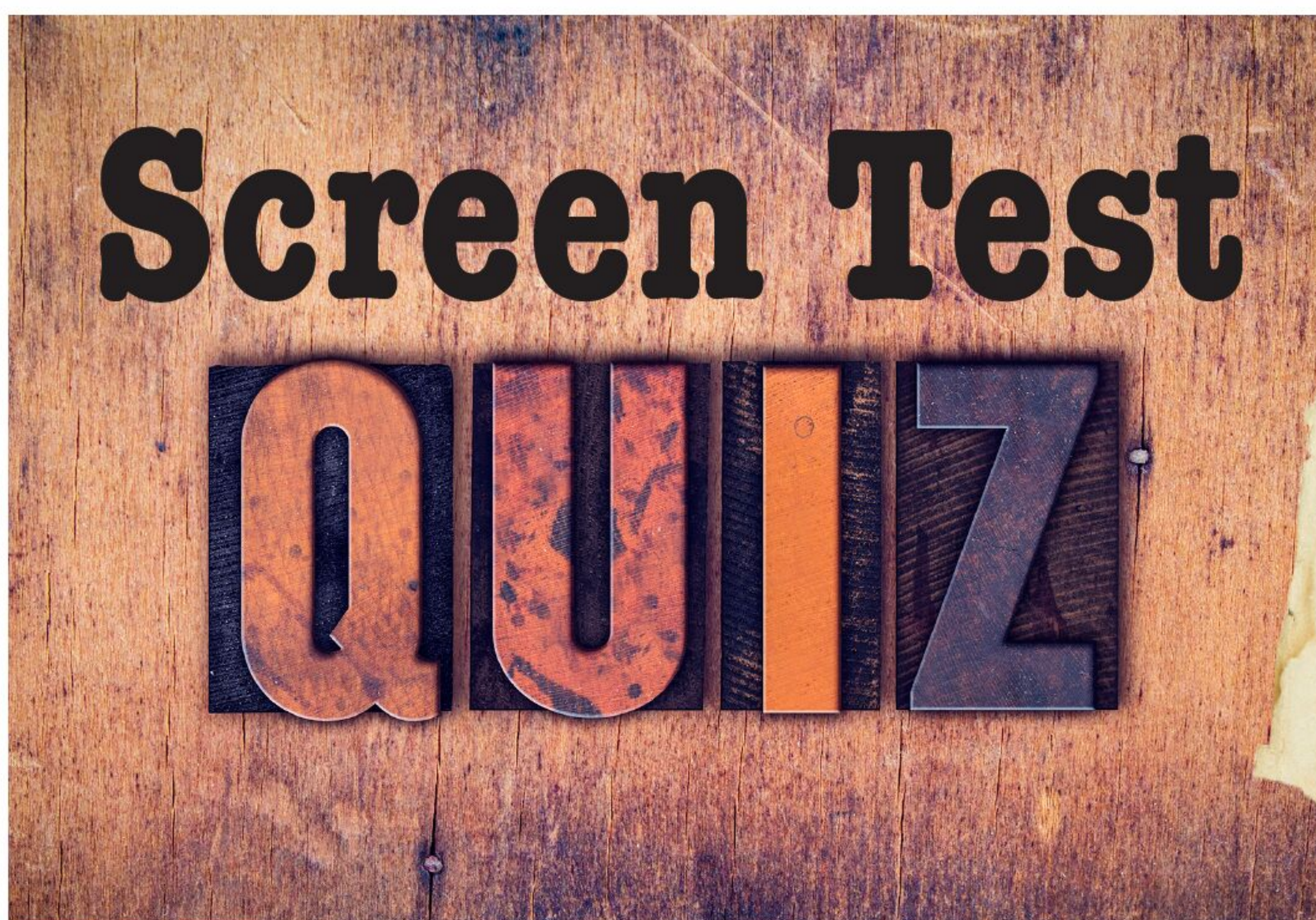
How many clues do you need to identify this star?

- 1** I was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana on 6 October 1908 and given the name Jane Alice Peters.
- 2** After being talent spotted in the street at the age of 12, I made my debut in A Perfect Crime (1921).
- 3** A car accident in 1926 left me needing plastic surgery for scars on the left side of my face and nearly put an end to my career.
- 4** I starred with William Powell in Man of the World (1931) and we married soon after.
- 5** My life was tragically cut short by a plane crash when I was just 33 years old.

## PIXELLATE

Can you identify the person listening so intently to Lew Ayres' banjo playing in Holiday (1938)?

