TRY ME!

EXCLUSIVE STAR CHATS

The lost interviews: Katharine Hepburn on her diet regime & daily ice-cold baths

Yours RETRO

ISSUE 85 // March 2025

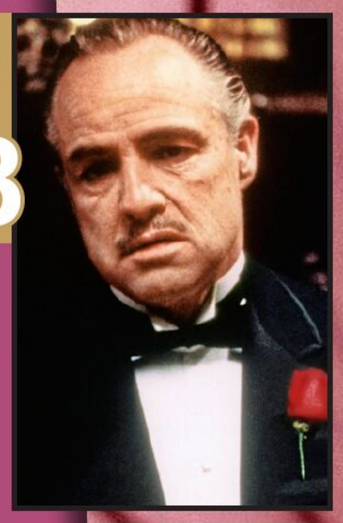
Celebrating the STARS we love

KING OF FASHION

How Elvis inspired a style revolution

HOLLYWOOD AND THE MOB

Studio heads and Mafia bosses locked in a power struggle



THE TIME MACHINE TURNS 65

MISHAPS & INJURIES ON THE SET OF A SCI-FI CLASSIC

JUDY GARLAND

The lasting legacy of a complex bond with her mother

£4.60

9 772397 611053 85

CLARK GABLE
Secret missions and a wartime bounty

THE CARPENTERS
Tragic Karen's struggle with celebrity

JODIE FOSTER
When Disney's girl shocked the world

Charlie Drake: The stunt that almost ended his career

Yours RETRO Issue 85

contents

On the cover

06 Judy Garland had a complex relationship with her mother, but did her lost childhood make her a better mum to her own children?

24 The King of rock 'n' roll inspired a style revolution.

36 Exclusive 'lost' interview. Katharine Hepburn talks about family, fitness and the benefits of being singleminded.

40 Mishaps on the set of The Time Machine.

48 Hollywood and The Mob. How mafia bosses made movie moguls an offer they couldn't refuse.

52 The accident that almost cost Charlie Drake his career.

57 1975: Jodie Foster's scandalous year in film.

60 Fame's tragic effect on Karen Carpenter.

68 When Hitler went gunning for Clark Gable.

NOW SHOWING EVERY 4 WEEKS!

Book your front row seat… next on sale 10 April 2025

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE
SEE PAGE 18

29

This issue

04 Seven scenes featuring cinema's cleverest cats.

12 News, views, reviews and your questions answered.

15 Master plan: what was the inspiration behind the Doctor's most fiendish foe?

20 Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck's enduring friendship.

23 Creating the looks for Garbo in Queen Christina.

29 The story behind Bruce Springsteen's masterpiece Born to Run.

32 Out of this world. How filmmakers transport us to other planets.

35 Grace Kelly's baby sparks celebration in Monaco.

39 When little engineers dreamed of Meccano sets.

46 The Gnomes of Dulwich. Terry Scott and Hugh Lloyd's strangest show.

54 How the Hollywood machine turned young starlets into beautiful screen goddesses.

62 What was the plot of surreal Japanese martial arts adventure Monkey?

65 Remembering comedy hero Roland Young.

66 Seven fast facts about cult classic The Wicker Man.

70 The impact of seminal drama Cathy Come Home.

72 When Chaplin met Garbo.

74 Unsung heroes of British cinema Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat.

78 Reel Obsession: One reader's favourite films.

79 Test your wits in our quiz.

80 The torrid love story of Sheila Hancock and John Thaw.

83 Free horror film poster.

62

Hello again...

Hollywood history is littered with stories of terrible mothers; pushy, neglectful, exploitative and sometimes downright abusive. The line between encouraging a child to realise their dreams and forcing them into a punishing and emotionally damaging regime has been crossed time and again. Judy Garland's story (p6) is a prime example. The little girl who loved to sing and dance ended up resenting her mother to such an extent that they became estranged. But she also used her own experience to influence the kind of mum she wanted to be to her own three children, determined to not repeat the same mistakes she ensured, despite her own difficulties, that they had a childhood filled with fun and laughter.

See you next issue

Sharon EDITOR

facebook.com/yoursretro
instagram.com/yours_retro
twitter.com/retroyours

RETRO MAGAZINE, BAUER MEDIA PUBLISHING UK,
THE LANTERN, 75 HAMPSTEAD ROAD, LONDON NW1 2PL
CALL: 01733 468000 EMAIL: YOURSRETRO@BAUERMEDIA.CO.UK

Editor: Sharon Reid, **Deputy Editor:** Christine Curtis,
Deputy Group Production Lead: Debbie Oliver,
Design: Christine Curtis,
Director of Brand & Content (Women's): Caroline Reid

Writers: Adam Smith, Allan Hunter, Brian J Robb, Chris Hallam, David Reid, Lorraine Gibson, Gary Horrocks, Jake Gwilliam, JD Savage, Jeff Billington, Lin Bensley, Douglas McPherson, Robert Ross, Roderick Mann, Sean Egan, Nick Smurthwaite, Steve O'Brien, Sharon Reid and Christine Curtis

Pictures: Alamy, BBC Archive, Imago, Getty Images, Shutterstock Editorial and Shutterstock Creative

Head of Marketing: Sarah Norman, **Product Marketing Manager:** Corey Hammond, **Marketing Executive:** Sophia Wright, **Newstrade Marketing Manager:** Karen Caruso, **Group Commercial Director:** Anu Short, **Commercial Director:** Sarah Bell, **Display Advertising:** Tori Lancaster, Catherine Whiteman, **Head of Agency sales:** Tom Meadowcroft, **Ad Production:** Zoe Bellamy, **Media Planner:** Andrea Herlingshaw, **Co-CEO UK Publishing:** Helen Morris & Steve Prentice, **Chief Financial Officer Bauer Magazine Media:** Lisa Hayden, **Publisher:** Tammi Townley **Chief Customer Officer:** Sam Gallimore, **Marketing Director:** Anne-Marie Lavan, **Print Production:** Richard Woolley, **Syndication:** syndication@bauermedia.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Visit www.greatmagazines.co.uk/yoursretro or call 01858 438884
BACK ISSUES: call 01858 438828 or email – bauer@subscription.co.uk

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

ipso. Regulated H Bauer Publishing is authorised and regulated by the FCA (Ref no 845898). VAT no 918 5617 01. Complaints: H Bauer is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (www.ipso.co.uk) and endeavours to respond to and resolve your concerns quickly. Our Editorial Complaints Policy (including full details of how to contact us about editorial complaints and IPSO's contact details) can be found at www.bauermediacomplaints.co.uk. No part of the magazine may be reproduced in any form in whole or in part, without the prior permission of H Bauer Publishing. All material published remains the copyright of H Bauer Publishing and we reserve the right to copy or edit any material submitted to the magazine without further consent. The submission of material (manuscripts or images etc) to H Bauer Publishing, whether unsolicited or requested, is taken as permission to publish that material in the magazine, on the associated website, any apps or social media pages affiliated to the magazine, and any editions of the magazine published by our licensees elsewhere in the world. By submitting any material to us you are confirming that the material is your own original work or that you have permission from the copyright owner to use the material and to authorise Bauer to use it as described in this paragraph. You also promise that you have permission from anyone featured or referred to in the submitted material to it being used by H Bauer Publishing. If H Bauer Publishing receives a claim from a copyright owner or a person featured in any material you have sent us, we will inform that person that you have granted us permission to use the relevant material and you will be responsible for paying any amounts due to the copyright owner or featured person and/or for reimbursing H Bauer Publishing for any losses it has suffered as a result. Please note, we accept no responsibility for unsolicited material which is lost or damaged in the post and we do not promise that we will be able to return any material. Finally, whilst we try to ensure accuracy of your material when we publish it, we cannot promise to do so. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss or damage, however caused, resulting from use of the material.

Seven scenes ...with cats

Whether they're used as a comic sidekick or an essential part of the plot, these feline stars are purr-fect partners

Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961)

Who could forget Cat (poor no-name slob)? In the closing scenes, to the strains of Moon River, the bedraggled ginger moggy is squashed in the midst of a rain-soaked embrace between Holly Golightly (Audrey Hepburn) and Paul (George Peppard).

RETRO says: Audrey described throwing the cat out of the cab as 'the most distasteful thing she ever had to do'.

You Only Live Twice (1967)

The actor playing Bond's nemesis Ernst Stavro Blofeld may have changed with each film, but whether it was Telly Savalas, Max Von Sydow or Donald Pleasance, the only thing the master criminal ever showed any real affection for was a white Persian cat.

RETRO says: In Cats and Dogs (2001) a white Persian, Mr Tinkles, runs his own SPECTRE-like organisation.

Alice in Wonderland (1951)

Disney's somewhat psychedelic interpretation of Lewis Carroll's Cheshire cat sported pink and purple stripes and yellow eyes. He was voiced by Sterling Holloway, who also voiced Winnie the Pooh, and Kaa the Snake in The Jungle Book (1967).

RETRO says: It wasn't Sterling Holloway's first brush with Alice; he previously played a frog in the 1933 film adaptation.

That Darn Cat! (1965)

A kidnapped woman (Grayson Hall) enlists the help of sassy Siamese, DC (short for Darn Cat), to send an SOS. The cat's owner, teenager Patti Randall (Hayley Mills) contacts FBI man Zeke Kelso (Dean Jones) to convince him to investigate.

RETRO says: You may recognise Syn (the cat actor) who previously starred as Tao in Disney's The Incredible Journey (1963).

Alien (1979)

Nostromo's crew wouldn't be complete without, Jones the orange tabby, who we see scurrying around the ship, helping provide Sigourney Weaver with lots of jump-scare moments.

RETRO says: In space, no one can hear you meow.

Bell Book and Candle (1958)

Beautiful modern-day witch Gillian (Kim Novak) falls in love with Shepherd (James Stewart) but it's her familiar, a Siamese called Pyewacket, who steals every scene. When casting the cat, producers stated they wanted a cat with 'an Ava Gardner personality'.

RETRO says: Controversially Siamese experts claimed the cat's voice had been dubbed with 'some raucous alley cat meows'.

The Third Man (1949)

A cat nestles on a shiny pair of brogues as Harry Lime (Orson Welles) is finally revealed. It's clear that at least three different cats were used and that cat continuity wasn't a priority.

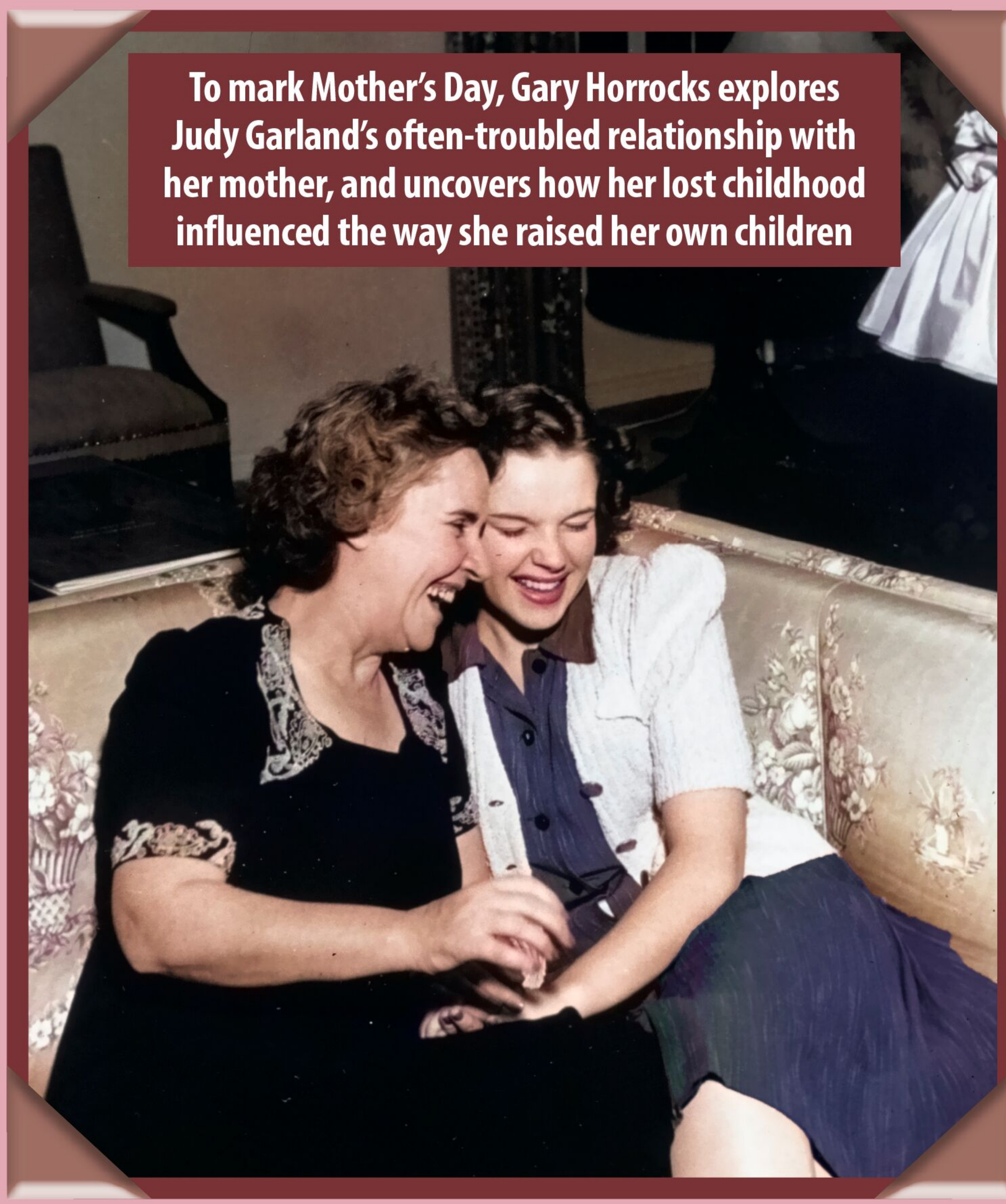
RETRO says: Director Carol Reed found fish oil on the shoes got the cat's attention.

DID YOU KNOW?

Judy's birth name, Frances Ethel is an amalgam of her parents' names. Had baby number three been a boy, he would have been called Frank Junior.

Mommy dearest

To mark Mother's Day, Gary Horrocks explores Judy Garland's often-troubled relationship with her mother, and uncovers how her lost childhood influenced the way she raised her own children



Sharing a joke with her mother, Ethel, in 1941

Frances Gumm's stage debut aged two wearing a dress made by Ethel

Judy Garland's mother, Ethel Gumm, played a fundamental role in her daughter's history that is both complex and controversial.

She is often portrayed as the archetypal pushy stage mother, projecting her ambitions for stardom onto her daughter and initiating the drug regime that eventually killed her. In a 1967 interview, Garland, frail and in ill health, perpetuated the myth and sealed Ethel's fate as a 'wicked' mother who would threaten her to 'get out and sing'.

Judy Garland's parents were small-time music hall artistes Frank Gumm and Ethel Milne. The couple married and moved to Grand Rapids, Minnesota, in 1914 where Frank managed the local theatre, and Ethel played the piano during the intermission. By the time Frances Ethel (nicknamed Baby Gumm) was born on 10 June 1922, her sisters Mary Jane (aka Suzanne) and Virginia (aka Jimmie) were seasoned pros, and Frances had an insatiable desire to sing and dance with them.

In December 1924, aged two and a half, Baby made her formal debut, singing Jingle Bells. She had to be carried off the stage after singing multiple renditions of the carol, despite her protestations that she wanted to 'sing more'.

'My mother was howling with laughter but kept on playing,' she later recalled. Baby adored the applause and the attention of the audience. 'I fell in love with the lights and the music.' Garland also recollected the white dress her mother had made for her debut.

A BUMPY BEGINNING

So began the musical career of The Gumm Sisters who went on to perform for a decade. Judy had fond memories of those vaudeville years, although life on the road was tough. The notion that she was forced into show business is grossly exaggerated. 'Mother and father would have had to tie me down, apply handcuffs and put a straitjacket on me to have kept me from becoming a performer.'

In 1926, the family was compelled to uproot to California, due to escalating rumours about Frank's homosexuality and infidelities. They eventually settled in Lancaster in 1927. The move profoundly affected them all. Frances was miserable and never understood the motivation for leaving Grand

What's in a name?

There have been numerous stories about how Judy Garland's name came about. Judy provides the definitive answer: 'At the Oriental Theatre we were billed as "The Glum sisters". We protested to the compère George Jessel. He said bluntly that Gumm wasn't any better than Glum. "They both rhyme with crumb and in this business that isn't so smart. Why don't you change it?" Mr Jessel suggested we call ourselves Garland after a friend of his, Robert Garland, who was a drama critic. Drama critics are important people, so we adopted the name.' For a while she was Frances Garland, then she chose the name Judy from a Hoagy Carmichael song. From that day onwards Judy would ignore anybody who persisted in calling her Baby.

The Gumm Sisters (*from left*) Frances, Virginia and Mary Jane in 1929

Rapids, oblivious to her parents' floundering marriage. Family life began to disintegrate. A humiliated but fiercely determined Ethel did everything she could to escape her husband, mentoring her daughters with singing and piano lessons, enrolling them into a prestigious LA dance school, and dragging them across the entertainment circuit in search of stardom. Frances missed her father terribly.

As The Gumm Sisters' career progressed, she shone, noted for her belting voice, instinctive musicality and ability to memorise a song. Garland recalled, 'I sang as loud then as I do now.' Early radio and movie shorts followed for the sisters, paving the way for the 'birth' of Judy Garland as a solo performer.

In later life, Judy's attitude to her mother was jaundiced after she was told that Ethel had wanted to abort her. In 1921, a pregnant Ethel didn't want a third child, largely due to the demise of her relationship with Frank. After failing to induce a miscarriage the couple explored an abortion but were warned by a family friend that the procedure was hazardous. Garland joked, 'She must have rolled down 19,000 flights of stairs.'

DADDY'S GIRL

Regardless of this inauspicious start, her parents loved her, and Judy had fond memories of her early years in Grand Rapids. A piano was the heart of the house, and it was a happy musical childhood where Ethel played, and everybody sang. 'I do remember it was terribly happy, and the only kind of normal, carefree time in my life. It was the only time I ever saw my mother and father happy. For such a mixed-up life later, it started out beautifully.' Snowball fights were prominent in her recollections, making angels in the snow, then going inside to drink warming chocolate malt.

Frances idolised her father, and he doted on her. 'I adored him, and he had a special kind of love for me as the youngest.' She recalled his rich baritone. He was 'a terribly handsome man, slender, sensitive'. He was born in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and later, tongue in cheek, Judy would say that she'd been born there too. When he suddenly died of meningitis in November 1935, only weeks after she'd signed her MGM contract, Judy was desolate. She spent the rest of her life trying to seek a benevolent, protective father figure in all her partners.

MGM had no time for her grief, and she was compelled to work. On top of movies, records and radio shows, she had to attend school, make countless personal appearances, support the war effort, spend endless hours in hair and make-up and pose for publicity photographs. Judy described herself as a 'wind-up toy', far removed from the real world.

Louis B Mayer and the studio became surrogate parents and ceded a portion of Judy's salary to her mother. She was paid to ensure that Judy behaved; policing the purgatory of a strict dietary regime, vetting boyfriends, and ➤

DID YOU KNOW?

David Rose's most famous composition was The Stripper. He also wrote music for the television series Little House on the Prairie. His first wife was comic actress and singer Martha Raye. She appeared on Judy's CBS TV show in 1964 where they duetted to a medley of Glenn Miller songs.

ensuring that she kept up the image of the all-American girl next door. Ethel answered Judy's fan mail, chaperoned her, and oversaw her daughter's every move. Over time, Ethel came to symbolise the paternalistic studio regime, and her complicity with and deference to Mayer catalysed growing resentment in Judy throughout the Forties.

One great betrayal was the pressure Ethel, Mayer and Judy's first husband, songwriter and composer David Rose, put on her to terminate a pregnancy. A child was out of the question. It would ruin her image and disrupt her career. This impenetrable alignment of mother, husband and studio left her stunned, resentful, isolated and feeling that nobody was fighting her corner. It killed the marriage (the couple divorced in 1944) and initiated the downward spiral for marriage number two to MGM director Vincente Minnelli when similar bitter feelings arose.

By the late Forties, as Judy's physical and mental health deteriorated, she was consumed by anger and estranged from her mother. Judy recalled that she'd wanted to hurt everybody around her who had dominated her and not allowed her to mature.

While some biographers lay the blame for Judy's addiction to amphetamines and barbiturates on her mother, it was the studio, adamant that she was 'camera

Mum and daughter with studio boss Louis B Mayer, who became a surrogate father to Judy

Little Liza Minnelli on the set of In the Good Old Summertime (1949)

thin', that prescribed the wonder drug Benzedrine. Nobody understood that it was addictive, nor appreciated the debilitating side effects: psychosis, paranoia, panic attacks and insomnia. To remedy the latter, she was prescribed the sedative Seconal. These drugs were prevalent in Hollywood, a staple of every bathroom cabinet. Even Judy herself once said, 'I wanted to be slim and lovely. I wanted to be calm and placid, and I wanted to sleep at night.' She once joked to her daughter, Liza Minnelli, that exploring a host's medicine cabinet was the best way to ascertain what kind of party it would be. Everybody was taking these pills. Judy's sister Virginia was sympathetic to Ethel, indicating that her mother wouldn't have dreamt of giving Judy medication if it would have harmed her. 'Nobody thought it was bad. No one knew you could get hooked.'

SHELTERED UPBRINGING

In his memoirs, husband number three, Sid Luft, recalled meeting Ethel in the early Fifties. 'I was genuinely happy to meet her. She was small, plump, with cute dancing eyes. Her voice, like Judy's, was a melodic singsong. "Do you think I could see Judy?" A familiar pixie quality. Inwardly my heart sank.' Sadly, Judy was adamant that she didn't want to see her mother.

In January 1953, within weeks of the birth of Judy's second daughter Lorna, and with no resolution of the rift, Ethel died from a heart attack, aged 59. She was found in a car park on her way to work at the Douglas Aircraft factory in Santa Monica. The press had a field day without really understanding the context of the mother and daughter relationship. Devastated and sedated, Judy flew out to California to oversee the funeral with her sisters. She felt exposed

Good times

Lorna Luft, in her 1998 autobiography, Me and My Shadows, shared fond recollections of family life in London in 1960. 'I used to love cuddling down on the couch under a quilt to watch TV with Mama and Joey and my dad Sid.' She recalled playing in Hyde Park, shopping in Harrods, pantomimes, fireworks on Bonfire Night, mama taking them to school, bangers and mash for lunch, 'with hot British mustard that made my nose run, and cake with runny custard for dessert. I could have stayed in England forever.' London was Judy's lucky city. 'London means a lot to me. I like the feel of the place. I love the tempo, the people, the way of life. I feel more relaxed here. I love the rain and the fog. California doesn't seem permanent any more – it's like a film set about to be sunk.'

Judy at home in London 1960, with Sid Luft, Lorna and Joey

and concerned for her public image, that the press would portray her as a 'cruel daughter'. Sid tried to placate the media.

Garland was determined to be a good mother to her children, Liza, Lorna and Joey. 'My family,' she said in 1960, 'are the gold at the end of the rainbow.' The children fondly remember her as mama; not an icon, not even Judy Garland. They recall a life of 'great highs and bad lows' but underpinned by immense love and affection. Judy protected them, encouraged them to make light of 'bad stuff'. She taught them to rise above the lurid headlines and misinformation in the media. That resilience stays with them today.

Judy didn't want her children to pursue careers in the harsh world of entertainment. 'I don't want to bring them up as performers. I want to bring them up as human beings. But because I make a living in the industry, I want them to know what it is I do.'

They were often in her audiences, appeared on her 1963 CBS Christmas TV show and were occasionally invited to perform with her in concerts. She never tried to dominate or manage them or force them down any career pathway. 'I think show business robs a youngster of too many things.' When Lorna and Liza demonstrated immense talent, she offered artistic guidance and musical advice, always stressing the importance of being a professional.

More than anything, Judy wanted to give them a childhood. She made a mean shepherd's pie, often destroying the kitchen in the process. The children recalled birthday parties, fairs, theatre visits and singalongs to their favourite musical, Oliver!. These experiences were the antithesis of Judy's young life. 'She was really funny, and she had such a great sense of humour, especially about herself,' remembered Lorna. 'The greatest times we ever had with Mama were spent laughing with her and having fun,' said Joey. Garland once reflected on what she'd missed, and the sacrifices she'd made. 'Being a child actress and being raised on a studio lot is not the easiest adjustment a young girl can make. You don't go to baseball games or junior proms or sorority initiations, but every success has its sacrifices, and these are the ones a very young girl must make if she wants a career at a very early age.'

SUSPICIOUS MIND

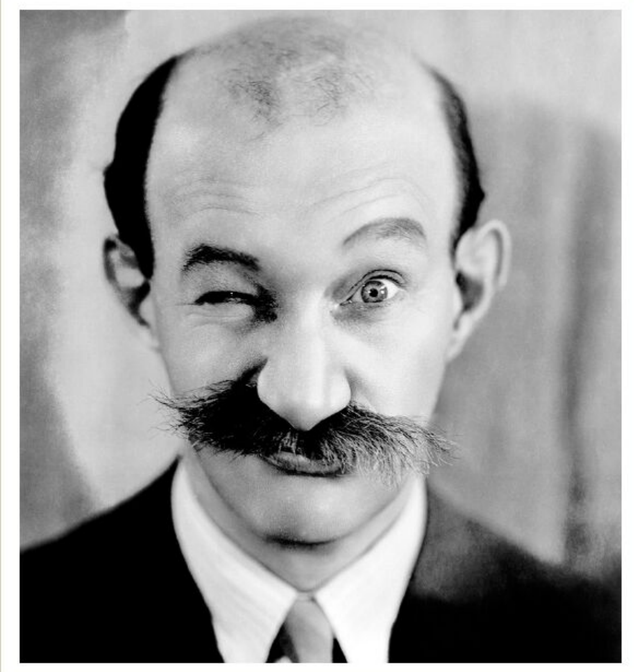
As time progresses, we all develop false memories and lose perspective. Judy's relationship with her mother had highs and lows, loves and hates. As her MGM career progressed and her health problems escalated, she felt abused by those closest to her, and scapegoated and demonised them all. She accused Ethel of spying on her as a teenager, exploiting and betraying her, selling her soul to a ruthless studio, though ironically, it was her father who played the piano at the audition that initiated Judy's first MGM contract. Having a mother and two husbands who were on the MGM payroll cannot have helped her state of mind.

The death of both parents was tragic on so many levels. Had Frank lived, the context of marital problems and the reasons for leaving her idyllic Grand Rapids could have been explained to Judy. It may also have helped to modify her view of her mother. Had Ethel lived, a rapprochement may have been achieved.

Judy naïvely once said that, had her family stayed in Minnesota, her life would have been so much happier. If she had, ours would have not. Her mother's determination and drive helped give us the legend we all revere today. In 1951, Judy said that 'Actors live in a queer sort of double world. Not many of us have the names or identities we were born with. I don't associate Frances Gumm with me – she's a girl I can read about the way other people do. I, Judy Garland, was born when I was 12 years old.'

I know the face...

JAMES FINLAYSON



Born: 27 August, 1887, Lambert near Falkirk, Scotland
Died: 9 October, 1953, Los Angeles, California
Screen debut: Oh, Baby! (1918)
Screen credits: 256
Best known for: Master of the furious double take, Scottish-born Finlayson was a frequent sparring partner for Laurel and Hardy, appearing in 33 of their films, such as Big Business (1929), Pardon Us (1931) and a standout performance as Mickey Finn in Way Out West (1937). As the silent slapstick era declined, Finlayson continued to secure bit parts with credits like 'cabby' or 'drunken sailor'. Illness forced retirement in 1951 and he died just two years later. One of Jimmy's screen mannerisms lives on though, his frequent exclamation of 'd'ohhhhh', inspired voice artist Dan Castellaneta to create Homer Simpson's famous catchphrase.

You've got MAIL

LETTERS+OPINIONS+DILEMMAS

HOW TO JOIN US IN THE RETRO CHAT...

By POST: Retro Magazine, Bauer Media Publishing UK, The Lantern, 75 Hampstead Road, London NW1 2PL

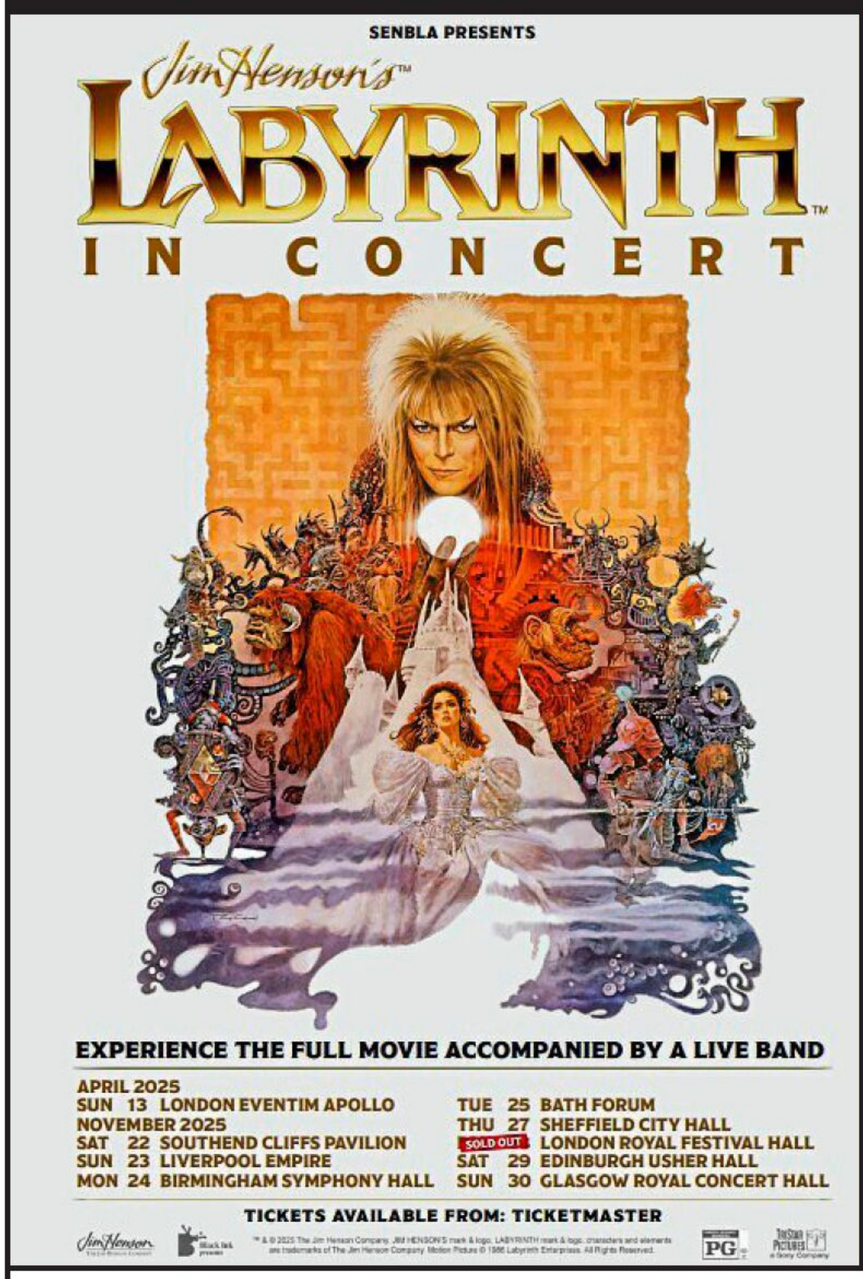
By EMAIL: Yoursretro@bauermedia.co.uk
By PHONE: 01733 468000

In the opening credits of the Sherlock Holmes TV series starring Jeremy Brett there is a group of boys looking in a shop window, one of whom sticks his tongue out as they run away. I've always wondered if any of the boys carried on acting or perhaps even became famous.
Sylvia Anderson
Retro *says: Can any readers help Sylvia identify the boys?*

Auction watch

The black leather motorcycle jacket worn by Olivia Newton-John in the final scenes of Grease (1978) sold at auction recently for $476,250 (£376,074). Proceeds from the sale were donated to her charity, the Olivia Newton-John Foundation.

CATCH IT NOW



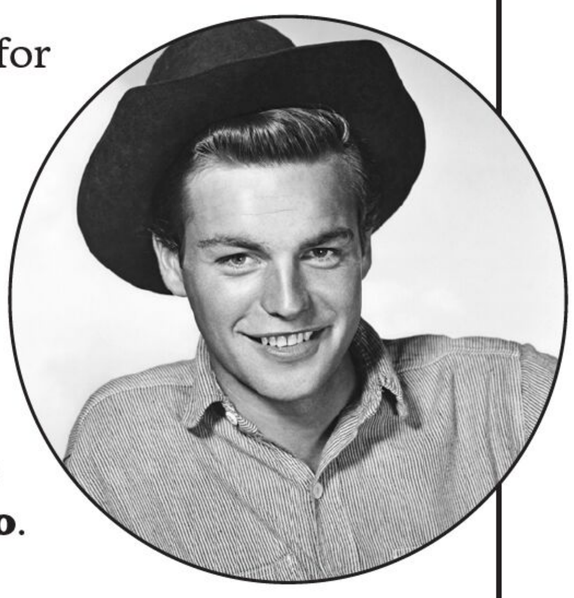
For the first time ever, fans of the musical fantasy film Labyrinth (1986) can be transported to Goblin City in an exciting fusion of film and live music on stage with Jim Henson's Labyrinth: In Concert.

The UK tour begins in London on 13 April, followed by Southend, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bath, Sheffield and Edinburgh, before finishing up at Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall on 30 November.

Labyrinth's loyal fans are invited to experience this epic movie, presented on a large HD cinema screen, accompanied by a live band performing the songs and score in sync with David Bowie's original vocals on songs including Magic Dance, Underground and As the World Falls Down.

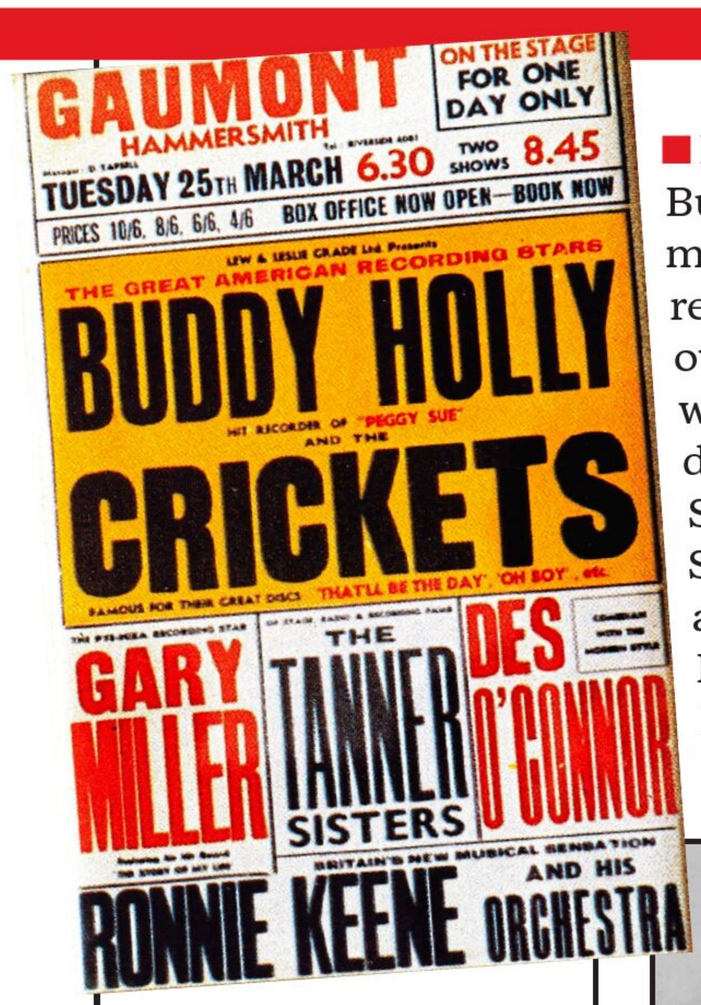
For more info and tickets visit ticketmaster.com

I have been such a huge fan of Robert Wagner for more than 40 years. I first watched him in the TV series Hart to Hart and since then I have collected and watched his vast catalogue of work. He was great in films such as The Pink Panther, The Mountain, All the Fine Young Cannibals, The Towering Inferno and Austin Powers and in TV series including It Takes a Thief and Two and a Half Men to name a few. As Hollywood royalty, he deserves a feature in **Retro**.
Sharon Matthews



45 years ago... 21 March 1980

Soap opera Dallas broadcast the ultimate season finale cliffhanger, leaving the nation on tenterhooks wondering who shot JR?



■ It was interesting to see the Buddy Holly tour poster in last month's issue. It inspired me to research what happened to the other acts mentioned. Gary Miller was a popular singer who also died tragically young in 1968, Stella Tanner of The Tanner Sisters went on to become a long-standing TV actress, while Ronnie Keene kept working and lived to be 91.

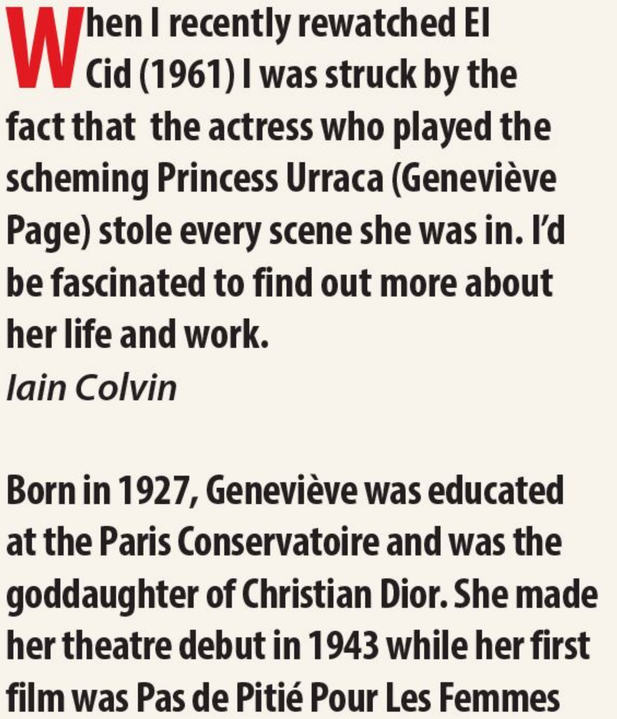
Mark Taha

■ One of **Retro**'s writers, JD Savage, has an answer to Sue Gray's query (printed in issue 84) asking for the name of a British children's TV drama from the Seventies. He believes Sue is thinking of Westway, a one-off, intelligent drama serial of seven episodes, first broadcast April-June 1976. Set in a Bristol commune, it followed three families and mixed self-sufficiency themes with a sub-plot about hidden treasure. As Sue rightly recalled, the cast included Simon Gipps-Kent. The other young commune dwellers were Dean Lawrence and Nigel Rhodes, best known as two of the Tomorrow People kids, and Sarah Sutton, later a Doctor Who companion.

■ Thank you for settling a very old argument for me. In 1968, I visited Universal Studios in Hollywood and was excited to meet Herman Munster, who was wandering around shaking hands with everyone. I was convinced that it was Fred Gwynne himself, while the friend I was with insisted that it was another actor made up to look the part. Having read in **Retro** that The Munsters was filmed between 1964 and 1966, it seems that she was right. After all these years I'm a little disappointed.

Maggie Cobbett

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?



When I recently rewatched El Cid (1961) I was struck by the fact that the actress who played the scheming Princess Urraca (Geneviève Page) stole every scene she was in. I'd be fascinated to find out more about her life and work.

Iain Colvin

Born in 1927, Geneviève was educated at the Paris Conservatoire and was the goddaughter of Christian Dior. She made her theatre debut in 1943 while her first film was Pas de Pitié Pour Les Femmes (1950). Once in Hollywood she starred opposite Robert Mitchum in Foreign Intrigue (1956), Dirk Bogarde in Song Without End (1960) and James Garner in Grand Prix (1966). She is perhaps best-known as the seductive Gabrielle Valadon in The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes (1970) and Madame Anais in Belle de Jour (1967). In later life she returned to the theatre. Geneviève was married for 52 years and had two children. She died in Paris on 14 February 2025 at the age of 97.

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.

84 years ago... 22 March 1941

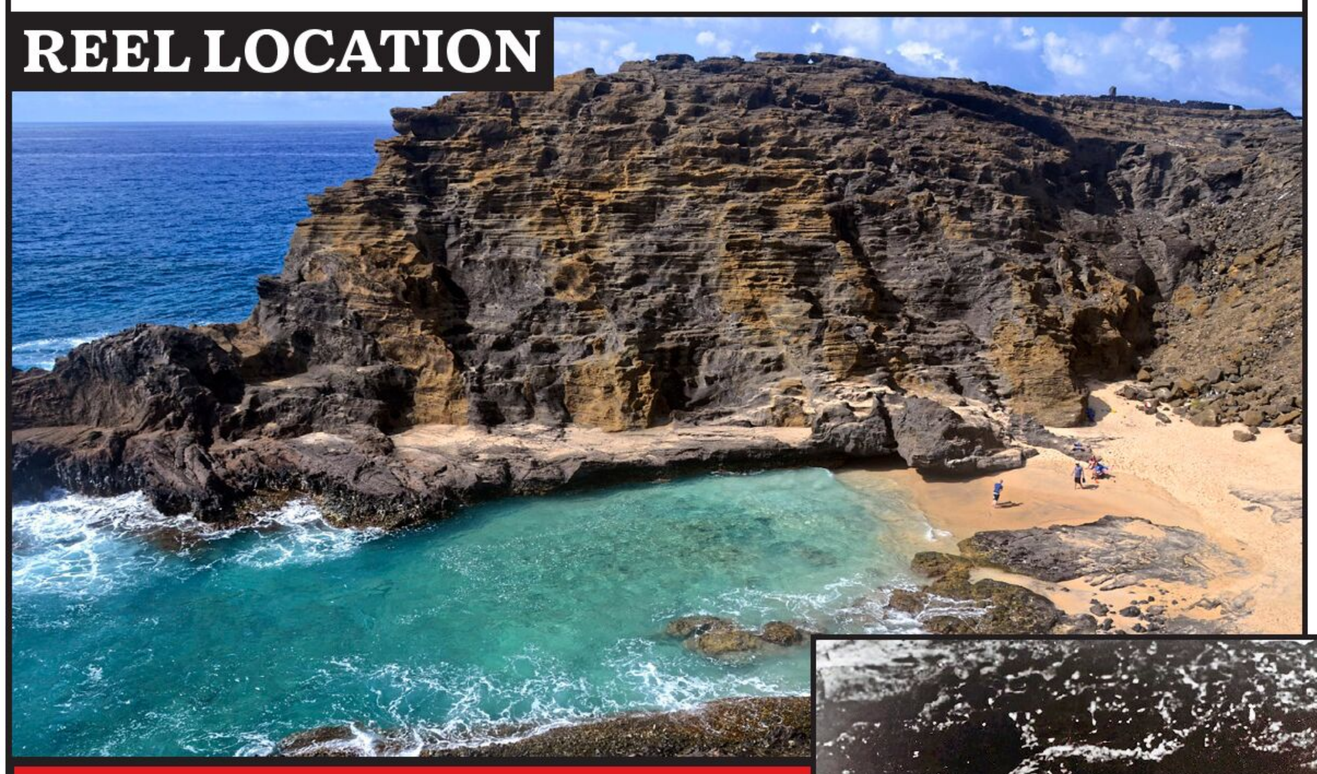
James Stewart was inducted into the US Army, becoming the first major American movie star to volunteer during the Second World War.

You've got MORE MAIL

■ What became of Gerald Harper. His film debut was in The Dam Busters (1955) and he had supporting roles in films such as The Admirable Crichton (1957) and A Night to Remember (1958) but he's perhaps best remembered for TV series Adam Adamant Lives! (1966-67) and Hadleigh (1969-76). After a remake of The Lady Vanishes (1979), he seemed to vanish from our screens. Is it true he became a radio disc jockey?
Nancy Rutherford

Retro says: *Voted actor of the year by Radio Times readers in 1969, Gerald was a popular face on the big and small screen. He did move into radio in the Seventies, presenting The Sunday Affair on Capital and in the Nineties moving to BBC Radio 2 to present Saturday Selection. He later returned to the stage, touring the UK in Agatha Christie's And Then There Were None in 2008.*

REEL LOCATION



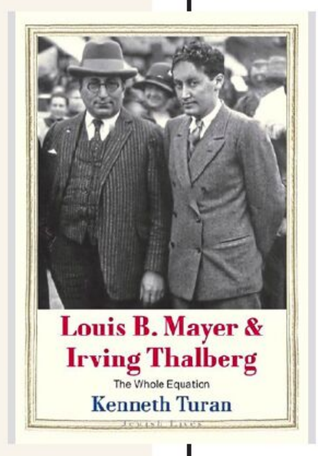
■ Not that I plan to recreate the scene, but please can you tell me where the beach embrace in From Here to Eternity (1953) was filmed?
Geraldine MacKay

Retro says: *The iconic scene that saw Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr frolicking in the waves was filmed at Halona Beach Cove, O'ahu, Hawaii. The passionate clinch set new records in time (three days), manpower (100 crew) and equipment used for a single movie love scene because director Fred Zinnemann wanted the incoming waves to break over the couple at the perfect moment.*

However, the Motion Picture Association deemed it too erotic and insisted four seconds be cut. Zinnemann later discovered that even more time had been lost when theatre projectionists snipped out single frames from the scene to keep as souvenirs.