Time to test your film knowledge.  
It may be just for fun but pride is at stake...



## IN A SPIN

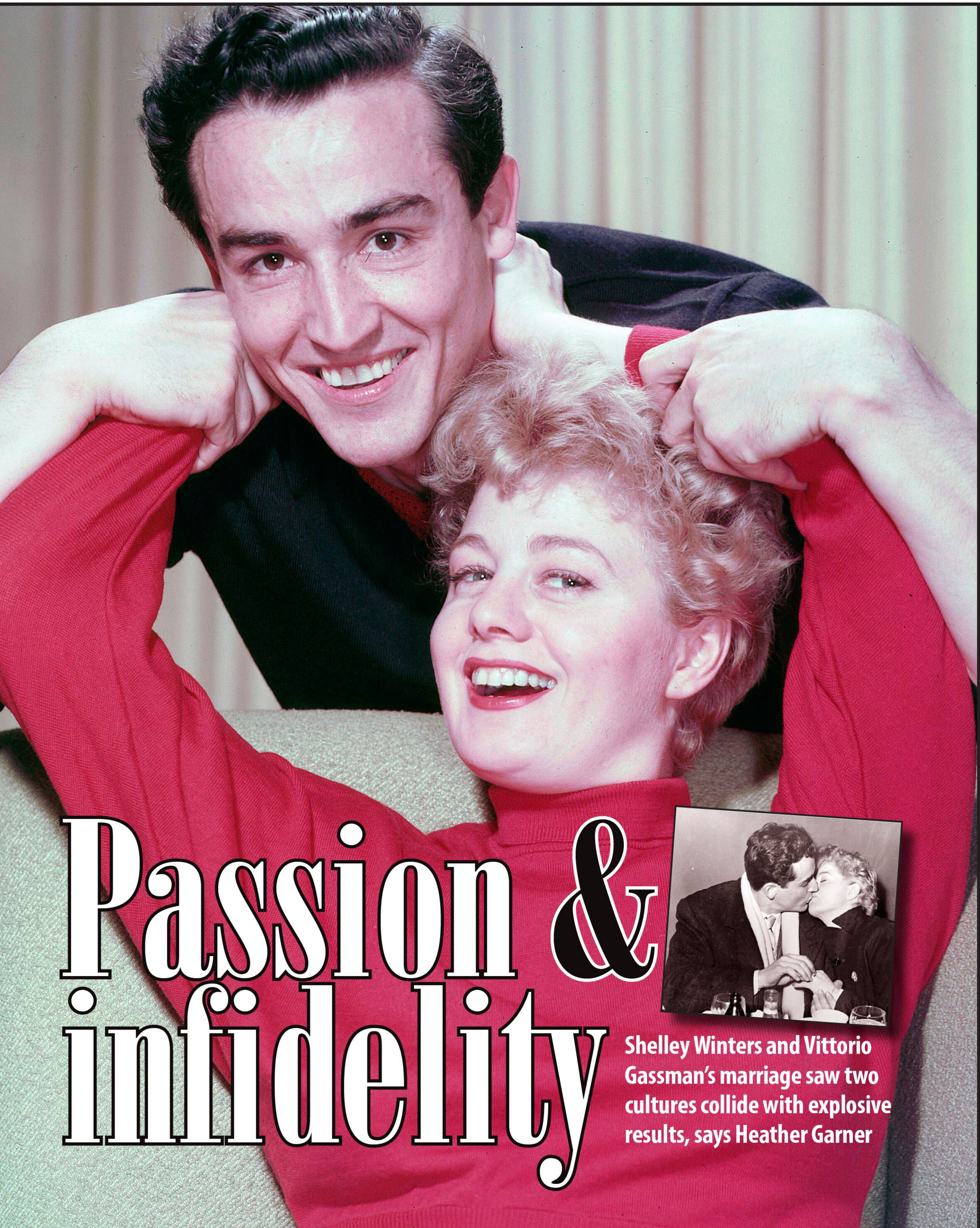
Can you unravel these anagrams to reveal the titles of five Gregory Peck films?

HOODY RAILMAN  
FACE PEAR  
HOTEL PIGPEN  
FOLIED VENDIBLE  
HEN FANG TO  
RAVENOUS



**ANSWERS:** Are you a movie buff? 1 Elizabeth Taylor as Gloria, 2 Dina Merrill, 3 Eddie Fisher, 4 She finds Liggett has left \$250 on the nightstand as if she's a call girl, 5 It's the telephone exchange on Manhattan's Upper East Side, 6 She is killed in a high-speed car chase.  
Who am I? Carole Lombard.  
In A Spin: Roman Holiday, Cape Fear, Night People, Beloved Infidel, The Guns of Navarone.  
Pixellate: Cary Grant.