OUT NOW.....

BUY THE BOOK

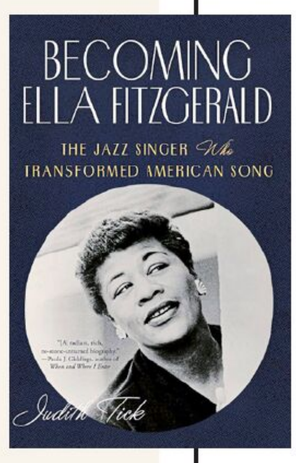


One was a tough junkman's son, the other a cosseted mama's boy but Louis B Mayer and Irving Thalberg shared an evangelical zeal for films. In The Whole Equation film critic Kenneth Turan examines their unlikely partnership and their role in movie history. RRP £16.99

WATCH ON BLU-RAY

Queen Bee sees domineering socialite Eva (Joan Crawford) and her alcoholic husband Avery (Barry Sullivan) trapped in a loveless marriage. When cousin Jennifer (Lucy Marlow) comes to stay, she is sucked into a dangerous whirlwind of lies and vengeance... Out Now. RRP £16.99

BUY THE BOOK

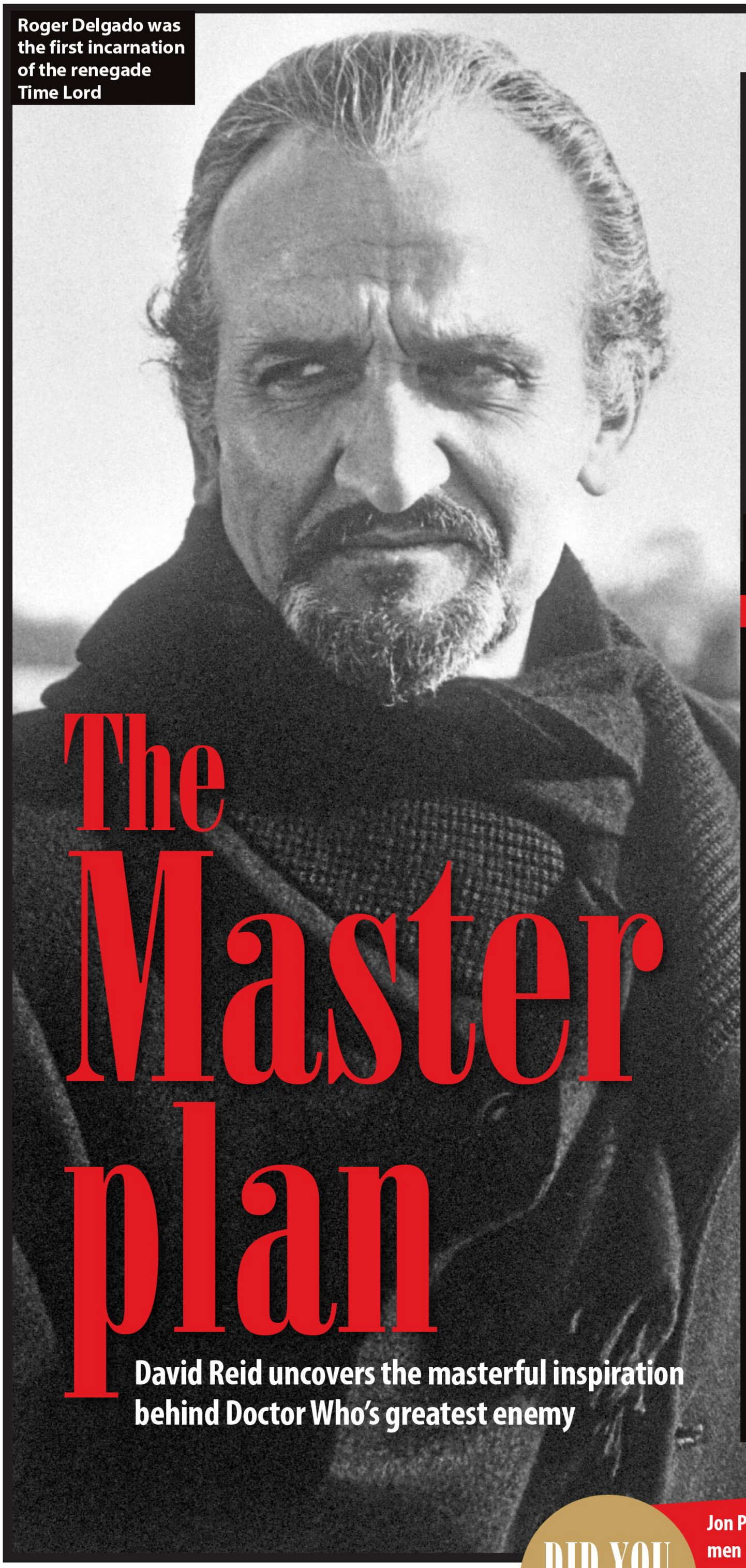


Charting one of the 20th Century's most astonishing voices, Becoming Ella Fitzgerald: The Jazz Singer Who Transformed American Song (WW Norton & Co) by music historian Judith Tick, draws on family interviews, newly available recordings and concert footage to show how Fitzgerald revolutionised US music. RRP £17.99

WATCH ON TV

Groundbreaking sitcom Soap is returning to British TV. Soap (1977-81) pushed the boundaries of TV comedy with its satirical take on the American soap opera format. It starred Richard Mulligan, Katherine Helmond, and Robert Guillaume, as well as Billy Crystal as Jodie Dallas, one of the first openly gay characters on TV. From 24 March at 10pm on Rewind TV

Roger Delgado was the first incarnation of the renegade Time Lord



The Master plan

David Reid uncovers the masterful inspiration behind Doctor Who's greatest enemy

Although enemies on screen Roger Delgado and Jon Pertwee were great friends

The third incarnation of Doctor Who had hit the ground running. Jon Pertwee's suave, action-hero take on The Doctor, combined with a new Earth-bound, Quatermass-meets-James-Bond format – and for the first time in colour – saw previously flagging ratings soar through 1970. That is until the excellent, but sprawlingly over-long seven-part season finale, Inferno, resulted in viewers losing interest and tuning out.

Producer Barry Letts and script editor Terrance Dicks realised they would have to re-energise the series a second time.

Throughout Pertwee's first season, The Doctor had worked as a scientific advisor for UNIT (the United Nations Intelligence Taskforce), reporting to Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney) after being exiled on Earth by his own race, the Time Lords. Letts surmised that, while the premise remained good,

DID YOU KNOW?

Jon Pertwee said Roger Delgado was, 'one of the bravest men I ever knew because he was basically cowardly. He was genuinely frightened of just about everything: water, heights…' Pertwee admired how he faced his fears and never let the audience see that he was terrified.

more variety was needed. He decided that The Doctor would begin to travel in space and time again, but also pondered how he could 'inject a note of difference into the rest? And more to the point, what could we come up with for our opening show that would catch the attention of the great British public?'

The answer came to Letts and Dicks remarkably quickly. Several people had likened the relationship between The Doctor and the Brigadier to Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, so they conceived a formidable new character as The Doctor's Moriarty; his intellectual equal but opposite – as evil as The Doctor is good. The Master would be of The Doctor's race, another renegade Time Lord, and Letts instantly knew who should play him: a frequent co-star and professional theatrical villain from Barry's earlier acting days, Roger Delgado.

A MENACING CHIN

Delgado was born in London in 1918 to a Belgian mother and Spanish father. He made his BBC debut in The Three Musketeers (1954) and quickly became known for playing scoundrels, appearing in many TV shows, notably including the duplicitous Spanish envoy Mendoza in popular ITC series Sir Francis Drake (1961-62).

He and Barry Letts had previously worked together as part of writer, director, producer and future BBC Head of Drama, Shaun Sutton's so-called 'Rep', a band of actors he used frequently that had also included second Doctor, Patrick Troughton.

Coincidentally, and unknown to Letts, Delgado and Pertwee had been close friends for many years, as Pertwee fondly recalled, 'Roger was one of my greatest friends ever – a modest, lovable man with a ready wit and a fine sense of humour.'

Delgado was delighted to be cast and later revealed, 'I love playing villains. I am chosen by directors to play wicked men because I have a beard, a menacing chin and piercing eyes. I was thrilled to be offered the part of The Master as I had tried three times to break into Doctor Who but the scope offered by the part was way above any other I had considered.'

The Master's debut was preceded by a striking Radio Times cover featuring an imposing close-up of Delgado, with The Doctor and Brigadier in the background. It was brilliant publicity, although Jon Pertwee was not impressed and complained, 'People keep asking me how I feel about Roger Delgado taking over as The Doctor.'

Season opener, Terror of the Autons, masterfully incorporates the new villain into a supercharged sequel to the previous year's Spearhead from Space, with the evil, plastic-animating Nestene hive mind and terrifying Auton dummies now collaborating with The Master. The four-part serial, which also introduced new companion Jo Grant (Katy Manning), showcases a compelling, almost telepathic chemistry between Pertwee and Delgado, who face off with a pitch-perfect mixture of amused contempt and grudging respect.

The Doctor's arch nemesis managed to show up, in league with various human and alien villains in every serial that series – including the classic horror-inflected The Daemons (1971).

Barry Letts continued to successfully apply his strategy of attention-grabbing openers over the next two seasons, first by reprising classic enemy the Daleks in The Day of the Daleks (1972) and then with the multi-Doctor 10th anniversary story, The Three Doctors (1973). However, The Master remained very popular, and Delgado reprised the character in a further three adventures before an unexpected real-life tragedy struck.

Anthony Ainley loved playing the part and even answered his phone by saying, 'This is The Master'

Michelle Gomez and John Simm both played The Master in 2017

During a break in the Doctor Who schedule, Roger had been contracted to appear in a film called Bell of Tibet, being made in Turkey. En route from the airport to the filming location his taxi driver decided to take a mountain road and, out of control after a near collision with another car, drove over a precipice. Roger was killed instantly. He was only 55 years old.

THE MASTER RETURNS

Just when it seemed that The Master had been respectfully retired for good after Roger Delgado's death, the character re-emerged, three years into Pertwee's successor, Tom Baker's tenure as the fourth Doctor. The Deadly Assassin (1976) features a heavily disfigured Master, played by Peter Pratt, an actor previously best known for comic roles in Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

The Master returned again, initially in a similarly unrecognisable form, in Baker's penultimate adventure, The Keeper of Traken (1981), portrayed first by veteran character actor Geoffrey Beevers, before 'merging' with the body of The Doctor's ally Consul Tremas (Anthony Ainley). Ainley continued to play The Master for the remainder of the series' original run, including in final serial, Survival (1989). He also reprised the role for the computer game, Destiny of the Doctors (1997).

Then American actor Eric Roberts and, for one short scene, Gordon Tipple, played The Master, alongside Paul McGann in the 1996 Doctor Who TV movie.

In the modern 21st Century revival era of Who, Derek Jacobi briefly undertook the part before regenerating into former Life on Mars (2006-07) star, John Simm during tenth Doctor, David Tennant's second season and Scottish actress Michelle Gomez became the first female incarnation (as Missy) of the character during Peter Capaldi's twelfth Doctor's run. Gomez and Simm memorably guest starred together in the two-part multi-Master story, World Enough and Time/The Doctor Falls (2017).

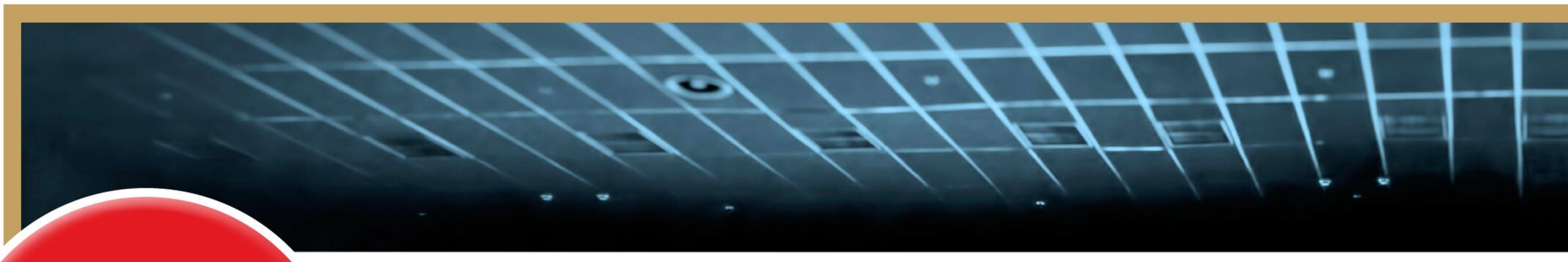
The Master's most recent incarnation was Stockport-born actor Sacha Dhawan who appeared in five episodes during thirteenth Doctor Jodie Whittaker's tenure between 2020 and 2022.

Anthony Ainley played the part with great theatrical flair for the longest time, and all the other protagonists, so far, have brought their own compelling slant to the character. But, from the moment he declaimed his menacing first line, 'I am usually referred to as The Master,' Roger Delgado set the scene and cemented his unsurpassable legacy as one of the greatest villains of all time and space.

Sacha Dhawan was the nemesis of Jodie Whittaker's Doctor

DID YOU KNOW?

In The Sea Devils (1972) The Doctor engages in a rare bout of physical combat – a sword fight with The Master. Pertwee recalled that Delgado was doubled in many of the shots by stunt man Derek Ware as he 'disliked all forms of physical violence'.



SAVE ON SHOP PRICES!

CELEBRATE THE STARS W WITH OUR SPECIAL OFFE

Subscribe to...

Yours RETRO

Escape the modern world and revisit the best from the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies. From the TV we loved to the stars we adored, Yours Retro is your monthly dose of everything nostalgic. Discover exclusive images, must-read features and jaw-dropping secrets.

Get 6 issues for £19.99* (including FREE UK delivery).

£25 every 6 months

£48.99 annual recurring

GUARANTEE YOUR PIECE OF HOLLYWOOD HISTORY

NEVER **miss an issue again! Yours Retro is highly sought after and often sells out in stores. A *SUBSCRIPTION* ensures every edition is delivered direct to your door, keeping your collection complete**

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

BY PHONE

01858 438884

(quote MD25)

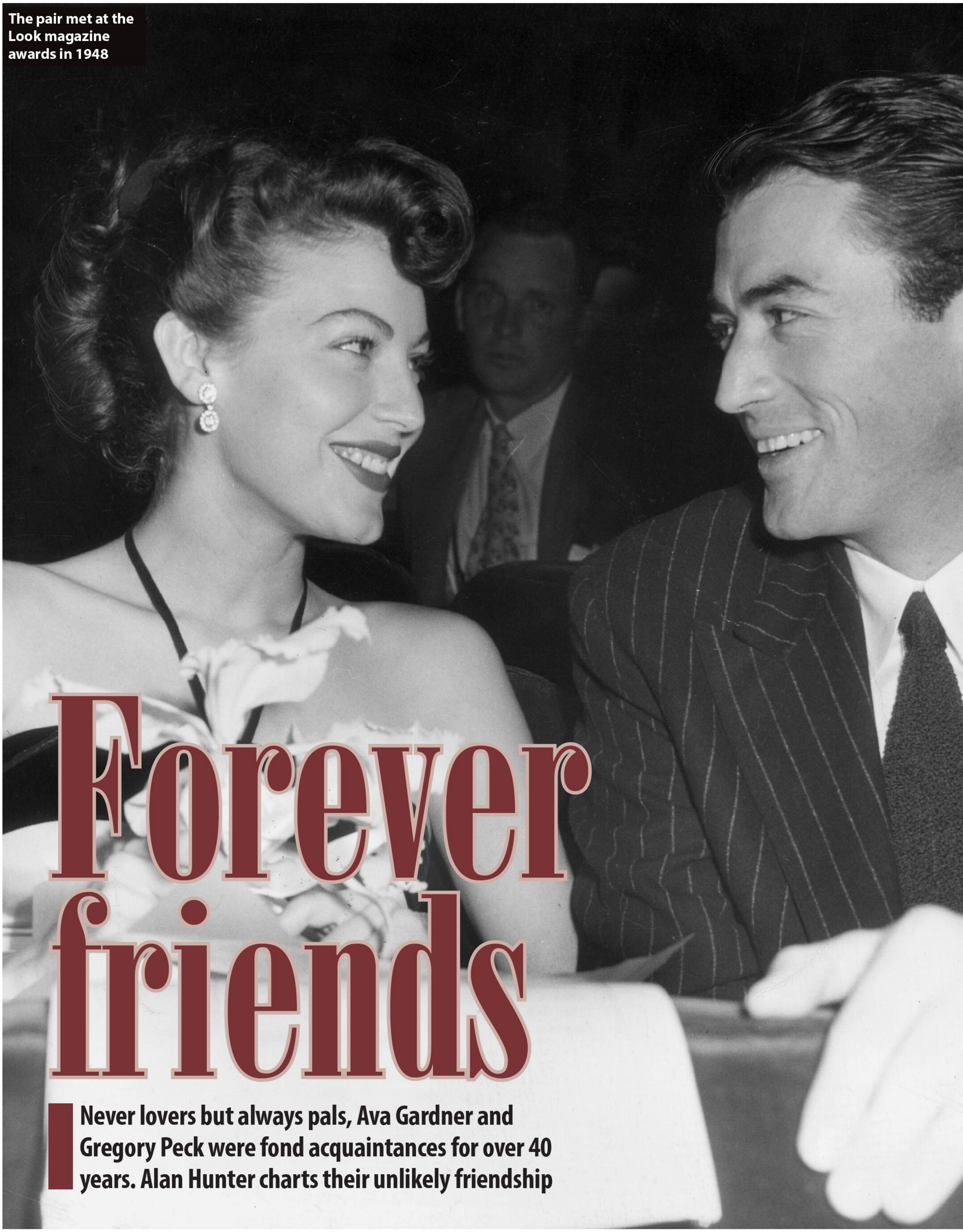
E LOVE
R

TERMS & CONDITIONS: *Saving applies to initial trial term. The minimum term is 12 months. Offer closes on 30/03/2025. Subscriptions will start with the next available issue. Offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Trial offers are only available on recurring payment and will auto-renew to a price of £25.00 every 6 months after the initial trial period, based on the print subscription. If you wish to cancel before the end of your trial period, please notify customer services at least 10 days before the end of your trial. Should the next payment have already been taken by the time you cancel, please contact us as soon as possible to arrange a refund. Any subsequent payments are non-refundable, and any cancellations will be from the next payment date. Order line open 0800hrs – 2100hrs (Mon-Fri). 1000hrs – 1600hrs (Sat). Calls may be monitored or recorded for training purposes. Call costs from mobiles vary according to the calling plan chosen. Typically, they are included in free call packages. However, if you call an 01/02 number outside of any inclusive minutes, they can cost between 3p and 65p per minute. Calls from landlines to 01 numbers are typically charged up to 16p per minute. Many providers charge a 23p call set-up fee (or 'connection charge'), but this can vary. Please refer to ofcom.org.uk for updated pricing. Costs for calls from overseas vary depending on the location. For general terms and conditions please visit: www.greatmagazines.co.uk/offer-terms-and-conditions

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

greatmagazines.co.uk/Yoursretro

Scan this QR code



The pair met at the Look magazine awards in 1948

Forever friends

Never lovers but always pals, Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck were fond acquaintances for over 40 years. Alan Hunter charts their unlikely friendship

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1992, Gregory Peck visited the Ava Gardner Museum. A tour guide described a black velvet gown Ava had worn in The Great Sinner. Only when Peck murmured, 'Oh yes, I remember that gown' did she recognise the museum's celebrity visitor.

Ava Gardner and Gregory Peck seemed the unlikeliest of friends. Often described as 'the world's most beautiful creature,' Ava was bewitching, provocative and forthright. When they first met, she was just coming up 26 and had already been twice married and twice divorced. Peck was six years her senior and would be labelled 'the last aristocrat of Hollywood's Golden Era'. Gentlemanly and dependable, Peck often seemed more like an affable bank manager than a dashing movie star. They moved in separate social circles and were at very different stages of their careers.

Peck and Ava attended a Look magazine awards ceremony in 1948. At the time, he was an established leading man with three Oscar nominations to his credit. She was just enjoying the first wave of the stardom that arrived in the wake of her breakthrough role as the sultry temptress in the classic film noir The Killers (1946). They discovered a sense of kinship that allowed them to feel at ease in each other's company. A friendship blossomed when they co-starred for the first time in the MGM period drama The Great Sinner (1949).

Peck would later reflect, 'What I liked about Ava was that we had so much in common. It was like we were young people from the same home town. We both were products of middle-class, small American towns where everybody knew everybody, and it was on that basis that we struck up an immediate friendship. Ava was also outspoken, and there was something refreshing about that because sometimes she'd be outspoken when other people would be afraid to. That to me shows a strength of character and the kind of grassroots, middle-American honesty she has.'

BEING THE BEST

The duo would co-star again in the Ernest Hemingway adaptation The Snows of Kilimanjaro (1952) and the nuclear drama On the Beach (1959). Peck would become one of Ava's greatest champions, believing she was a far better actress than she did. 'I wanted her to be good, to be her best,' he declared. From their first film together, he offered to coach her and encouraged her to consider appearing on stage, a prospect that terrified her. He offered encouragement and praise, remarking, 'She did things in Kilimanjaro she could not have done three years earlier in The Great Sinner.' The role of bruised romantic Cynthia seemed tailor made for Ava and she later wrote, 'Of all the parts I've played Cynthia was probably the first one I understood and felt comfortable with, the first role I truly wanted to play.'

No matter how much had changed in their personal lives, Ava ➤

Gardner played Peck's lost love in The Snows of Kilimanjaro

Romance after a nuclear holocaust in On the Beach

and Gregory found it easy to pick up the threads of their friendship. By the time they filmed The Snows of Kilimanjaro, Peck's marriage to Greta Kukkonen was in trouble. Ava, on the other hand, was betrothed to Frank Sinatra. He was so determined she should spend little time away from his side that 20th Century Fox arranged for all of Ava's scenes to be shot in 10 days so she could return to Sinatra in New York. When her work extended a day over that agreement, she recalled, 'I knew Frank would give me holy hell about that, and he did.'

Peck and Gardner share a glass of wine at a cafe in Earl's Court, London on 3 July 1973

A SAFE SPACE

Seven years later, during the filming of On the Beach their lives were at very different points again. Ava's marriage to Sinatra was over and she was footloose and fancy free. Peck was now married to French journalist Veronique Passani, the great love of his life. The friendship survived every change in their fortunes; Gregory remained friends with both Ava and Sinatra while Ava quickly became close to Veronique.