# Passion & infidelity



Shelley Winters and Vittorio Gassman's marriage saw two cultures collide with explosive results, says Heather Garner



**I**n 1951 Shelley Winters was enjoying success as Universal Studios' resident bombshell, but her personal life was less than stellar. Her first marriage had fallen foul to her career and subsequent romances with co-stars had ended in disappointment.

The film *Behave Yourself!* (1951) partnered Shelley with close friend and sometime lover Farley Granger. As the couple were spending a lot of time together gossip columnists began to speculate that a cocktail ring Farley had gifted Shelley was an engagement ring. Tired of denying any impending nuptials she and Farley agreed to the studio's idea to capitalise on the supposed romance with a three-month publicity tour. After all, it was a chance to take a break from filming.

Once the pair arrived in Italy, Shelley was introduced to actor Vittorio Gassman and the pair fell instantly in love. Despite not being able to speak one another's language the couple were soon inseparable and Shelley moved into Vittorio's apartment saying, 'We couldn't see enough of each other.'

Their apparently idyllic life was abruptly interrupted when Shelley was called back to Hollywood by the studio's legal team, who pointedly reminded her filming was due to start on her next movie. Their budding romance was maintained through letters and long-distance calls until Vittorio could arrive in America. Shelley showed him around Hollywood hoping he would feel happy there and was delighted when he agreed a seven-year contract with MGM.

They married in Juarez in 1952, settled into their new home and welcomed a daughter, Vittoria, in February 1953. The baby was born prematurely while Vittorio was in Italy performing in *Hamlet* and it would be six weeks before he met his new daughter. Shelley later said, 'I can assure you that having a premature baby without your husband present is scary, painful and the loneliest thing in the world.'

On his return the pair resumed making movies, but Vittorio was unhappy, he disliked the fakeness of Hollywood and one night in a rage he told Shelley to, 'Pack up the baby. We're going home!' Dumbfounded, Shelley replied, 'We are home' and was shocked when Vittorio snapped back, 'What are you talking about? Rome is home!'

As soon as work on his current film completed Gassman returned to Italy and *Hamlet* leaving Shelley alone with their baby.

A few months later the couple were to star together in the film *Mambo* (1954), which was to be shot in Italy. It could have been the ideal opportunity for baby Vittoria to meet her Italian family, but an uneasy Shelley left her daughter in Hollywood and travelled alone.

## FIGHTS AND DIVORCE

On arrival Shelley was shocked to discover her husband was involved with Anna Maria Ferrero, the 16-year-old actress appearing as Ophelia to his *Hamlet*.

Hurt and humiliated she was forced to watch the pair on stage. After the performance Vittorio asked Shelley's opinion of his acting and, furious at her scathing reply, a fight broke out. 'Ladies of the theatre,' Shelley would later say, 'If your husband ever does *Hamlet*, whatever you think of it, you must say it's the best *Hamlet* you have ever seen. I tell you this with great authority because I almost lost an eye for my foolish truth.'

Aware now that her marriage was over, Shelley was dreading their upcoming film. Keen to save it the studio tried to mediate. Vittorio accused Shelley of overreacting to his affair while Shelley branded Vittorio an absent father. Though they tried to remain professional the press followed them relentlessly hoping for further fights. Shelley obliged, hurling a hand mirror at Vittorio's head on one occasion and another

time pushing him into a freezing Venice canal.

The press lapped it up, too, when both appeared in public with new partners – Shelley on the arm of French actor Raymond Pellegrin and Vittorio squiring his 16-year-old around town.

Despite her bravado Shelley was devastated at the failure of her marriage and was hospitalised after a breakdown. Once discharged she was desperate to quit the film but the studio refused. With no option she gritted her teeth, avoided Vittorio and with the film in the can, returned to Hollywood armed with divorce papers. Her Italian love story was officially over.

Shelley and Vittorio eventually managed to overcome their differences for the sake of their daughter, though it was several years before Vittoria was allowed to travel to Italy. When asked about their relationship Vittorio would later say, 'Shelley and I probably loved each other the most because we hated each other the most afterwards and tried to hurt each other in every way possible for a couple of years. But we have been good friends for many years now and have a grown-up beautiful and intelligent daughter.'