The friendship may have really deepened during the months of filming On the Beach in Melbourne, Australia. Gregory and Veronique hired a Victorian mansion and brought their own French cook to Australia. The Pecks became the focal point for off-duty socialising with co-star Fred Astaire joining them for games of gin rummy and Peck trying to teach Ava to fish. Ava sometimes struggled to mix with strangers, few realising that beneath her man-eating diva image she was shy and insecure. The Pecks provided a safe space far from the prying eyes of an insatiable Australian paparazzi.

The relationship between Ava and Gregory was always friendly and never romantic. Peck recalled during the filming of The Great Sinner that crew members would stop in their tracks just to stare at her beauty. 'I didn't have that slant on her. I certainly knew she was good looking,' he conceded. 'But I was young too and, in youth, you sort of accept that everyone is good looking.' The fondness they shared was never in doubt. There is footage from the wedding of Princess Caroline of Monaco to French banker Philippe Junot in June 1978. Mother of the bride, Princess Grace had invited a few old Hollywood chums, including Cary Grant and Frank Sinatra. Gregory and Ava can be seen enthusiastically bobbing away on the dance floor all smiles and affection.

Ava spent her final years living quietly in London. Greg and Veronique remained close to her. In December 1989, he sent her a short note that read, 'A couple of nice little items about you in this magazine piece. You are always on our minds. Try hard to get better. With love – Greg'. A little over a month later, Ava died of bronchial pneumonia aged just 67. Gregory opened his California home to Ava's long-time housekeeper Carmen Vargas and to Ava's beloved Corgi Morgan who lived with the Pecks until his death in 1995 and was buried on their land. It was a final act of kindness to a woman Peck regarded not as a tempestuous sex symbol but as his 'great old pal' Ava.

Ava with her beloved corgi who was adopted by Peck after her death

DID YOU KNOW?

Arriving in Australia in January 1959, Ava was widely reported to have said, 'On the Beach is a story about the end of the world, and Melbourne sure is the right place to film it.' The remark was made up by an Australian journalist but stuck to her like glue.

SCREEN CHIC
MOVIE STYLE

FILM: QUEEN CHRISTINA (1933)

ICONIC COSTUME: A dramatic floor-length black velvet gown with an exaggerated stiff white circular collar and cuffs.
SHE WORE IT WELL: Greta Garbo
DESIGNED BY: Adrian
SHOWSTOPPING SCENE: Queen Christina is forced to choose between her love for Don Antonio (John Gilbert) and duty to her people.

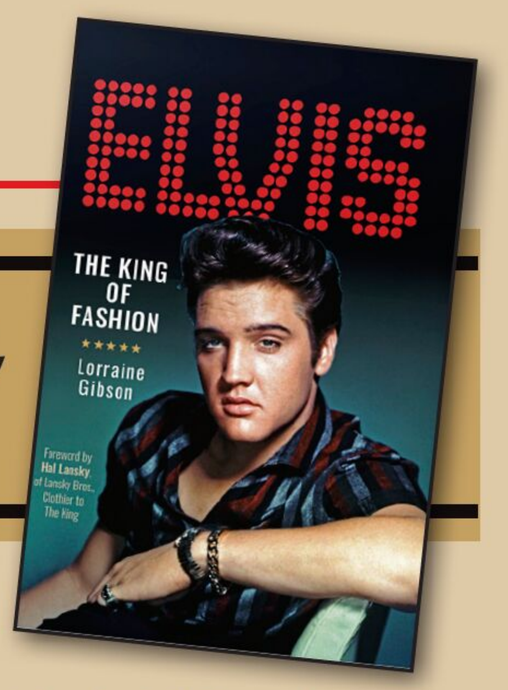
- Garbo worked closely with Adrian during the design process, even taking a trip to Sweden to study 17th Century paintings and prints in the Stockholm museum.
- Raised by her father as if she were a male heir, the real Christina preferred to dress as a man.
- Adrian didn't dwell on historical accuracy. The masculine travelling suits symbolised Christina's sexual ambiguity, while the weight of regal responsibility was shown by a dress so heavy Garbo couldn't walk in it.
- The release of a Garbo film always generated a buzz around the costumes and soon department stores were full of heavy velvet jackets with starched white collars. Macy's declared, 'Seventeenth century romance sets the keynotes for 1934 chic.'
- Garbo requested ex-fiancé John Gilbert as her co-star after failing to find screen chemistry with Laurence Olivier. Gilbert had hoped the opportunity would revive his career, but he made just one more picture.
- The film was box-office flop but Garbo was singled out for praise, with The New York Times saying, 'She appears every inch a queen.'

DID YOU KNOW?

The ivory velvet jewelled gown worn to greet the Spanish ambassador reportedly weighed 65lbs.

THE KING of fashion

Retro talks to Lorraine Gibson about her latest book, Elvis: The King of Fashion, to uncover the part that clothes played in his literal rags-to-riches story



Close your eyes, picture Elvis and then open them again. What did you see?

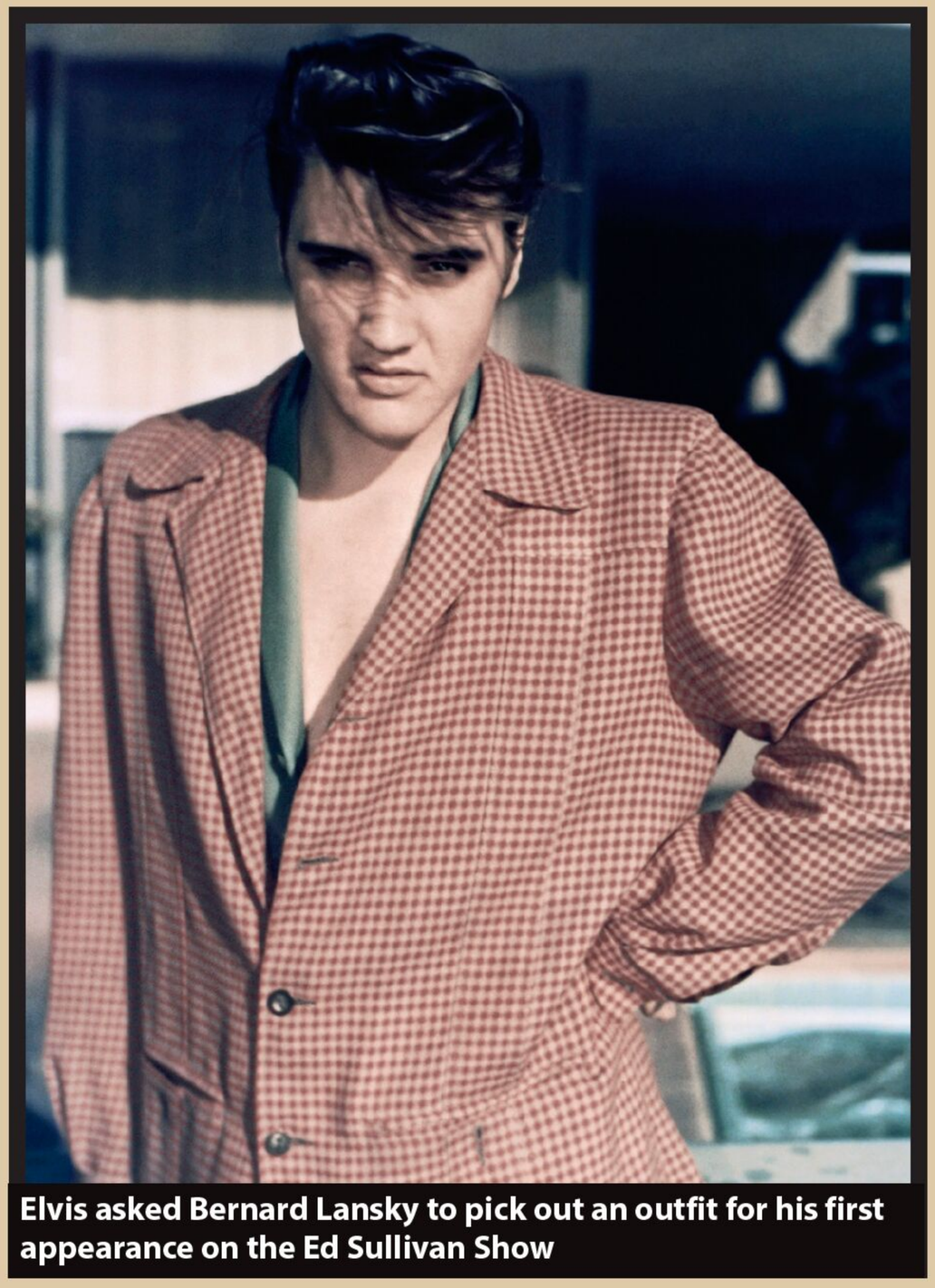
Early Fifties Elvis? The rock 'n' roll rebel in an oversized jacket, splayed shirt collar, billowing trousers and rocking a quiff so animated it could have had a show of its own.

Or Jailhouse Rock Elvis? The rubber-limbed rebel in prison duds of stripy top and bold-stitched denim in front of a stylised Hollywood cell block.

Perhaps '68 Comeback Elvis? Revitalised, rebooted and channelling his younger, edgier self in sensual black leather while pacing the stage like a panther sizing up its prey.

Maybe Angel Elvis? The same show, but the antithesis of the leather-clad stud, in pure ecclesiastical white and blood-red silk, belting out If I Can Dream.

King of Bling Elvis? The karate-kicking, jump-suited, groin-thrusting idol wearing an American Eagle on his chest and burning up the stage in a supernova of jewels that leaves fans undone by his sheer Elvis-ness.


Elvis asked Bernard Lansky to pick out an outfit for his first appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show

BORN STYLISH

Whichever outfits we conjure up, they describe the times that Elvis lived through as much as his music did, narrating eras, years and even specific days. However, what makes these cerebral fashion statements so instant, so evocative, is the man wearing them.

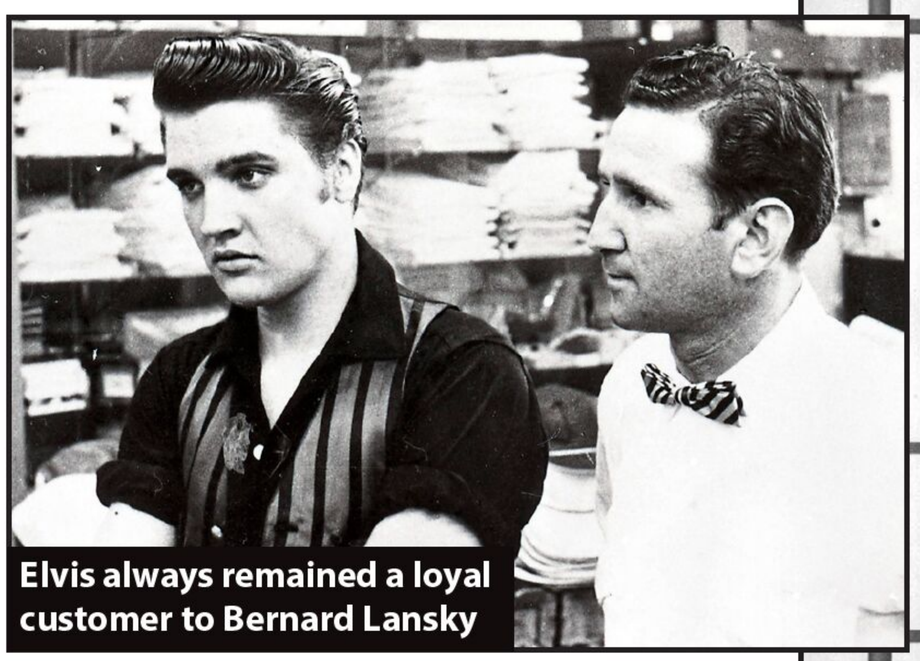
Lorraine Gibson's latest biography, Elvis: The King of Fashion, revels in Elvis's instinctive sense of style and how it defined him long before he walked into Memphis Recording Service in July 1954 and, by chance, recorded That's All Right, the song that profoundly changed both him and the music world forever.

Gibson weaves this sartorial savvy through the fabric of his life story, illustrating how significant his appearance was throughout his career, interviewing people who knew, admired or dressed him, and emphasising just how astonishing the seemingly overnight ascent from obscurity to super-stardom by an underprivileged kid from Tupelo, Mississippi really was. It unpicks the seams of his impoverished childhood, revealing the depth of the Presley family's privation and how its shadow left him afraid to sleep at times during the peak of his fame for fear that he'd wake up and find that it was all a dream.

'Dirt-poor he may have been, but young Elvis always managed to elevate his image,' insists Gibson. 'Whether a toddler in hand-me-downs and a tiny trilby or a stammering schoolkid in denim overalls, he never looked run-of-the-mill. And when he moved to Memphis at 13, living first in a doss house, then eventually a housing project apartment, his high-school uniform was anything but, well, uniform.

'In a sea of crew-cuts and white T-shirts, his slick DA, black trousers with chartreuse piping and a pink jacket made a bold sartorial look,' continues Gibson. 'It got him ridiculed and bullied but never deterred him and he used his unique style like armour, not just against antagonists, but against need and mediocrity. He never contrived to stand out, he just did.

Showing an early sense of style with his parents, Vernon and Gladys



Elvis always remained a loyal customer to Bernard Lansky

Jailhouse Rock helped make black denim fashionable

'He looked different than his peers, because he *was* different, and, to their annoyance, was better looking than them, too.

'Only the teen outcast, whose voice would stop a generation in its tracks, had the chutzpah to jump on stage with alarmingly long hair, sideburns sharp as Sabatier knives, eyeshadow and a sugar-pink suit (in the deep South – in the early Fifties) and not only avoid a beating, but win over the crowd.

'To appreciate what an achievement Elvis's transformation from loner to global icon was, we must travel back to 1935 when he let out his first wail in a shotgun shack in Tupelo. His parents, Gladys Love Smith and Vernon Elvis Presley came from impoverished plantation workers, or 'sharecroppers', who were paid a pittance from crop profits.

Elvis's rhinestone jumpsuits were designed by Bill Belew

'Back-breaking, poorly paid and weather-dictated, it was the lowest form of employment. Extended families toiled as one and occasionally married within their groups. They camped where there was work and when there was none, they had a choice – move on or sink.

'As children, Vernon and Gladys lived in absolute destitution, lurching from one harvest to another to find jobs or escape debt. The Smiths, a sizeable itinerant group comprising grandparents, parents, cousins, aunts and uncles, constantly moved and grafted, like a convoy of sad mules. So severe was their need that Gladys and her siblings fixed iron pig-snout rings around their shoes to stop them falling off. You could hear them coming before you saw them.

THE WILL AND THE WAY

'So, while the boy who would be King's residence was primitive, to his parents it was the Palace of Versailles; material trappings were scant but there was plenty of love to go round.

'When he was almost four, hardship from The Great Depression was rife and poverty bred despair. Vernon got embroiled in a cheque-forging incident where a payment sum of $4 was altered to read $14. The ruse was spotted and he went to the state penitentiary for three years. Harsh for what was a crime born from hunger. Elvis and Gladys fell further into deprivation, losing the shack and living on

handouts, goodwill and God to survive. He clung to his mother and cried for his father and later spoke of dreaming of flying to prison to help Vernon escape.

'Those dark days traumatised him and when they moved to Memphis, teenage Elvis promised his parents that one day he'd have enough money to ensure they'd never be poor again. It took a while, but when the miracle finally happened and he hit the big time, he worked tirelessly, building a wall of wealth to keep his family secure,' asserts Gibson.

'As hitherto unimagined sums of money rolled in, Elvis, barely in his 20s, indulged in an almost obsessive acquisition of material stuff, tangible proof that he'd never again be that boy who had to go to the toilet in the woods. He bought Graceland mansion, added a pool and horses and dogs, even monkeys, and motorbikes and cars, lots of cars. And with a des res fit for a king, it was time for the trendiest and most nonconformist dresser that Memphis had ever seen, to go shopping for clothes...

'This was the era of radio, so most people had heard but not seen him, unless they were in Memphis, or thereabouts. They liked what they heard and, when his songs flew up the music charts, and he wound up on national TV in 1956, the rest of the country and, later, the world saw the actual man behind the famous voice. And, boy, did they like what they saw – the women yearned to be with him and the guys wanted to be him, copying his baggy suits from Lansky Bros. on Beale Street, his wild hair and even his two-tone shoes.

'Fast-forward beyond his back-to-back movies – although even in Hollywood's cheesiest costumes, Elvis owned every scene – to the close of the Sixties when the real Elvis suddenly re-emerged and stole the satirical show again.

'Now it was sharp, Continental-cut suits, silk shirts, bespoke shades, the hint of a flare, Napoleonic collars and immaculately groomed hair that gleamed like a thoroughbred racehorse.

ENDLESS APPEAL

'Peak fashion fabulousness was reached on NBC's 1968 Singer Presents: Elvis show, quickly dubbed the '68 Comeback, when he appeared lithe and tanned in head-to-toe black, fitted leather. When he glowered from the TV screen and sang the line, *If you're looking for trouble*... everyone knew that The King was back.

'And when he changed scenes and into a pure white suit to sing a protest song that resonated so well after the recent assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, he became exalted. If an angry angel were to sing, it would look like Elvis did right then.

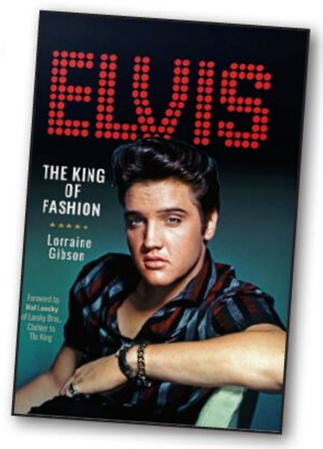
'Morphing from his 30s into his 40s, only he had the nerve to carry off a rhinestoned jumpsuit, matching cape and huge boxer-style belt slung around his hips.

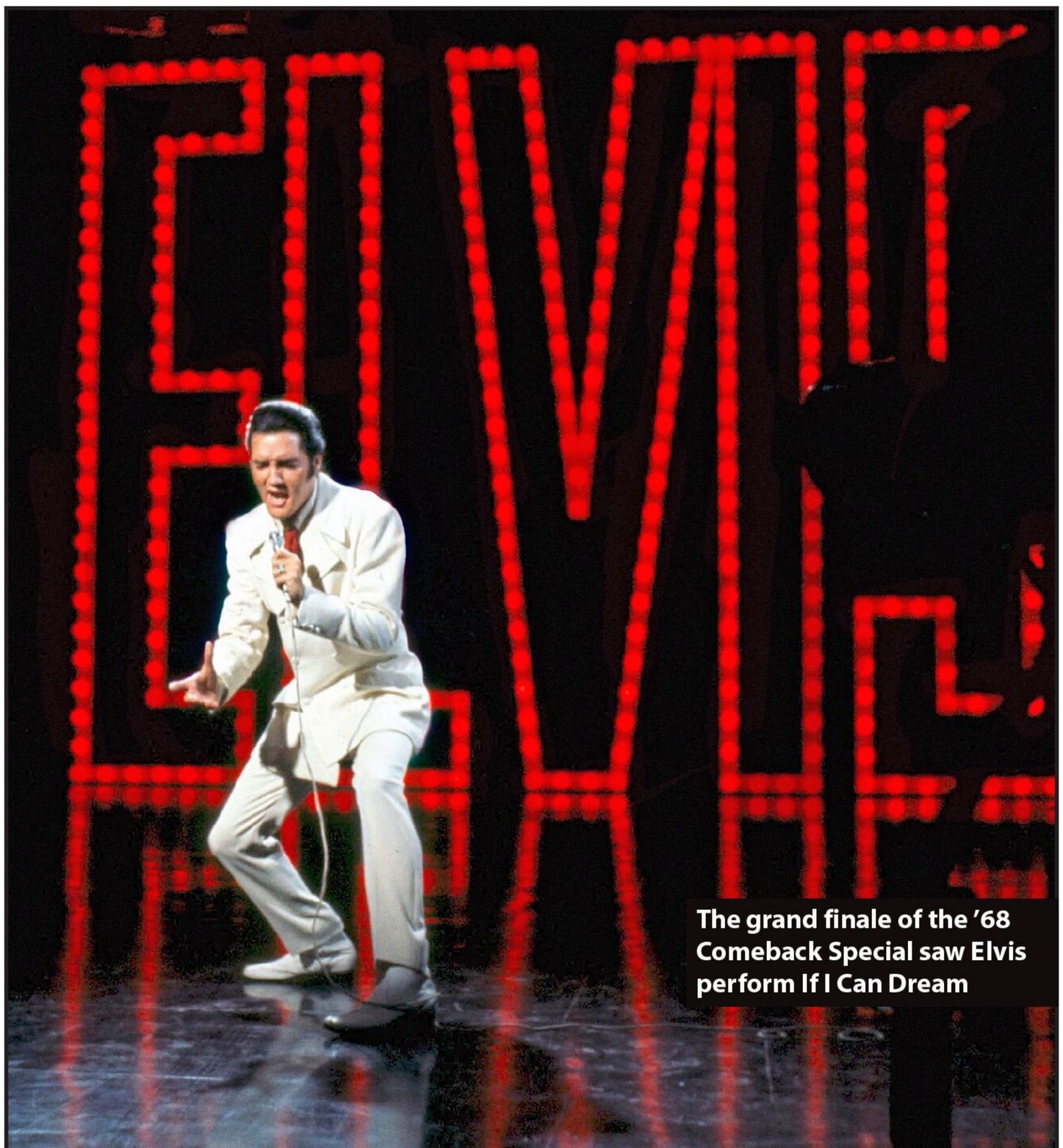
'And even in the erratic last days of his final summer in 1977, wearing his age and his declining health on the sleeve of his snug Mexican Sundial suit, emblazoned with shimmering sunbursts, he held a vast crowd transfixed by singing Unchained Melody so perfectly and with such power and emotional depth, it left them in tears.'

To sum up his lasting influence, Gibson concludes, 'Despite rarely doing press calls or interviews, or ever writing a book, and without music videos, social media or streaming, Elvis remains the best-selling solo performer of all time. It seems his image, as much as his music will never go out of fashion.'

Elvis The King of Fashion by Lorraine Gibson is out now and Retro readers can get 25% off the RRP using the code ELVISRETRO25 at the checkout, exclusively online at pen-and-sword.co.uk

T&Cs: 25% off applies to the hardback version of the book (ISBN 9781399049849). Valid from 10 March to 10 April 2025. Cannot be used in conjunction with other offers.





The grand finale of the '68 Comeback Special saw Elvis perform If I Can Dream

DON'T FORGET: MOTHER'S DAY 30 MARCH!