Shelley said, 'When I saw that interview, although it had been 25 years or so, the "Mambo sadness" overcame me again and I used up half a box of Kleenex. But not a full box'. She also recalled a friend saying, 'It's wonderful to have an Italian lover. Like good wine they don't travel well. But you mustn't marry them.' At the time Shelley felt it was sour grapes but would later admit it was worldly advice.

Vittoria was Shelley Winters' only child





## NEXT ISSUE



**Mommy dearest** We explore how Judy Garland's difficult relationship with her mother influenced how she raised her own children

**Future shocks** The making of the HG Wells' classic *The Time Machine*

**King of style** Discover how Elvis's choice of clothes reflect so much more than his fashion sense

**Hollywood's lost interviews** Katharine Hepburn shares her views on family, freedom and keeping fit

**Remembering top TV** Doctor Who's greatest foe, Cathy Come Home and *The Gnomes of Dulwich*

**On sale 13 March**

**Cut-out-and-keep posters to collect...**

## FREE CLASSIC POSTER

**C**ecil B DeMille's directorial swansong, *The Ten Commandments* (1956), was a remake of his 1923 silent film of the same name. The poster promises 'The greatest event in motion picture history!' and the scale of the production made it an epic like no other. Filmed partly on location in Egypt, it features one of the largest exterior sets ever created. Four screenwriters, three art directors, five costume designers, 15,000 animals and 14,000 extras worked on the film and, at the time of its release, it was the most expensive production ever made.

A great cast was assembled including Charlton Heston as Moses, Yul Brynner as Rameses II, and Anne Baxter as Nefretiri. DeMille also attracted Edward G Robinson, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Vincent Price, John Carradine, Judith Anderson and Yvonne De Carlo to the project. As Anne Baxter later recalled, 'There was only one DeMille, and there wasn't an actor in the world who didn't want to work for him just once, however short the salary or tall the corn.'

Despite the record-breaking production budget of \$13.27 million the 3hr 40min epic was a huge box office success. It was the highest-grossing film of 1956, and the second most successful film of the decade. By April 1957, the film was raking in an average of \$1 million per week. According to Guinness World Records it remains the eighth most successful film of all time (when the box office gross is adjusted for inflation).