THOUGHTFUL GIFTS UNDER £20

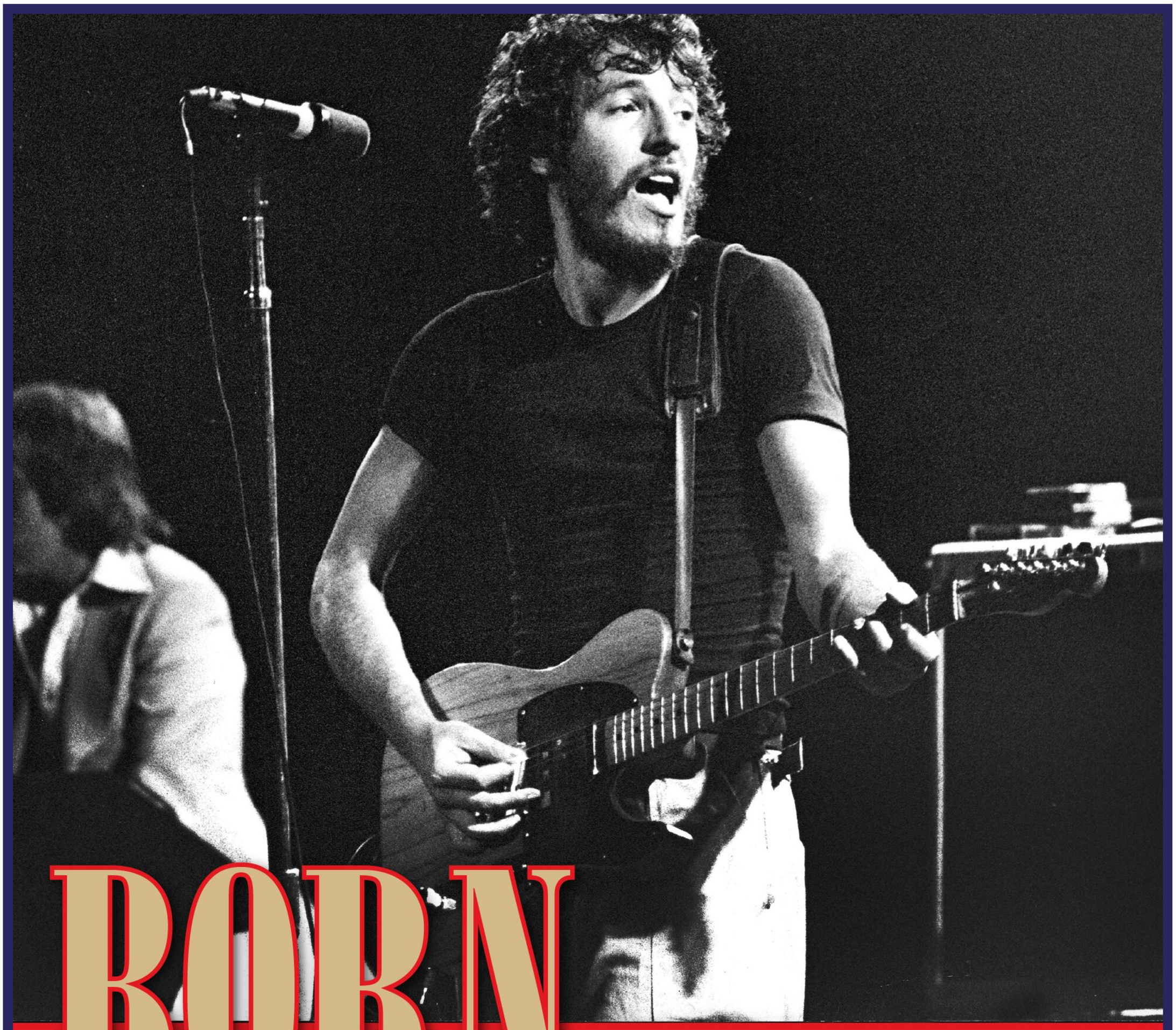
FREE UK DELIVERY

A GIFT THEY'LL CHERISH ALL YEAR LONG

SCAN NOW TO SHOP EXCLUSIVE MOTHER'S DAY OFFERS

GREAT MAGAZINES.CO.UK

Terms and Conditions: £14.99 for 6 issues is an example of a print subscription offer available. See www.greatmagazines.co.uk/mum for our complete range of magazine subscriptions and prices. Offers are only available on recurring payment and will automatically step up to a six month/quarterly price after the initial trial period. UK only. Offers are available until 31st March 2025.Your subscription will start with the next available issue. Calls from a BT landline will cost no more than 4p a minute. Call charges from other landline providers on mobile phones may vary. For full terms and conditions visit www.greatmagazines.co.uk/offer-terms-and-conditions



BORN to run!

Fifty years ago, Bruce Springsteen revitalised rock music with Born to Run. As explained by Sean Egan, however, it was an album that started life as a desperate measure to save his endangered career

Bruce Springsteen's 1975 breakthrough album Born to Run seemed to synthesise and refresh everything good about rock, a musical medium that many were suggesting was – after the then-remarkable-seeming lifespan of two decades – exhausted, verging on obsolete. Yet although the album was a bestseller and is now considered a classic, it could so easily never have been made.

Born in New Jersey in 1949, Springsteen had made two likeable but unfocused albums whose sales were so low that his record ➤

DID YOU KNOW?

At one point, Springsteen had lost so much confidence in the Born to Run track that, in the summer of 1975, he drew up a proposed track list for the album that excluded it. His manager had to prevail upon him to change his mind.

label Columbia were dubious about him making a third. Humiliatingly, they insisted he record a single first, something that amounted to requiring he pass a new audition.

During the making of that single, Springsteen went on something of a journey. It started as a resented chore, but he quickly came to a decision that, if he was going to be forced to record it, he would make, as he put it, 'the greatest rock record I'd ever heard.' The result was a track called Born to Run, the sonic glamour of whose gargantuan production counterpointed the bleakness of its words: the narrator of this loser's anthem was under the delusion that he could magically and permanently escape his poor prospects if he merely rode out of Nowheresville with his girl Wendy clinging to his back.

CONSUMMATE PERFECTION

Ironically, the fact that Columbia initially declined to issue this gem as a single presented Springsteen with less of a problem than the fact that he had upped the ante with his own creativity. He could hardly throw this masterpiece onto an LP with a clutch of other tracks that were merely quite good, not least because his third long player might be his last shot at the big time. Accordingly, Springsteen poured – off and on – 14 agonising months of effort into said album, during which time he lost and replaced band members, gained a new co-producer, switched studios and drove himself and colleagues to the brink of a nervous breakdown.

He indulged in endless rewriting, re-recording and overdubbing, all made worse by a purism that dictated all basic tracks had to be organic, laid down start to finish with no splices or edits. One evening, Jon Landau – a journalist fan whom Springsteen had insisted be added to the production team of himself and his manager, Mike Appel – wordlessly, despairingly walked out of the studio when Springsteen, yet again, couldn't make up his mind. Worse, Landau and co could hardly reason with an artist who felt he had nothing to lose. As album engineer Jimmy Iovine later commented, 'This guy was broke. You couldn't borrow him, rent him, get him to compromise. He didn't give a f*** who you were, what you were going to give him, it was him and that record.'

It all came good in the end. Released in August 1975 in an iconic gatefold sleeve featuring Springsteen and saxophone player Clarence Clemons, Born to Run proved to be a triumphant overhaul of Springsteen's formula. His street wisdom and working-class humanitarianism now possessed a mythic bent, high gloss and towering scale. As well as the imperishable title track, the album treated us to the eager but elegant ballad Thunder Road, the syncopated, brass-punctuated inner-city sketch Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out, the day-job decrying Night, the anguished poverty retrospective Backstreets, the pulsing pledge of romantic devotion She's the One, the downbeat vignette of small-time criminality Meeting Across the River, and the climactic nine and a half-minute youth-culture tableau Jungleland. Despite the giganticness and mythologising, Born to Run was also gritty, simply because it explored the lives of a swathe of society usually deemed by recording artists too unimportant to bother chronicling. This last fact was significant.

For all of rock 'n' roll's informal and libertarian aura, it had, up

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band in 1975 (*from left*: Clarence Clemons, Bruce Springsteen, Steven Van Zandt and Gary Tallent)

Time and Newsweek both made Springsteen their cover star the same week in October 1975

Born to Run ranked No.22 in Apple Music's 2024 list of the 100 Best Albums

until the mid-Seventies, rarely been concerned with class. The gutter-level likes of The Animals' We Gotta Get Out of This Place (1965), The Kinks' Dead End Street (1966), Creedence Clearwater Revival's Fortunate Son (1969) and Elvis Presley's In the Ghetto (1969) were rarities. As such, Springsteen had to devise his own rules for the path he'd chosen to take his music down. Born to Run is an album that effectively makes Springsteen the father of class-based popular music. Without his pioneering proletarian vignettes, the likes of punk and heartland rock might never have happened.

Lauded by the press, the album was a US No.3. It was initially less successful in the UK, only making No.36, but we did finally put it into the British top 20 in 1985. The cherry on the cake of Born to Run's critical and commercial success was Springsteen – still playing clubs and without a hit to his name – making the cover of culturally cautious US news magazines Time and Newsweek in the same week.

WORTH THE HYPE

Newly enthusiastic about their artist, Columbia splashed out on advertisements and billboards as Springsteen took the album on the road. While the energetic and theatrical stage show of he and his celebrated E Street Band generated huge enthusiasm, he also had to fend off criticism about hype, a controversy that reached its crescendo when the tour moved on to the United Kingdom. Arriving on 18 November at Hammersmith Odeon, the West London venue at which he was booked to play the first of two dates, six days apart, Springsteen was horrified to find on its backlit marquee the legend, 'Finally London is Ready for Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.' He infuriatedly tore down similarly exclamatory posters plastered across the foyer walls.

Five decades on, the issue of hype has become an irrelevance: the inhabitants of the States, the UK, and indeed the entire world, have long concluded that they enthused over Born to Run not because adverts or reviews or peer pressure compelled them to, but because it was an extraordinary work whose excellence and innovation moved and excited them like few others.

How ironic that the man trading in loser's anthems should deploy them to establish himself unequivocally as a winner.

DID YOU KNOW?

When Jimmy Iovine turned up at Springsteen's hotel to play him the master recording, Bruce listened to it, then disgustedly tossed it into the swimming pool below. He had to be dissuaded from cancelling the album.

Out of this world...

When a science fiction script calls for intergalactic travel, location managers and special effects teams step in to create otherworldly planets right here on Earth. Jake Gwilliam discovers that the Final Frontier is closer than we think

DID YOU KNOW?

Norway's coldest winter for 100 years wreaked havoc with the Star Wars production. At one stage there was 18ft of snow. The shot of Luke collapsing in the snow was filmed just outside the crew's hotel with the camera stationed in the hallway!

Filming on location comes with inherent difficulties. There's less control over the lighting, weather, wider surroundings, even bystanders can cause headaches for a film crew. But sometimes the benefits outweigh any potential problems: beautiful vistas, interesting and ancient architecture, not to mention helping the finished film to feel vivid and authentic.

However, for the sci-fi genre, shooting on location, on the ice planet Hoth for example, is all but impossible. Though not all hope is lost. Thanks to the diversity of architectural design and natural terrain here on Earth, with the right choice, camera angle, and perhaps a sprinkling of special effects, even the most ordinary of landscapes can play host to an alien world.

In Planet of the Apes (1968), when Charlton Heston crash lands on the 'alien' planet, the rocky region with its strange architecture, filled with intelligent apes, seems very different to our own.

Now, if you have seen the film through to its conclusion, you'll know that this example might be stretching the definition of alien, but it's exactly that conundrum that puts Planet of the Apes at the heart of making an Earthly location look and feel like it's a different planet. After all, if it wasn't believably alien, it would somewhat undercut the film's finale.

Much of the desert landscapes were filmed in Arizona, while the Ape City was filmed on Fox Ranch in California. The other-worldly architecture built by the special effects department turned the Malibu locale into a bewildering place for Heston's character to be transported. The apes roaming between buildings help cement the belief that it's a faraway planet.

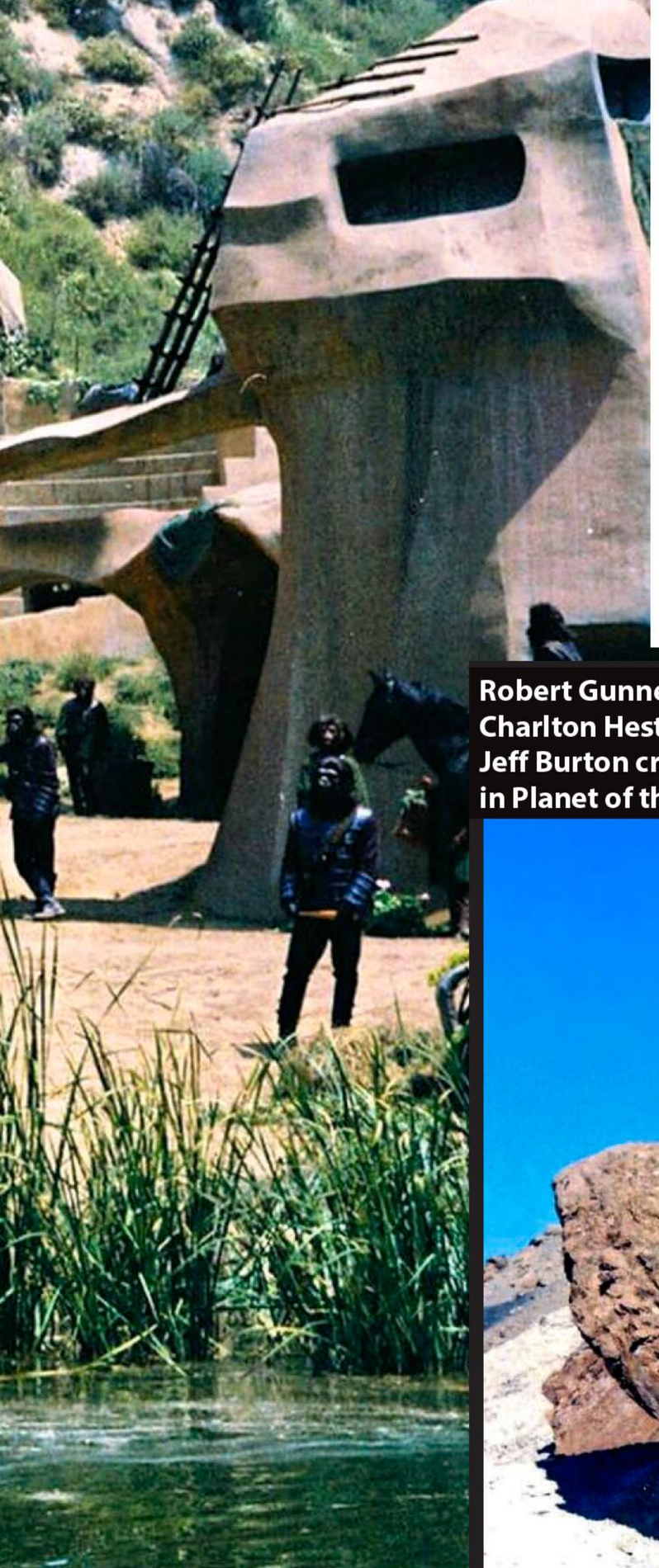
SPOILER ALERT

If you haven't seen the film, turn away now. It was then the job of the set designers to return the viewer unceremoniously back to Earth for the film's climax.

The shot of the ruined Statue of Liberty was created with a matte painting by visual effects artist Emil Kosa Jr, while the accompanying live action was filmed on a Californian beachfront. Heston's cries at the statue became one of the most famed scenes in cinema, but it all hinged on the locations in the preceding scenes being believably alien.

The team behind The Empire Strikes Back (1980) worked very hard to convince us that Hardangerjøkulen glacier in Norway was in fact the distant ice planet of Hoth, the current home of the Rebel Alliance. This set the stage for the opening of the film, so getting the audience on board was crucial.

It starts with an Imperial Star Destroyer, in space, sending down ➤



Robert Gunner, Charlton Heston and Jeff Burton crash land in Planet of the Apes

Many of the extras in the Battle of Hoth scenes in The Empire Strikes Back were Norwegian mountain-rescue skiers

The tauntaun's roar is a blend of elephant and sealion sounds

probes which we see crash into the icy world. From the snow-covered crater emerges a menacing droid, which we follow as it hovers across the landscape. Though some of the shots were created on a sound stage in miniature, a full-scale droid was set on tracks, hidden in the snow, as it travelled over the real glacier.

We then see Luke travelling across the snowy terrain while riding a tauntaun, a strange, tusked creature. The effect was created with a mix of full-size rideable prop with animatronics and stop-motion animation.

While many of the shots of the AT-ATs were miniatures filmed on a sound stage, the scene where Luke single-handedly destroys one of the colossal troop carriers had one of the stunt performers suspended from a helicopter over the Norwegian landscape. And the wide shot of the Rebel Base was a matte painting created by legendary concept artist Ralph McQuarrie, transporting us away from Norway and into a galaxy far, far away.

At the other end of the temperature spectrum, it's not too hard to imagine that the deserts of Mexico stood in for the arid world of Arrakis in Dune (1984). For the newer adaptations, Dune: Part One (2021) and Two (2024), director Denis Villeneuve had production designer Patrice Vermette scour the globe before settling on Wadi Rum in Jordan and the Liwa desert in Abu Dhabi.

Time and budget restrictions meant the cast and crew of Star Trek (1966-69) didn't venture far beyond the deserts in and around California. Most memorably, the imposing sight of Vasquez Rocks first stood in for a strange Class M planet in Shore Leave (S1,E15) and again for Arena (S1,E18), when Captain Kirk took on the lizard-like Gorn.

FAMILIAR TERRITORY

But Star Trek isn't the only small-screen sci-fi franchise taking advantage of their nearby landscapes.

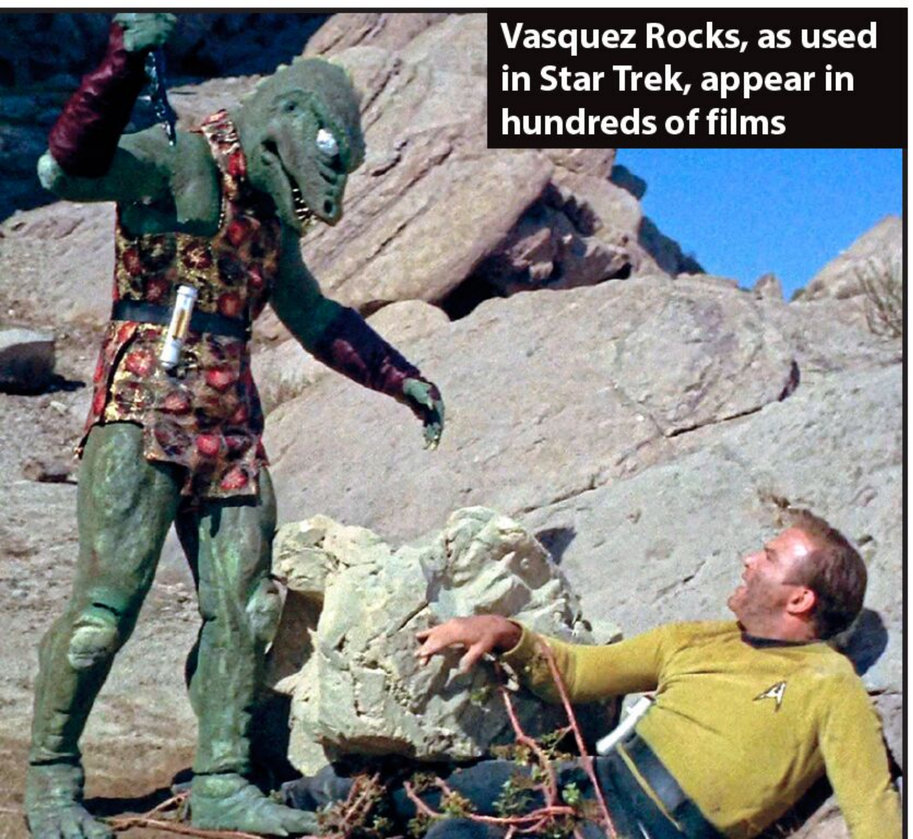
The 21st century reboot of Doctor Who became synonymous with Wales after the show's production was shifted to BBC Cardiff, and later, Bad Wolf Studios. But the association goes back further than that. Although The Doctor travels through time and space, much of his galactic globetrotting has ended up being in Wales and south-west England.

Winspit Quarry in Dorset played host to The Doctor twice, first providing the entrance to the sunken city of Atlantis in The Underwater Menace (1967) and later as Skaro, the home planet of his arch enemies in Destiny of the Daleks (1979).

The Five Doctors (1983) saw multiple incarnations of The Doctor taken from their respective time streams and deposited in the Death Zone on the Time Lord's home planet of Gallifrey to fend off The Master, Cybermen and Daleks.

The story required an unforgiving landscape and the crags, hills, and valleys surrounding the small Welsh village of Ffestiniog played host as Gallifrey. When the Doctors part ways having emerged triumphant, the Fifth Doctor (Peter Davison) takes Tegan (Janet Fielding) and Vislor (Mark Strickson) to the Eye of Orion – one of the most peaceful places in the universe. In fact they emerge in the gardens of the familial home of Sir Bertram Clough Williams-Ellis, a renowned Welsh architect, best known for the village of Portmeirion (where The Prisoner TV series was filmed).

Whether they used matte paintings, puppets, or strange architecture, production teams work hard to make the Earthly feel alien. So, whether its Gallifrey, Hoth, Skaro or Earth all along, keep an eye out for the ways that filmmakers help you suspend your disbelief.



Vasquez Rocks, as used in Star Trek, appear in hundreds of films

DID YOU KNOW?

The desert planet Tatooine, that was Luke Skywalker's home in Star Wars (1977), was named after the Tunisian town of Tataouine where some of the scenes were filmed.

MOMENT IN TIME

• 14 March 1958 •

PRINCE ALBERT BORN

All of Monaco celebrated after Princess Grace, former Hollywood actress Grace Kelly, gave birth to a son, ensuring the continuation of the Grimaldi dynasty. A celebratory 101-gun salute rang out across the principality, marking the birth of the 8lb 11oz baby. The newborn, named Albert Alexandre Louis Pierre, would become known as Prince Albert.

Despite meticulous plans for an official announcement, the world first learned of the baby's arrival when an over-enthusiastic palace employee shouted out of a window to the reporters below, 'It's a boy, it's a boy'. The news was confirmed moments later by Princess Grace's mother, Margaret Kelly, who reassured journalists that both her daughter and the baby were doing well.