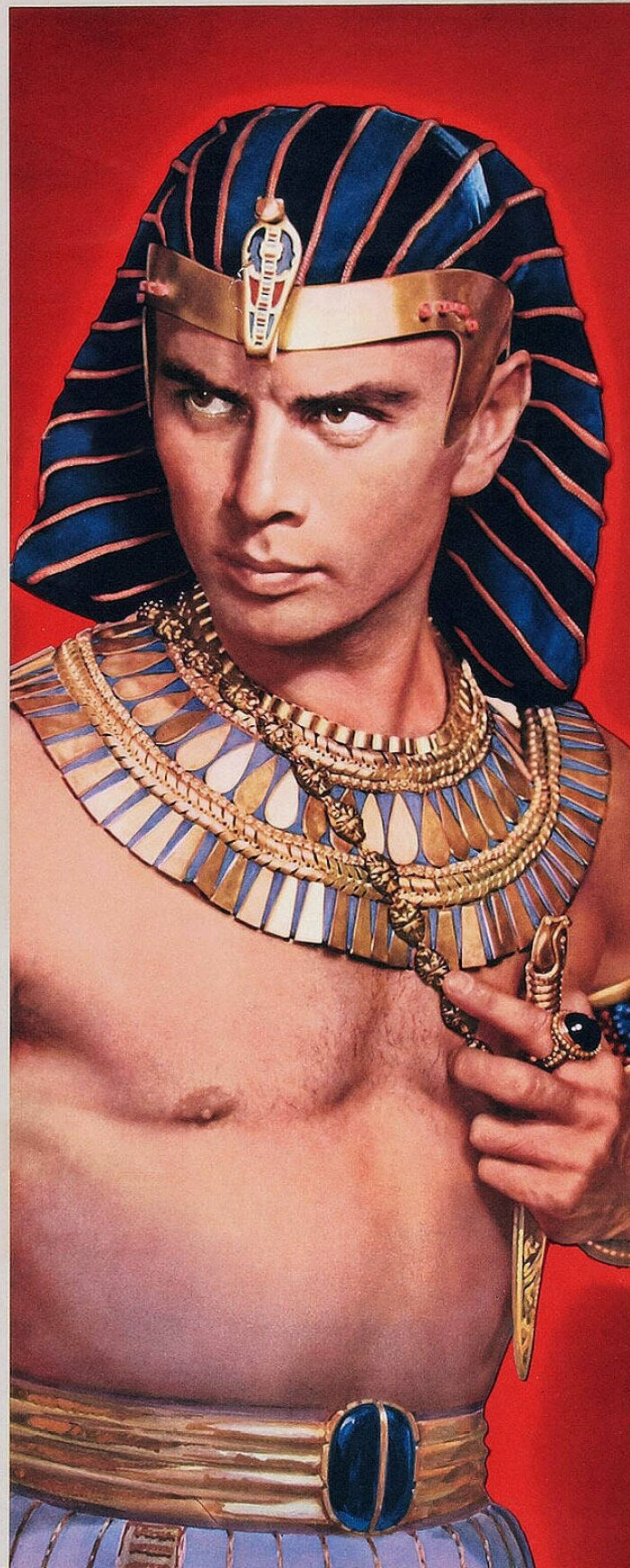
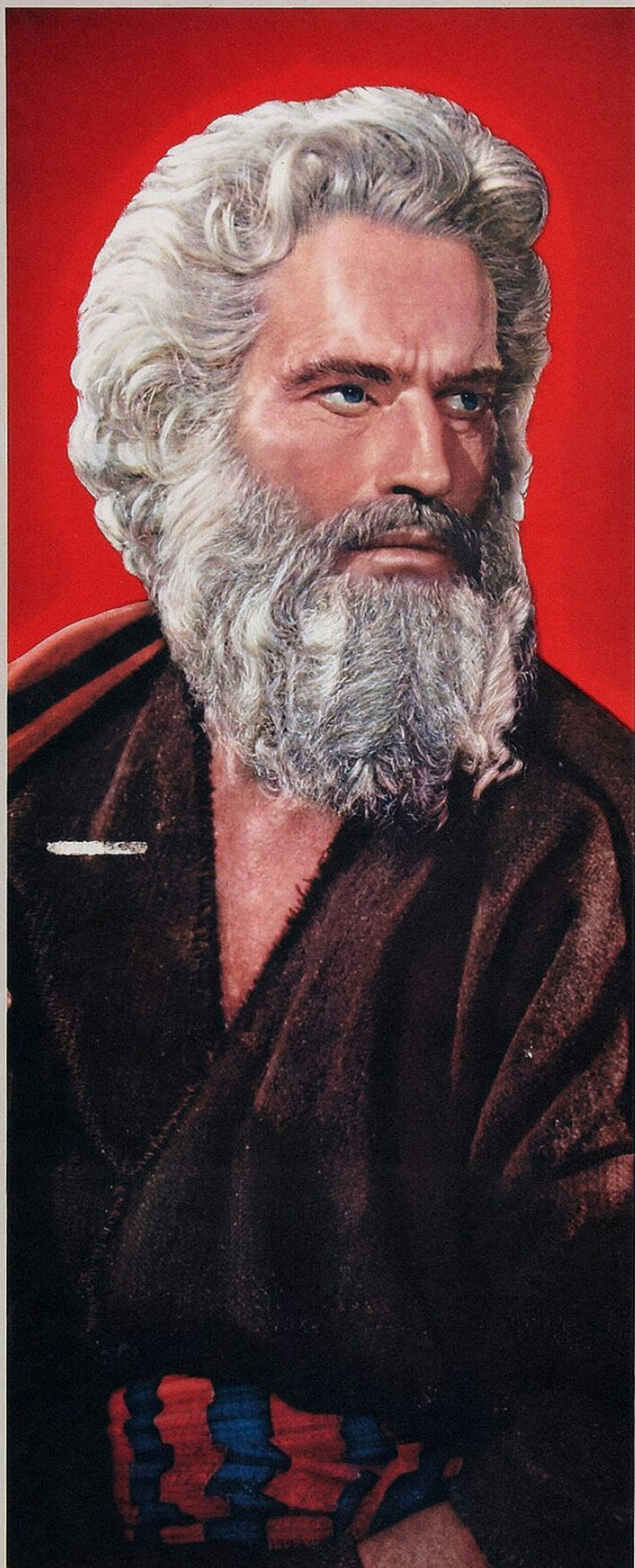
**DID YOU KNOW?** The Voice of God was not credited 'out of reverence' but it was later revealed to be Delos Jewkes, a bass singer in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.



The infant Moses, placed in a basket in the Nile, was played by Charlton Heston's three-month-old son Fraser



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