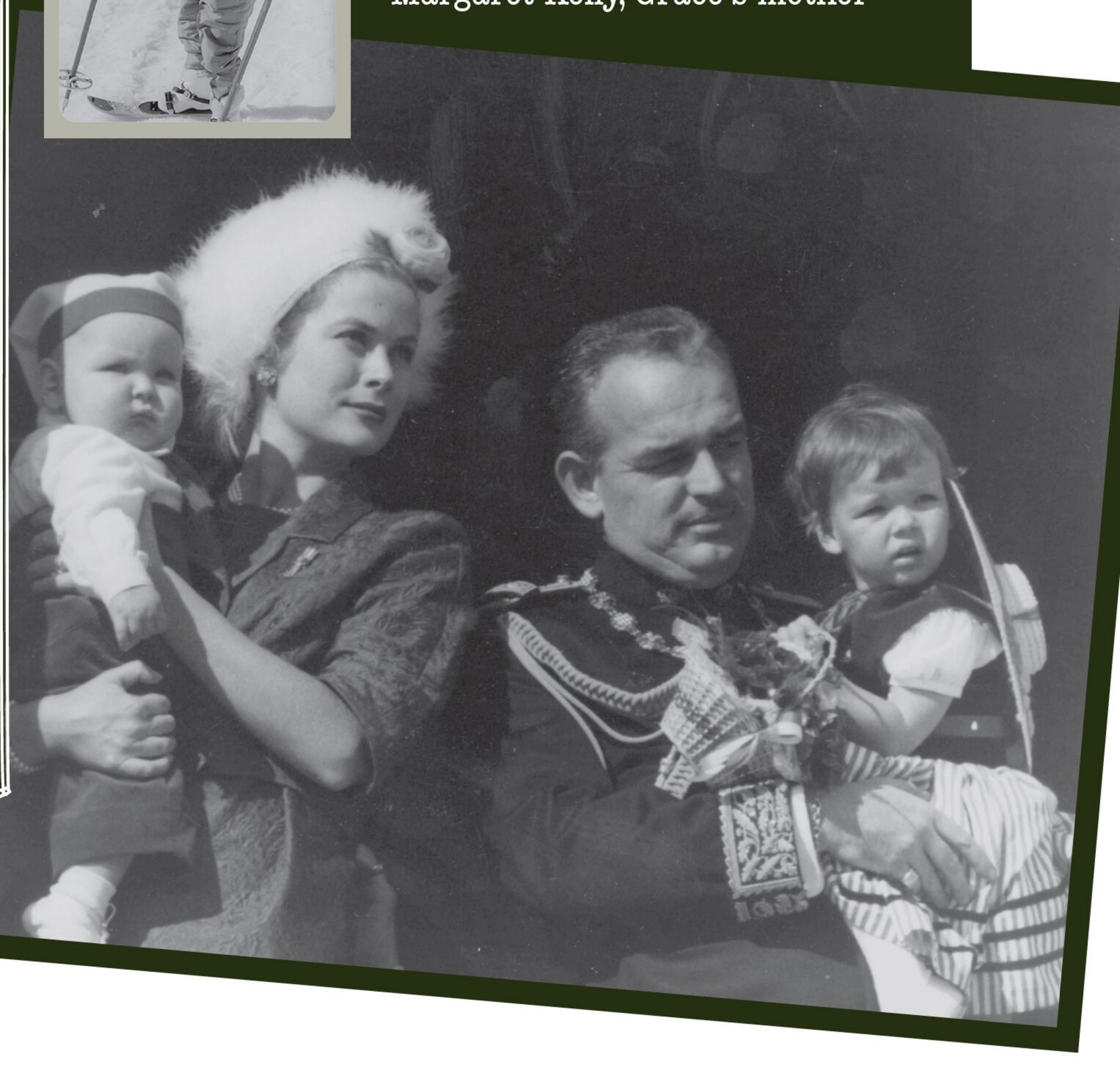
The new prince took precedence over his one-year-old sister, Princess Caroline, in the line of succession. Shortly after the birth, Princess Caroline was seen on the palace balcony in the arms of her father, Prince Rainier III, who addressed the nation.

The streets of Monaco were decorated with flowers and flags, and a public holiday was declared in the baby's honour.

The whole country was delighted by the birth because it secured the Grimaldi family's control over Monaco, which, under a 1918 treaty, would have been subject to French rule if there had been no heir.

Did you know?
Albert became an enthusiastic sportsman and even competed for Monaco in the bobsleigh event at five consecutive Winter Olympics

'It is a bonny, bonny prince'
Margaret Kelly, Grace's mother



Retro is privileged to publish the 'lost' interviews of renowned journalist Roderick Mann. In a chat from the Sixties Katharine Hepburn talks about family and keeping fit

'Clean up mess as you go along'

Down in the South of France I have been talking to one of Hollywood's most legendary actresses; the brittle-voiced and definitely arrogant Miss Katharine Hepburn.

Nobody remotely like her has ever again been produced by the Dream Factory – an actress who has never worn make-up in private; never changed her mode of dress – the slacks and fatigue-blouse she calls her 'Civil War Veteran rags'; never hidden her patrician contempt for the publicity machine.

Her career spans three generations. For those who were young in the Thirties it was Morning Glory (1933), in the Forties it was Woman of the Year (1942); in the Fifties, Summertime (1955).

She came to greet me wearing the familiar gear; what looked like a GI fatigue jacket, baggy, fawn slacks and white gym shoes. Her red hair was brushed carelessly up.

She was eating chocolates. They were, she wanted me to understand, the most expensive chocolates. Ten dollars a box.

'That's around five francs per chocolate' she says. 'I tell everyone they just better enjoy them at that price. Go ahead; have one. I like the square ones. That's because I'm a square.

'I was very close to my parents, both as a daughter and as a friend. And it wasn't just sentimental; we really enjoyed each other's company.

'Father was a surgeon, and mother active in women's suffrage. She used to speak out on birth control at a time when it was quite revolutionary. They brought all of us up to be individuals' (Miss Hepburn was one of six).

'If people find me a ludicrous personality, they should see my brother Dick. He seems very odd, even to me. Of course, you understand, I don't seem odd to myself.

'But we've had some nuts in the family. Grandfather was one. He never owned to a toothbrush. He'd say he didn't want to become dependent on anything. So he cleaned his teeth with the same washcloth and soap he used for the rest of his toilet.

'I suppose people are more interested in you if you appear

the ou

Hepburn and Spencer Tracy were in a relationship for more than 20 years

Katharine's signature style never changed

unconventional. But I don't dress the way I do for effect. I do it because I could never be bothered with stockings. I've never not worn trousers, you know. If I'm invited out and can't wear trousers, I won't go. Oh, if I go to the theatre at night, I'll wear a dress. But only then. For a matinee I'd wear trousers.

'Fortunately, I don't like to eat out, so restaurants aren't a problem. Nobody in my family likes to eat out. I doubt I've dined out more than a dozen times in my life. It makes me nervous. I get keyed up. Also, I worry about the bill. Even if I'm invited to dinner at a friend's house – say someone like George Cukor – I turn up after dinner, so that I can wear slacks.

'I can't change my character now; not at my age. Though sometimes I think I should, or I may wind up in a cage. But I don't like going out, and I do like to be in bed by 7.30pm. And, although I'll probably be stricken for going through this 2lb box of chocolates, I do like keeping fit.

'I took an ice-cold bath every morning as a child, and I still do. It almost congeals you, sometimes, but it's worth it, afterwards. I had one this morning.'

She adjusts the zip on her baggy pants; crosses her gym shoes over each other. Did she diet to keep herself in shape?

'No. I eat very well. Even when I'm cooking for myself. Steak and watercress and cheese for lunch. For breakfast; two eggs and six pieces of bacon and half a pound of butter; maybe some fruit.

'But, as I say, I believe in a healthy body. After all, it's the sack we live in and it's up to us to keep it in running order. It dumbfounds me the way some people drink and smoke themselves to death. I used to smoke, but I only do it in the evenings now. And I take a lot of exercise (she is a keen tennis player). My father always said: "Never start something you can't continue. And preferably do something that doesn't cost anything".'

Cary Grant made four films with Hepburn ending with The Philadelphia Story (1940)

George Cukor directed Hepburn in her first film in 1932 and they remained friends for life

She smiled faintly, crinkling her blue eyes.

'It's odd about memory. I can even remember the licence number of the car my father used to drive.' She looked down at her left hand, which had a scar on it. 'Look at that. I stuck my hand through a pane of glass when I was seven, and the mark is still there. See it? The mark of everything we've ever done is still there, isn't it?'

She had married once (in 1928, to a Mr Ogden Smith. They divorced in 1934). She had previously said she wasn't fit to be married.

'He was a nice man. And no nice man should marry an actress, or anyone else whose mind is always on themselves. I know if I were a man I wouldn't be dumb enough to marry someone who couldn't pass a mirror without looking into it.' She laughed again. 'I remember something my mother used to say, "If you want to sacrifice the admiration of many men for the criticism of one – go ahead, get married."

She pushed her hair back and fixed me with a steady gaze.

'I was lucky, you know. I was brought up in an age which believed in individuals; before the insurance companies took over our lives. I understand the kids of today, dressing the way they do. It's a desperate effort to say "Look at me" before they're captured and strangled by life.

'But many of them spread themselves too thin. It's a mistake, because if you do that in the end you'll have trouble collecting enough of yourself together to be a person. You should dole yourself out prizes in life, I believe. But not too often.'

Her prizes had come through what? Acting?

'Some of them. Certainly I've enjoyed it. Look, here I am living in one of the nicest houses in Cap-Ferrat without the need to convince some dud that he's wonderful in order to get the bill paid.

'Actually, I think I have a lot more fun than most people. What's more, my habits are better. For instance, I never go to bed leaving the living-room messy. I always clear up first. It's my attitude to life; clear up the mess as you go along.'

She got up to go, still clutching her chocolates.

'You know,' she said 'I've got a daily diary, with a saying for each day. And as I get older, I realise that most of them are true. Childish, perhaps – you know: Do unto others... that sort of thing – but true.

'Anyway. I'm too old to change now. People keep telling me I'm too one-track. I just say, "Hell, that's the way I am..."'

Interview written and edited by Roderick Mann

Next issue we publish Roderick's chat with Barbra Streisand

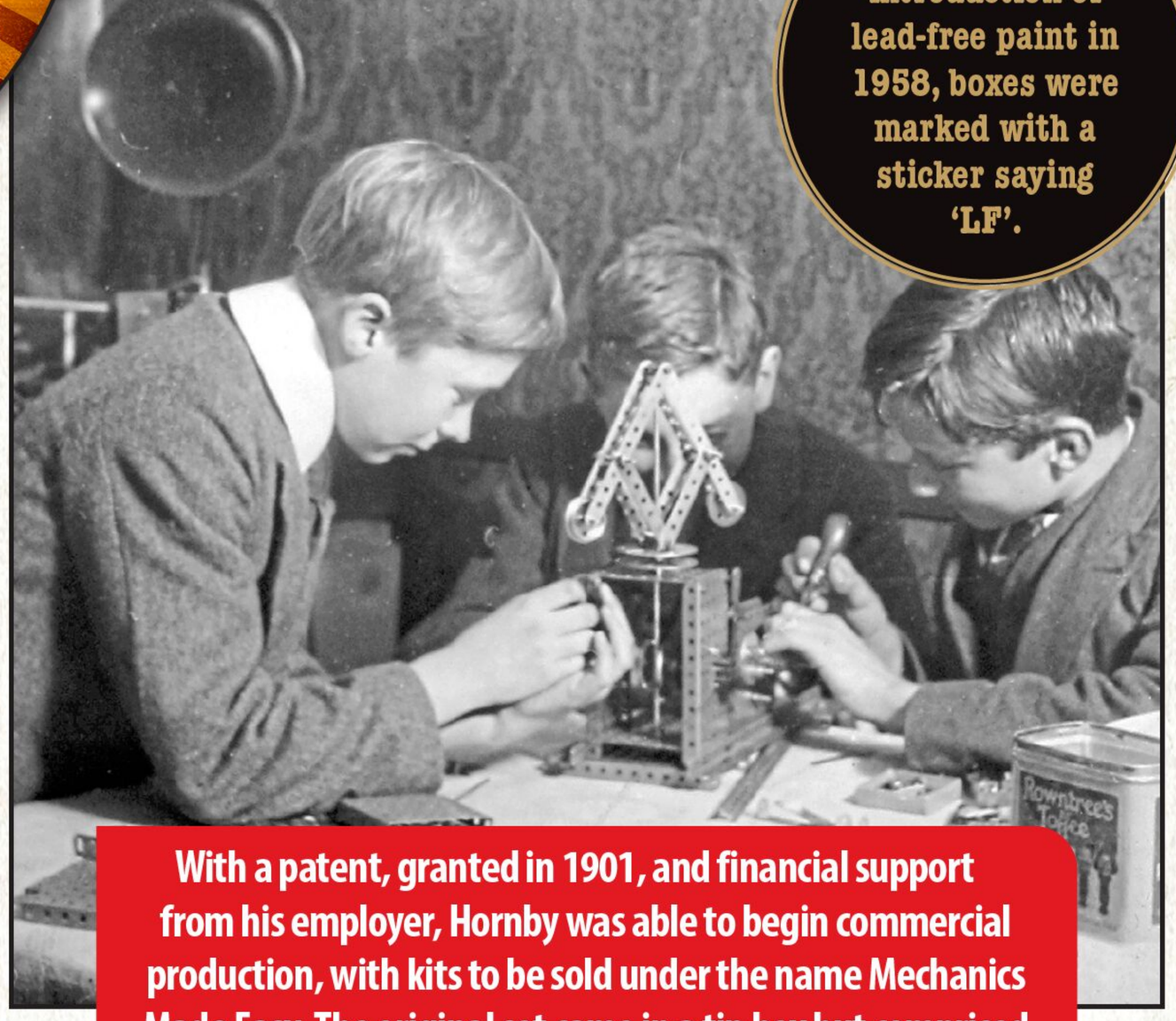
OBJECT of desire

MECCANO

Budding engineers were delighted to get their hands on a box of metal strips, wheels, gears, axles, nuts and bolts – and have the chance to let their imaginations run wild

Liverpudlian Frank Hornby, invented the toy in 1898 to keep his two young sons amused. He machined the parts himself in a home workshop, cutting strips of copper and drilling holes ½in apart.

With the introduction of lead-free paint in 1958, boxes were marked with a sticker saying 'LF'.

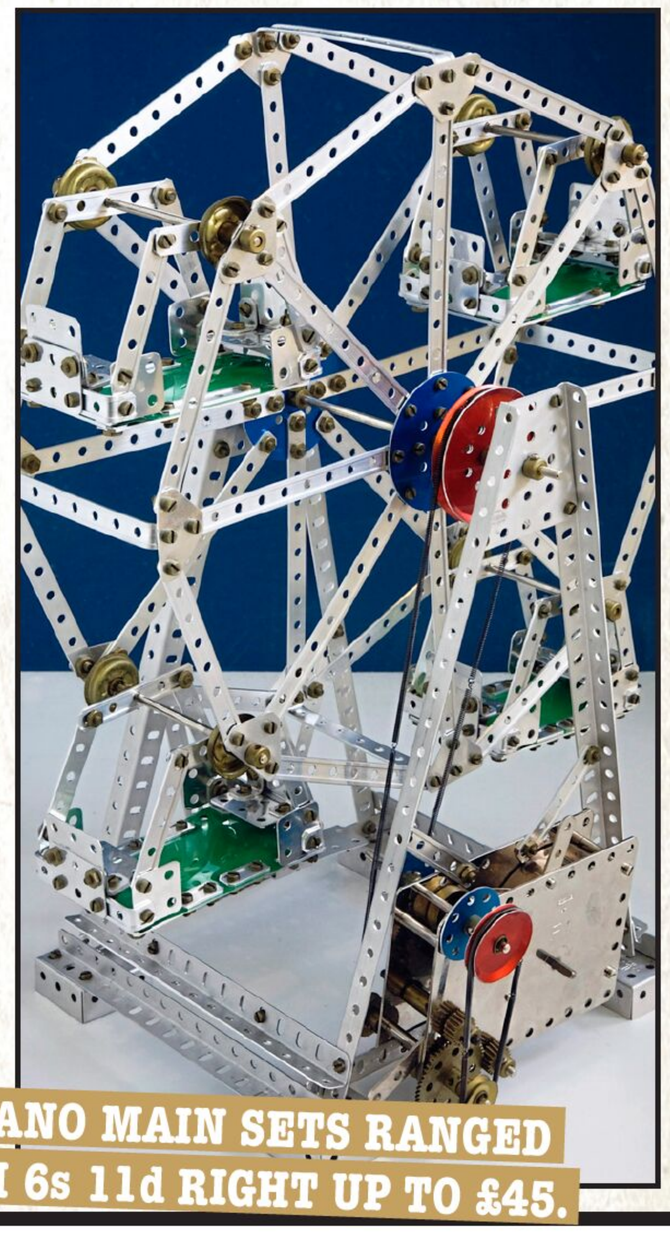


With a patent, granted in 1901, and financial support from his employer, Hornby was able to begin commercial production, with kits to be sold under the name Mechanics Made Easy. The original set came in a tin box but comprised just 17 different parts made of tinplate.

COLLECTORS CAN DATE MECCANO SETS BY THE COLOUR OF THE PLATES.

Renamed Meccano, the inter-war period was a boom time and the range of parts on offer was expanded to add gears and pulleys, allowing more complex models to be built, such as a Ferris wheel or the Forth Bridge.

In 1914, a large new factory was built in Liverpool which was Meccano's home for 66 years. Production was halted during the Second World War when the Merseyside factory was requisitioned to produce military hardware.



In 2009, TV presenter James May and a team of volunteers from the University of Liverpool created a 23 metre (75 ft) bridge from Meccano – long enough to span the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.

IN 1958, MECCANO MAIN SETS RANGED IN PRICE FROM 6s 11d RIGHT UP TO £45.

The Time Machine was Rod Taylor's first lead role

Future shock

In 1960, audiences thrilled as Rod Taylor travelled hundreds of thousands of years into the future in the sci-fi classic The Time Machine. Jeff Billington travels back in time to investigate what made the film so special...

DID YOU KNOW?

Rod Taylor said that, out of all his roles, The Time Machine was the film he was most frequently asked about.

Producer, director and animation pioneer George Pal had already enjoyed significant success with his 1953 adaptation of HG Wells's 1898 novel The War of the Worlds, and in 1958 he was approached by a Japanese studio to adapt Wells's The Time Machine, first published in 1895. When the Japanese producer backed out, Pal couldn't find a Hollywood studio to pick up the film, and the production was almost cancelled. Pal was eventually able to persuade the British arm of MGM to back the film, and it went into production in the spring of 1959 on a low budget of less than $1 million, and a strict shooting schedule of just 29 days.

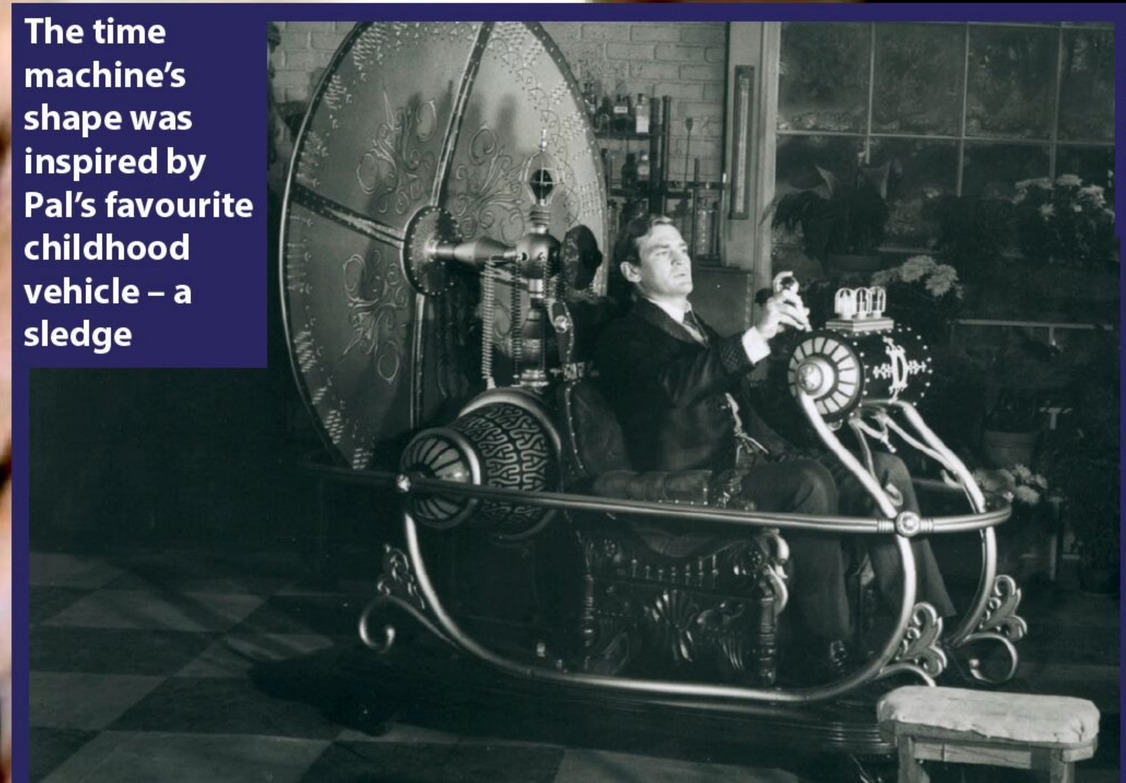
To adapt Wells's novel, Pal employed science-fiction novelist David Duncan. Duncan kept the basic premise of Wells's story: an eccentric time traveller journeys from the Victorian era to the year 802,701 and returns to tell his friends what he has found – that the future Earth is populated by two peoples: the naïve, leisurely Eloi who live above the ground in a garden paradise, and the ape-like subterranean Morlocks who toil in darkness and feed upon stray Eloi. To the consternation of literary critics, Duncan toned down Wells's complex social commentary on evolution and class inequality, focussing instead on spectacle and adventure.

The limited budget precluded the casting of major actors, with Pal having originally wanted David Niven or James Mason for the lead role. Instead, he was charmed over a series of lunches by rugged Australian newcomer Rod Taylor, who had recently been cast in his first Hollywood roles. Fascinated by Pal's descriptions of the film, Taylor was cast as the time traveller, anonymous in Wells's novel, but here named George as a nod to both Herbert George Wells and George Pal. Taylor later recalled Pal as 'a lovely, warm-hearted man... a funny little elf... surrounded by tiny puppets and toys.' Pal, meanwhile, was pleased to learn that Taylor was an artist, and the pair got along well, collaborating closely throughout the production.

A ROOKIE GAMBLE

In the role of Weena, the Eloi who becomes the time traveller's love interest, Pal cast beautiful newcomer Yvette Mimieux, even though she was totally untrained and had just two small bit parts to her name. 'I'd never acted before,' she recalled, 'I was never really sure where the camera was.' There was also an issue in that Mimieux, aged just 17, had lied about her age to Pal, a potential violation of Hollywood's strict child-labour laws which could have seen the production shut down!

Taylor, who had wanted New York-based method actor Shirley Knight, was initially unimpressed with the choice of co-star, worrying that it would be a struggle to perform opposite a non-actor.



The time machine's shape was inspired by Pal's favourite childhood vehicle – a sledge

Yvette Mimieux's innocence was a good contrast to Taylor's boldness

But Mimieux proved herself a quick learner, so much so that Pal went back and reshot some scenes from earlier in the process to take advantage of her new-found acting ability. In any case, Pal thought Mimieux's naïvete was central to her role and, in the event, she worked well alongside Taylor's confidence and machismo.

Probably the biggest name in the cast was British-born Alan Young as both David and James Filby. Young had appeared in a series of hit shows in the US, including his own vehicle, The Alan Young show, which ran for nine years on radio and television. Though based in the US, Young was one of several British actors in the cast, along with veteran character actors Doris Lloyd and Tom Helmore, the latter having recently enjoyed a part in Hitchcock's Vertigo (1958).

MODELS AND PROPS

The tight budget also placed restrictions on some of Pal's more ambitious plans, such as shooting the film on location in London, or using his trademark puppet animation to represent the Morlocks. Instead, the film was shot in Culver City, Los Angeles, and the team employed paintings and miniatures to create the atmospheric sets and impressive landscapes. The Eloi's dome was built without a ceiling, in order to cut down on lighting costs by shooting during bright daylight.

To save money, some costumes and sets were re-used from Forbidden Planet

The production also recycled props and costumes from other films, including uniforms and devices taken from the science-fiction classic Forbidden Planet (1956).

The most famous prop, however, was the time machine, a fanciful contraption resembling a sledge with levers, and a spinning disc that indicated the passage of time. The machine, which has become as well known as the film itself, was the brainchild of veteran art director Bill Ferrari, working in tandem with pioneering artist and designer Wah Chang. Ferrari's work

George Pal: animation legend

György Pál Marczincsak was born in Hungary in 1908, and, after graduating from art school, he began work as an animated filmmaker. In the early Thirties, he developed a new patented technique which he termed 'Pal-Doll', a form of stop-motion animation in which the pre-made limbs and heads of wooden figures are substituted between frames. This gave his work an uncanny, fairy-tale look, and led to a popular series of animated cinema commercials. In 1939 he moved to the US, where he renamed the 'Pal-Doll' technique as 'Puppetoons', making a series of shorts for Paramount Pictures, a number of which won Academy Awards.

Each of the Puppetoons films required 9,000 individual parts, and the cost grew too expensive. Instead, Pal shifted into predominantly live-action feature films, beginning with The Great Rupert (1950), in which comedian Jimmy Durante performs with an animated squirrel. It wasn't a hit, but the follow-up, Destination Moon (1950), was a success, and Pal moved between science-fiction adventures such as The War of the Worlds (1953), and fairy-tale adventures including Tom Thumb (1958). His films were often compared with those of his friend and former assistant Ray Harryhausen, and have enchanted generations since his passing in 1980.

Tom Helmore, Alan Young, Rod Taylor, Sebastian Cabot and Whit Bissell

The Morlock costumes were heavy and caused extras to faint under hot studio lights

spanned genres from episodes of Science Fiction Theatre (1955-57) to Westerns such as Terror in a Texas Town (1958). Chang, one of the few Chinese Americans working in the film industry at the time, was much in demand, and had built reference models for Walt Disney to use on ➤

DID YOU KNOW?

In 1968, Mimieux and Taylor reunited for the action film The Mercenaries (1968, titled Dark of the Sun in the US).

Pinocchio (1940) and Bambi (1942). Heading the effects unit, he realised Ferrari's design, as well as designing the sphinx and the Morlock costumes. For the latter, Chang also used make-up that would look different as the light changed, exaggerating their strangeness. Pal, meanwhile, employed his trademark stop-motion techniques to create the intricate time-lapse sequences, showing skyscrapers being erected in a matter of seconds, flora and fauna springing to life, and the rapid development of women's fashion on a shop mannequin.

The Morlocks aren't named in the credits but it's thought they were played by professional wrestlers

MISHAPS & INJURIES

The production was not without its mishaps. Life was doubly difficult for those playing the Morlocks, as their heavy costumes and thick make-up caused several to faint under the studio lights. On one occasion, the Morlock extras, in full wigs and blue-green body make-up, were banned from the studio canteen for fear they might make the other diners feel sick!

Rod Taylor did not get away unscathed either, suffering injuries from a fall during the climactic fight with the Morlocks. There was another near-vomiting incident during the scene of the volcanic eruption. Here, porridge with red food dye substituted for molten lava, but it had been made on a Friday afternoon. When shooting began on the Monday, the now-fermented porridge started to smell so awful under the studio lights that the set had to be cleared as crew members began to retch.

Guy Pearce as Alexander in the 2002 remake

A number of changes to Duncan's screenplay were made along the way, including the removal of a theme song by Fever singer Peggy Lee. The song, titled The Land of the Leal, was supposed to feature throughout the film, with characters singing or humming it along the journey. It's not clear why it was cut, but newspaper reports from late 1959 suggested Lee was also writing songs for a Broadway adaptation of The Time Machine to be produced by George Pal, a production that appears to have fallen through, perhaps explaining the severing of the relationship.

Pal was a notorious perfectionist, expecting his actors and technicians to perform with the accuracy of his puppets. On many occasions, cast and crew grew bored as Pal attempted to get things exactly right. The studio tired of Pal's tinkering, believing he was shooting too much film, and threatened to curtail the production, but the director stuck to his vision and brought the film in on time and on budget. He spent a weekend preparing a rough cut to show the studio executives, who were finally satisfied with his work.

PATHS TO GLORY

Thankfully for everyone involved, the film was a success, grossing almost $3 million on its initial US release, and winning an Oscar for special effects. It elevated Rod Taylor to the status of Hollywood A-lister, with the following years bringing him starring roles in swashbuckler Seven Seas to Calais (1962) and Hitchcock's The Birds (1963). Alan Young would soon enjoy further huge, small-screen success as the owner of Mister Ed (1961-66), while Mimieux enjoyed a prolific career in both film and television, later marrying Singin' in the Rain (1952) director, Stanley Donen. Pal produced and directed several more fantasy classics, with the award-winning Cinerama spectacular The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm (1962) further showcasing his stop-motion animation skills. Writer David Duncan would work on films such as Fantastic Voyage (1966), and designer Wah Chang would design

HG Wells's novels have sold in their millions

The father of science fiction

While best known today for the many adaptations of his work, the cultural importance of writer HG Wells in the first half of the 20th Century cannot be overstated. A proponent of social reform, he preached pacifism and advocated for human rights. As a journalist, he met and interviewed figures including US President Franklin D Roosevelt and Soviet leaders Lenin and Stalin. And as a pioneer of science fiction, he predicted inventions from aeroplanes to nuclear weapons, and dreamt up alien invasions and time travel. Even during his lifetime, filmmakers were fascinated with his work, with popular adaptations including The Invisible Man (1933) and Island of Lost Souls (1932), an adaptation of The Island of Dr Moreau (1896) which was banned in several countries. Wells also wrote the screenplay for Things to Come (1936), an elaborately designed work of speculative science-fiction in which humanity must be rebuilt following a devastating war.

Orson Welles's infamous 1938 radio adaptation of The War of the Worlds, presented as a live news broadcast, led to increased interest in Wells's science fiction which continued after the author's death in 1946, leading to dozens of film and television adaptations.

props for Star Trek (1966-69) as well as Elizabeth Taylor's iconic headdress in Cleopatra (1963).

The Time Machine has continued to enchant subsequent generations through its frequent television screenings and home video rentals. The prop of the time machine itself has been a huge influence on the 'steampunk' subgenre, which melds futuristic technology with Victorian style. In 1993, Rod Taylor and other cast members were reunited for Time Machine: The Journey Back, a short documentary-sequel written by David Duncan.

So ingrained is the film in the popular imagination that two further film adaptations have been made. First came a 1978 television film which featured The Time Tunnel (1966-67) stars John Zaremba and Whit Bissell (the latter also having appeared in the 1960 film). Secondly, a big-budget 2002 film starring Guy Pearce and Samantha Mumba was directed by HG Wells' great-grandson, Simon Wells. But neither of these updates captured the attention of film lovers as much as George Pal's original vision.

TOP 5 BOX OFFICE GOLD...

FRANK SINATRA FILMS

From Here to Eternity (1953) $605.3m

Not as a Stranger (1955) $458.4m

Guys and Dolls (1955) $443.8m

Anchors Aweigh (1945) $431.8m

High Society (1956) $358.8m

** Adjusted domestic box office gross using current movie ticket price (in millions) according to ultimatemovierankings.com*

Gnome sweet gnome

Robert Ross explores the origins of The Gnomes of Dulwich, a surreal and short-lived comedy vehicle for Terry Scott and Hugh Lloyd

DID YOU KNOW?

Guest Gnomes included roly-poly Roy Kinnear as a replica of Big; Dad's Army's doom-laden undertaker, John Laurie, as Top Gnome, and even future knighted star of Yes, Minister, Nigel Hawthorne!

It is one of the most mysterious of 'missing-link' shows, discussed in hushed tones by archivists and fans alike... and it all started with an obsession for garden gnomes! Actor Jimmy Perry, fed up of rarely getting cast, had written himself a part in a series about the Home Guard of the Second World War. Dad's Army, under the production and co-authorship of David Croft, had started in July 1968. The role Perry had his eye on, that of black market spiv Private Walker, went to James Beck; Croft having insisted that he couldn't write it as well as be in it. Thus Jimmy Perry became a writer, exclusively, and began pitching material to the variety producers of the BBC's Light Entertainment Department.

One such producer was John Ammonds who, in September 1968, had launched The Morecambe and Wise Show. Jimmy Perry wrote a sketch featuring Eric and Ernie as argumentative garden gnomes. However, Jimmy's wife, Gilda, instinctively thought the idea had potential to become a series. But what to call it?

Well, the gnomes of Zurich had been in common parlance since November 1964. It was a derogatory collective term for the Swiss bankers who were accumulating even greater wealth as a result of association with questionable, secretive, political organisations. In traditional folklore, gnomes would count their coins within an underground hideout. As for Zurich, that was the commercial centre of Switzerland. The situation became so serious that Prime Minister Harold Wilson called an emergency meeting. George Brown, the Deputy Labour Leader and MP for Belper, in Derbyshire, was heard to mutter, 'the gnomes of Zurich are at work again'. The name stuck... and with a neat south London suburban twist for sitcom familiarity, Jimmy Perry came up with The Gnomes of Dulwich. These were real gnomes. Well, ceramic garden ones that, as Perry recalled, would move, interact and, 'sit by a pond and comment on life, race, religion – everything'.

SHORT LIVED

Casting was crucial for the two central gnomes, Big and Small, and it proved an intriguing, if somewhat bizarre, extension on the comedy partnership of Terry Scott and Hugh Lloyd.

Produced by David Croft from 1962, and featuring an acting turn from Jimmy Perry, Hugh and I had made stars of the nation's favourite odd couple. By 1968 the format of domestic bickering had been glammed up to allow Hugh and Terry to get involved in James Bond-esque espionage. As a result, the series was rebranded Hugh and I Spy; itself a cheeky reference to the American television series I Spy (1965-68).

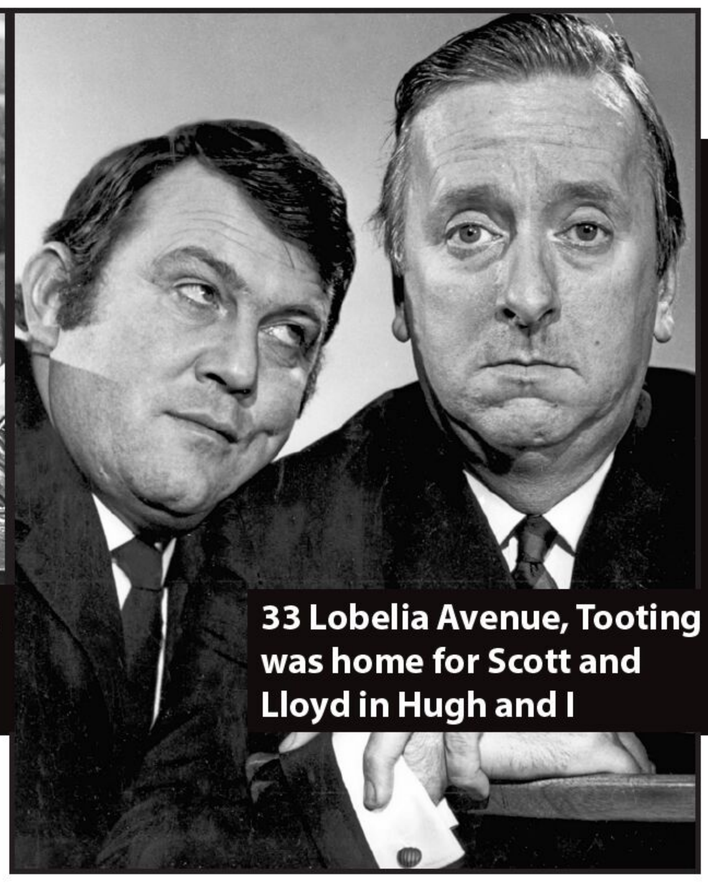
The Hugh and Terry show lasted just one series so, despite being initially rather sceptical of this 'Bill and Ben the Flower Pot Men on hallucinogenic drugs idea', the comedians seized the opportunity to do The Gnomes of Dulwich.

This, too, was destined to last just one series of six episodes, broadcast from 12 May 1969. Jimmy and Gilda Perry, having run the Watford Repertory Company for many seasons, had collected a notebook of brilliant theatre actors who they wanted to catapult into television stardom. Colin Bean, who would play Private Sponge in 76 episodes of Dad's Army, recalled his brief appearance, reflecting the political inspiration for the title, as well as finally giving the writer a part in his own creation, 'Jimmy and Gilda were in my scene also as ornaments on a bric-a-brac stall at a garden party at the rear of 10 Downing Street. Jimmy was a plaster bust of Napoleon, and I was a matching bust, on a named base, of Beethoven... My few lines played on Beethoven's deafness (Da da da dah!) after Napoleon had made some cutting remarks.'

Dad's Army's Vicar, Frank Williams, was also in that scene and recalled that the PM's wife, Mary Wilson, bought Big and Small, 'They stood at ground level contemplating the legs of the various guests at a garden party. Clad in Carnaby Street trousers, I wandered around as a society photographer. As the audience only heard my voice and saw my disembodied legs, they were never quite sure who I was, but I decided that this was my one chance to play royalty and that I was Lord Snowdon.'

Following just one repeat, in 1970, the entire series was wiped. Only a few fragments of off-broadcast audio recordings and a handful of production stills remain. As Jimmy Perry said, 'It became a little cult.' And it remains one to this day. So, dear readers, do search the sheds at the bottom of your garden. Big and Small may be in there!

Garden dwellers Dolly (Anne De Vigier), Old (John Clive), Big (Terry Scott), Rita (Lynn Dalby) and Small (Hugh Lloyd)



33 Lobelia Avenue, Tooting was home for Scott and Lloyd in Hugh and I

Movies and The Mob

Ever since its founding Hollywood has been tied to the mafia, from the early days of mob bosses shaking down the studios, to The Godfather becoming a template for real gangsters. Adam Smith reveals all

In 1949 Raymond Chandler, a man who knew a thing or two about crime, was idly looking out of an office window on the Universal lot when he spied a group of executives coming back from lunch. What struck the legendary author was how much the bigwigs resembled the hoods he wrote about every day.

'I was transfixed with sinister delight,' he later wrote to a friend. 'They looked exactly like a bunch of top-flight Chicago gangsters. It brought home to me in a flash that strange kinship between the operations of big money, business and the rackets. Same faces, same expressions, same manners.'

As Chandler would have well known, the relationship between Hollywood and the mob went back decades, almost to the birth of the movie industry. Organised crime had arrived

Paul Muni as Tony in Scarface

Edward G Robinson played the title role in Little Caesar (1931)

DID YOU KNOW?

During the making of The Godfather, mob boss Joe Columbo and The Italian-American Civil Rights League threatened to disrupt production. A deal was struck to remove any references to 'mafia' or 'cosa nostra' and a 'donation' was made to the organisation.

early, and penetrated the industry from top to bottom, from the unions right up to the studio heads, who were wined and dined and then extorted by the mafia bosses.

But what Chandler noticed that day was how they were influencing each other, the mobsters had somehow become role models for the executives, they aped their style, their attitudes. Or maybe they weren't that different to begin with.

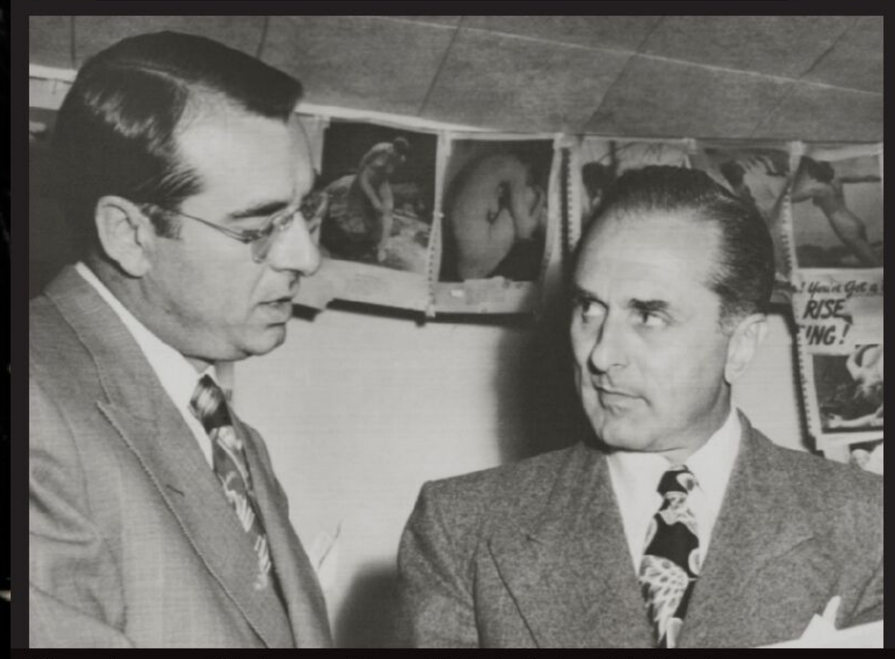
Movies like Scarface (1932) and later The Godfather (1972) would change the way the mafia saw itself. Hollywood romanticised the gangster life, and the gangsters were happy to be romanticised. The very word Godfather, which the mafia would subsequently adopt, was a Hollywood invention.

As the old saying goes, 'Hold your friends close and your enemies closer.' Well, Hollywood and organised crime have been locked in a tight embrace since the very beginning.

THE COMBINATION

By the mid-Twenties Los Angeles had been transformed from a dusty Californian farming town into one of the fastest-growing industrial cities the country had ever seen, and the industry in question was the movies. The town's population doubled in size from 577,000 to over 1.2 million between 1920 and 1929, and the coming of sound boosted it further.

Hollywood became a mecca for money, power and vice. There ➔



'Handsome' Johnny Roselli (*right*) with his lawyer, Frank Desimone

Paul Muni was a respected stage and screen actor

had been organised crime from the beginning, of course. Prostitution, gambling, political corruption, drug dealing and bootlegging were all controlled by 'The Combination', an affiliation of local gangsters that spanned politics, the police and the justice system.

They ran the city, and were terrified they would attract the attention of the big crime families back east. They even posted corrupt cops at the railway station to send any rivals or interlopers packing.

But it was inevitable that their monopoly couldn't last. And, one day in the mid-Twenties in Chicago, a short, heavy-set man with three unmissable scars on his face turned his eye westward. His name was Alphonse Gabriel Capone.

Al Capone first visited Hollywood in 1927. He was met by a phalanx of police at the railway station but was unmoved, waving them away and saying he was just taking a vacation. He visited movie sets and toured stars' palatial homes. 'I never saw them make pictures before,' the delighted mobster told reporters. 'That's a grand racket! I have lots of money that I made in Chicago, I'm coming back pretty soon!' He was finally ejected by the police a few days later, and would never return. Instead, he dispatched a trusted lieutenant, his driver Johnny Roselli, to scope out the new territory.

Roselli was an up-and-comer, charming, with a gimlet eye for criminal opportunity, and so good-looking he was soon just known as 'Handsome Johnny'. He even acted a little, bit parts in movies. He would become a key player, 'The Mob's Man in Hollywood'. And his first big move was to befriend a man almost as ruthless and corrupt as himself, Columbia boss Harry Cohn.

MARRIED TO THE MOB

The pair became best friends. They would go to nightclubs together, gamble at the racetrack, and have cocktails in Cohn's offices at Columbia, where the security guards gave him complete access. They even exchanged ruby 'friendship' rings. Roselli would fix problems for Cohn, protecting him and Columbia, when other studios were being shaken down.

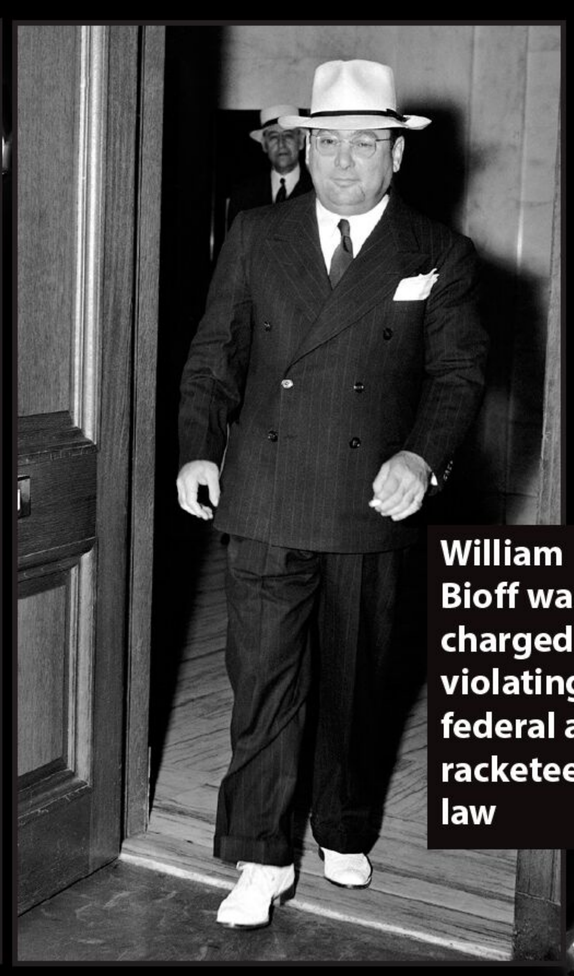
When Columbia made crime movies he showed the rushes to Johnny for his approval. Actor Marc Lawrence remembered being told by Cohn to study Johnny. 'I want you to watch him. The way he talks, his eyes, everything, that's how I want you to do it in the picture.'

Cohn's ties to the mob continued for decades. In the late Fifties when Sammy Davis Jr, began dating Kim Novak, Cohn was outraged. He regarded stars as his property, and Novak marrying a black man was then unthinkable. Furious, he took out a mob hit on Davis.

'They said they would break both of his legs, put out his other eye, and bury him in a hole if he didn't marry a black woman right away. He was scared as hell, same as I was,' Davis's friend Arthur Silbert later said.

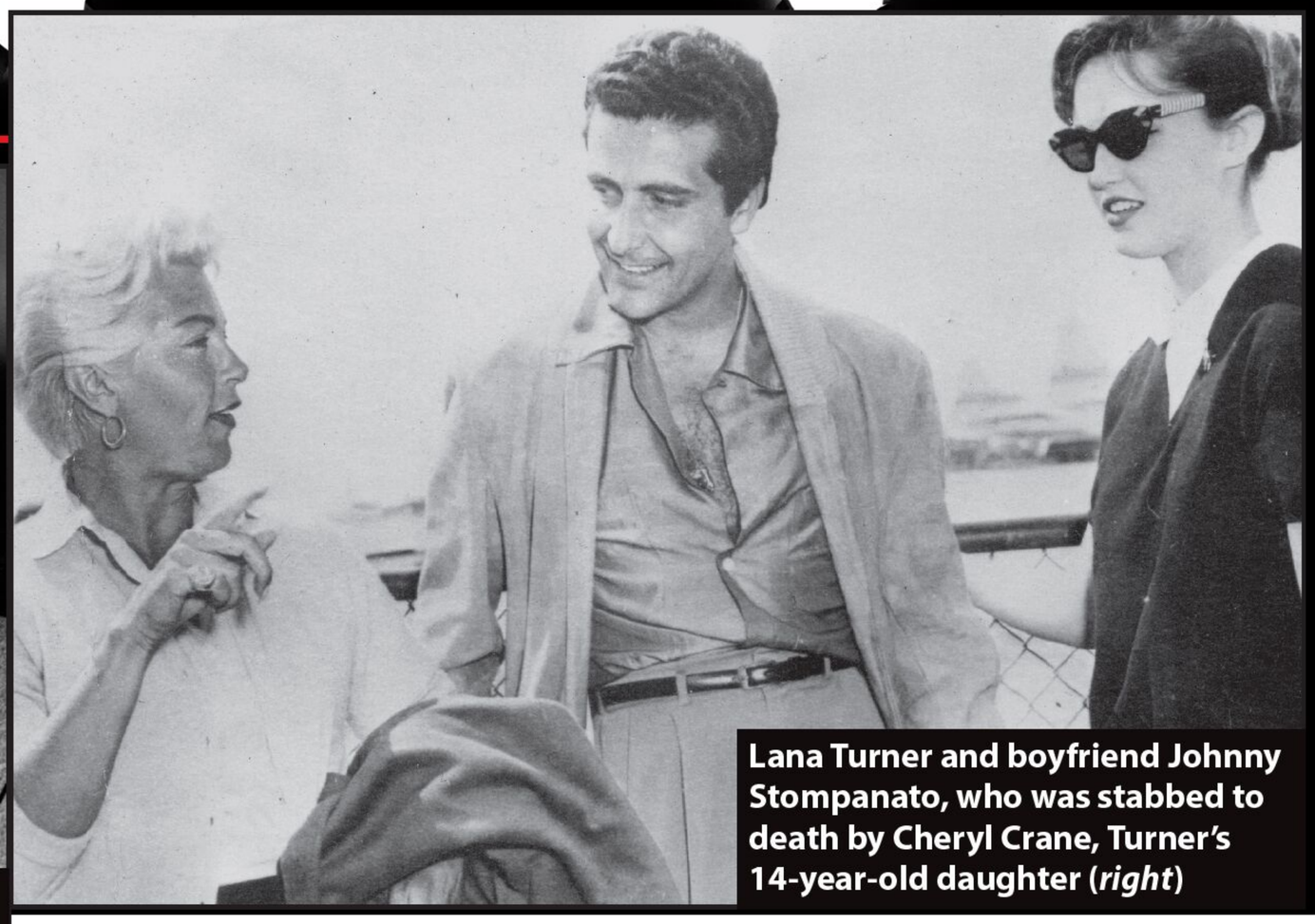
Roselli acted for other Hollywood players too. In the Thirties a pornographic 'stag' movie purportedly starring MGM star Joan Crawford began doing the rounds. Blackmailers were demanding $100,000 to hand over the negative. Roselli was called on to make a deal. $25,000 was as high as the studio would go. Roselli told the

'Bugsy' Siegel was assassinated by the mob on 20 June 1947



William Bioff was charged with violating the federal anti-racketeering law

Benjamin 'Bugsy' Siegel (*left*) and George Raft were great friends



Lana Turner and boyfriend Johnny Stompanato, who was stabbed to death by Cheryl Crane, Turner's 14-year-old daughter (*right*)

blackmailers that if they didn't take the deal he would have them killed. They capitulated, and he pocketed the $25,000.

Roselli lived the Hollywood dream. He dated starlets, he is rumoured to have bedded Marilyn Monroe, married a minor star, June Lang, and counted Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra as friends. At one point he even founded his own mini film studio.

UNION RULES

All the studios were in the thrall of the gangsters. The main weapon was their control of the unions, particularly International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). One word from Chicago or New York could shut down film production indefinitely. In 1936 a group of gangsters decided to shake the studio heads down for an unprecedented $2 million. Mobster Willie Bioff told MGM executive Nicholas Schenck that if he didn't pay, the union would shut down the industry. 'We want $2 million from you and your pals or else! If you don't pay we'll close every theatre in the country!' Bioff had yelled. And, to further humiliate them, Bioff insisted the studio heads deliver his cash in person.

Schenck got the mobsters down to $1 million. MGM chairman Louis B Mayer held out – until the mob threatened to murder him. The downpayments were delivered to the gangsters by the most powerful executives, in brown paper bags. Meanwhile, studio accountants struggled to disguise the cash outflows. One $12,000 payment was recorded as 'Christmas presents for critics'.

Another hood, Bugsy Siegel, controlled the extras union from whose members he skimmed $400,000 a year, adding it to his criminal income, which included the proceeds of a gambling ship moored in the bay, for which he had borrowed money from his friend George Raft, as well as illegal casinos and horse racing. Siegel lived next door to Humphrey Bogart and Bing Crosby in a fancy part of Bel Air. The friends called themselves The Holmby Hills Rat Pack. He dated Lana Turner and Ava Gardner and organised illegal card games for studio heads Jack Warner and Louis B Mayer. Like Roselli, he became as much a part of the Hollywood scene as the stars, even appearing regularly in the town's gossip columns.

Stars palled around with mobsters. Lana Turner dated one, Johnny Stompanato, who was fatally stabbed in 1958. Bing Crosby was rumoured to have run up gambling debts with mafia friends which led to threats to his life. Frank Sinatra's ties to the mob were an open secret, and the FBI had a file on him stretching back years.

For decades the mob exerted its malevolent influence on Hollywood, but its powers began to fade. In 1970 Congress passed the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act, which made prosecuting the mafia much easier. In the following years, the FBI pursued the major crime syndicates in New York and Chicago, decimating them.

In Hollywood, the collapse of the studio system further eroded the mob's influence. By the Eighties the studios, once run by colourful individuals, sometimes undistinguishable from the gangsters, had been absorbed into conglomerates with millions of shareholders, which were much more difficult for the mob to extort.

In 1988 California Attorney General John Van de Kamp declared the mafia was the least of Los Angeles' problems compared to the rapidly growing street gangs The Crips and The Bloods.

Perhaps the most ironic symbol of the mob's declining influence on Hollywood was the fate of Handsome Johnny. In 1976 a 55-gallon oil drum was discovered floating in Dumfoundling Bay near Miami. Inside was a decomposing body, its legs sawn off. Fingerprints identified the corpse as Roselli's. Having turned state's evidence years earlier, the Mob's Man in Hollywood had, in true mafia movie style, been sent to sleep with the fishes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Martin Scorsese's movie GoodFellas (1990) is based on the life of gangster Henry Hill, who found Hollywood and the mafia eerily similar, saying, 'My adventures as a gangster prepared me nicely for swimming with the sharks of Wilshire Boulevard.'

Drake and his comedy partner Jack Edwardes appeared as Mick and Montmorency

Henry McGee was Drake's straight man, Mr Pugh, for five years in The Worker

Hello My Darlings!

Lin Bensley recalls how the knockabout comedy of Charlie Drake led to a shocking accident that almost ended his career

DID YOU KNOW?

After working in a couple of pantos with Cannon and Ball, Drake, having grown too old to perform his more energetic slapstick stunts himself, willingly coached the comedy double act with whom he formed a close friendship.

Had he been inclined, Charlie Drake could have justifiably proclaimed himself as the last of our great slapstick practitioners; a cherubic-faced comic who had mastered the physical agility required by the exponents of such a demanding brand of mirth making. His rotund stature, red locks and wheedling falsetto bore all the theatrical hallmarks of a court jester from the commedia dell'arte.

The son of an impoverished newspaper vendor, Drake was born in Elephant and Castle in south London on 19 June 1925, and began his career as a singer before turning to comedy. Pairing up with former RAF buddy Jack Edwardes, they formed a double act and first appeared on children's TV in 1953 billed as Mick and Montmorency.

Drake gained his big break when he guested on Bob Monkhouse and Denis Goodwin's sketch show Fast and Loose, the following year. During the show, the ever-accident-prone Drake had part of his left ear blown off when Monkhouse fired a revolver loaded with blanks.

SPLISH SPLASH

Drake's brand of knockabout humour instantly found favour with the public and he was soon hosting a series of shows including Drake's Progress (1957-58); Charlie Drake In... (1958-60); The Charlie Drake Show (1960-61) when his catchphrase 'Hello My Darlings' caught the nation's attention.

He also enjoyed success as a recording artist and scored a number of top 30 hits such as Splish Splash (his gleeful parody of the Bobby Darin hit); Mr Custer (reaching No.1 on the American Billboard chart) and My Boomerang Won't Come Back. The latter was a major worldwide hit, and others that failed to chart such as Tanglefoot, I Bent My Assagai and I've Lost the End of My Yodel regularly received airplay and were no less likeable.

Between 1960 and 1967 he took the lead in four feature films that appealed to his legions of fans, though none garnered any appreciable box office success. The best was The Cracksman (1963) in which Drake played a repeatedly duped locksmith; a role that allowed him the opportunity to exhibit his abilities as a character actor between moments of finely executed visual gags.

In 1961 during an episode of The Charlie Drake Show entitled Bingo Madness, he suffered a fractured skull when a stunt went wrong. During the live transmission, he failed to re-emerge after being thrown through a window, and the credits were rolled as Drake was rushed to hospital. He remained unconscious for three days and did not return to the small screen for two years, but his comeback in The Worker was to prove spectacular.

Running intermittently from 1965 to 1970 and co-written by Drake and the vastly underrated comedy writer Lew Schwarz, The Worker featured Drake as an unemployable misfit willing to work but incapable of holding down a job. Many of the stunts required copious reserves of courage and stamina that could easily have defeated a man half his age, while his weekly verbal sparring in the Labour Exchange with Mr Pugh (Henry McGee) provided equally entertaining moments.

Charlie Drake's first wife Heather and their children (*l-r*): Stephen, Paul and Christopher

Another medium in which Drake found enduring success was pantomime; from Sleeping Beauty to Little Old King Cole and Cinderella; all served to further showcase his slapstick skills influenced as much by Buster Keaton as Charlie Cairoli. He topped the bill in sell-out seasons at the Palladium and made nine Royal Command appearances.

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

He also appeared in remakes of The Plank (1979) and Rhubarb Rhubarb (1980); two silent (barring sound effects) classics written by Eric Sykes, and Drake adds much to the general order of chaos that abounds in both.

As comedy tastes changed he turned to straight acting and won acclaim for his roles as Touchstone in Shakespeare's As You Like it and as Nagg in Samuel Beckett's Endgame. He won a Drama Award playing the homeless grifter Davies in Harold Pinter's The Caretaker, but is possibly now best remembered for his role as the uncompassionate moneylender, Joshua Smallweed in the BBC's adaption of Bleak House.

Once estimated to be worth £5 million, Drake liked a flutter and gambled away most of his money. He once owned 14 racehorses, a cavalcade of prestigious cars, a luxury yacht and a mansion in Surrey, but lost it all. Drake played hard, but he worked hard too. For him timing was everything and, while he rehearsed every stunt to perfection, he admitted in his autobiography that he had broken almost every bone in his body in his pursuit of laughter.

After suffering multiple strokes, Drake died on 23 December 2006, at Brinsworth House, a home for retired actors and performers. Aged 81, it was a cheerless postscript for man who had brought happiness to millions around the world for over three decades. Farewell, our darling.

Head turners

Where the Hollywood machine saw potential it was never afraid to exploit it. With a bottle of hair dye and a team of stylists and make-up artists, young starlets were transformed into screen goddesses

RITA HAYWORTH

Long before she seduced us all in Gilda (1946), Margarita Carmen Cansino had a career as a professional dancer. Her Spanish heritage gave her an exotic look that often saw her cast as Argentinian, Russian or Egyptian. But when she signed with Columbia Pictures they wanted her to appear more 'American' to rival MGM's starlets. And so Margarita was sent into exclusion and underwent extensive painful electrolysis to raise her Mediterranean hairline by an inch. Her black hair was dyed flame red and she re-emerged as Rita Hayworth, Hollywood's own Cinderella (and eventually she even married a real-life prince!).

DID YOU KNOW?

Jean Harlow's once thick eyebrows were shaved off for a part in The Adventures of Marco Polo (1938). They never grew back and had to always be redrawn with an eyebrow pencil.

MARLENE DIETRICH

For her first Hollywood film, Marlene lost 15lbs in weight, her hair was dyed blonde and her eyebrows tweezed into thin arched lines. She also indulged in an early version of contouring with a darker shade of foundation applied to the lower half of her cheeks to emphasise her high cheekbones. Rumour has it, she enhanced the look even more by having her molars removed to leave her cheeks looking hollow.

MARILYN MONROE

Emmeline Snively of Marilyn's first model agency remembered, 'her hair was dirty blonde... and quite unmanageable. I knew at once it would have to be bleached and worked on.' Marilyn had electrolysis to remove her widow's peak and her hair was then straightened and re-permed into soft curls. The model agency also taught her to smile differently – her original beam showed her gums and 'made her nose look too long'.

LANA TURNER

In her early films, Lana Turner had natural auburn hair and was even billed 'the red-headed sensation who brought "it" back to the screen'. But by 1941 she was being billed as the most glamorous actress since Harlow and had aped Jean's famous platinum blonde hair.

JEAN HARLOW

Nicknamed the blonde bombshell, Jean Harlow shot to fame in Howard Hughes's Hell's Angels (1930). Her platinum hair became synonymous with the characters she played, but Jean always claimed it was natural. Howard Hughes offered $10,000 to any hairstylist who could match the colour. Her hairstylist, Alfred Pagano, later revealed he achieved the look with a mixture of peroxide, ammonia and household bleach.

MIA FARROW

Vidal Sassoon is often credited with Mia Farrow's change from long hair to the famous pixie cut, but, in an interview in The New York Times, Mia revealed, 'I had literally cut it myself with a pair of fingernail scissors while working on the Peyton Place TV series. My then-boyfriend, Frank Sinatra, loved the cut, so I kept it short. No disrespect to Mr Sassoon, but he had nothing to do with it.'

MARGARET SULLAVAN

Frequent James Stewart co-star, Margaret Sullavan found Hollywood to be fickle about her looks. 'The first day I was in Hollywood they looked me over... and whatever it was that was so beautiful when they wanted to hire me, they now wanted to change. They began with the mole on my left cheek. In New York, they'd told me that was the clincher – that was the mark of beauty. So they took it off! That was the first sacrifice. "You have to have new teeth", they said next. "Yours need repairing and straightening anyway, and so we thought we might as well take out that whole upper row..."

'"Your face is lopsided", they told me next... They fixed that in the make-up department. They put lipstick on the corner of my mouth and painted the right eyebrow higher than the left to raise my face on the right side.'

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY...

When film producer David O Selznick brought Ingrid Bergman to Hollywood he told her she should change her name, fix her teeth, tweeze her eyebrows and wear more make-up. She refused to do so. By the Forties, her style, with thicker eyebrows and more natural make-up, became the fashion.

Jodie Foster and the year that shocked

JD Savage revisits the year Disney girl Jodie Foster became 'Little Miss Shocker', drawing both acclaim and concern for her sometimes disturbingly authentic portraits of some very adult roles while still in her early teens

Alicia Foster was born in Los Angeles in November 1962 to a Hollywood press agent mother, who was determined her daughter would have a showbiz career. Indeed, she started acting, firstly in TV commercials, at age three. She was probably most at risk making Disney's family movie Napoleon and Samantha (1972), about a kid couple who embark on a dangerous mountain hike with a pet lion. At one point, a stand-in lion attacked her, picking her up in its mouth and shaking her while the crew ran away (with their equipment).

250 girls auditioned to play teen prostitute Iris in Taxi Driver

DID YOU KNOW?

Foster, who never had an acting lesson, said that for Taxi Driver, she knew how streetworkers behaved simply from having watched Klute (1971) and other prostitute movies.

Yet it wasn't until 1976, by which point Foster, professionally known as Jodie, was a veteran of several movies and TV series, that questions arose about the roles she was being cast in and their potential impact on her well-being. This was the year Photoplay magazine dubbed her 'Little Miss Shocker' and The New York Times wrote about 'Jodie Foster's Rise from Disney to Depravity.'

STREET WISE

Her first controversial film that year was Martin Scorsese's iconic Taxi Driver. The gritty drama follows ticking timebomb Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro), a lonely, mentally unstable Vietnam veteran navigating New York's sleaziest streets as a cabbie. His growing frustration finally finds release in an anarchic, bloody shooting spree.

Foster had previously worked with Scorsese in Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore (1974), playing a small role as a boozy shoplifting strategist calling herself Audrey. Despite her age at that point, she'd made more movies than Scorsese, De Niro, or anyone else on set.

In Taxi Driver, she plays Iris, a 12-year-old prostitute Bickle tries to rescue. After reading the script, Foster thought it was a great role for a 21-year-old, but couldn't believe they were offering it to her, 'the Disney kid'.

The Los Angeles welfare board, tasked with protecting child actors, also deemed the role inappropriate. A compromise was finally reached; Foster's 19-year-old sister Connie would be her body double for explicit scenes. Also, before filming began, Foster had to undergo a four-hour session with a Los Angeles psychiatrist to affirm her mental stability. Joining the set, she found the crew uncomfortable about her role, and an embarrassed Scorsese unsure how to direct her.

A welfare worker visited daily, examining the rushes to ensure she wasn't around even when De Niro's character swore. Yet Foster took everything in her stride, even finding the gory special effects in the climactic shooting scene 'neat'. It proved to be her breakout role, drawing much critical acclaim.

TALLULAH TIME

Foster's next film seemed far more innocent by comparison. Alan Parker's directorial debut, Bugsy Malone, was mostly shot in Buckinghamshire's Pinewood Studios and premiered in UK cinemas in May 1976. A musical spoofing Thirties gangster movies, with an all-child cast and set in a realistic-looking Twenties New York during Prohibition – although it's a sarsaparilla racket, rather than liquor that its criminal gangs try to control. The genre's inherent violence is sidestepped by its child hit squads using whipped cream for ammunition, either as the hurled cream pies of traditional slapstick or shot by rapid-fire splurge guns. Adding to the surrealism, their songs, penned by Paul Williams, are dubbed by incongruous adult singers.

Some perceived discomforting elements, however, especially citing Foster's character Tallulah, a hard-bitten nightclub singer-cum-gangster's moll. In heavy make-up, she vamps her way through a suggestive torch song at Fat Sam's Speakeasy, teasing and seductively stroking the faces of even younger-looking boys in the crowd. She has some of the much-loved movie's best lines, although others are sexually suggestive, including inviting titular nice guy Bugsy (Scott Baio) to smear her lipstick and calling failed gang lord Fat Sam (John Cassisi) 'Lover Boy'.

Foster herself was mostly only freaked out after her hair was bleached an unnatural blonde, which nobody had forewarned her about. She burst into tears upon seeing the results.

Fresh from working in Hollywood with A-List talent, it was also a humbling culture shock to find herself in England with a cast of 200 kids new to acting, including many hard-to-control New York miniature hoodlums bent on sabotaging other

Foster had more experience of filmmaking than Scorsese or De Niro on the set of Taxi Driver

Connie Foster (*right*) was her sister's body double for any explicit scenes

John Cassisi, Jodie Foster and Scott Baio in gangster film Bugsy Malone

Foster also starred in body-swap comedy Freaky Friday with Barbara Harris

production's sound stages. Overwhelmed by the chaos, Parker left her to do her own thing, later claiming, 'she directed me as much as I directed her'.

Although the sometimes unpolished performances of the other kids add to the movie's charm, Foster impressed as its evident consummate professional.

ONE REGRET

The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane, based on a horror novel by Laird Koenig, was filmed, like the others, in 1975, and had its first screenings in 1976. Foster, who'd just turned 13, stars as Rynn Jacobs, an independent, resourceful kid living alone in a large house in Quebec where bodies start to multiply in the basement. She's visited and sexually harassed by her landlady's son Frank Hallet (Martin Sheen), who later returns to kill her pet hamster, and she's pestered by the snooping landlady (Alexis Smith). Soon, she meets a polio-afflicted oddball and loner Mario (Scott Jacoby) a boy she grows to trust – even enough to show him what's in her cellar.

For disrobing shots for an underage sexual encounter with Mario, Foster's older sister Connie was used again as a body double. Nonetheless, an embarrassed Foster later asked the director to edit out the scene. He was happy to comply, but one of the co-producers, who reportedly wanted more of that sort of thing, insisted it remained.

Although a cult favourite, and despite her assured performance, this is the one film of the trio Foster regretted making, citing its unsettling themes, including animal cruelty (although a dead hamster from a laboratory was used for that disturbing scene).

The prolific actor had two other films released that year: the sentimental drama Echoes of a Summer and Disney's mother-and-daughter personality-switch comedy Freaky Friday, showcasing her extraordinary versatility.

There was little doubt she'd soon ace the often difficult transition from child to adult actor. After all, she'd long been playing children who were essentially little adults, imbuing the roles with a depth and maturity beyond her years.

Scott Jacoby and Foster in The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane

DID YOU KNOW?

There was rivalry between Bugsy Malone's UK and US kids, with Foster terrorised by 'really scary' girl dancers from Manchester and Leeds who'd block her path at Pinewood, armed with fire extinguishers.

On Top of the World

Karen and Richard Carpenter gave the world musical perfection. But was it at too high a price?

Young Richard Carpenter was a musical prodigy. He spent hours listening to his father's collection of 78s – everything from classical to big band – and studied piano at Yale. His younger sister Karen however, only took up the glockenspiel, as a way of getting out of school sport. But she adored her older brother, 'I did everything that Richard did. If he listened to music, I listened to music. I idolised him so much.'

Karen switched to playing drums, but it was another instrument that would change their fortunes forever. Aged just 16, Karen had a beautiful alto voice that stopped you in your tracks. The duo made some demo tapes, which ended up at Herb Alpert's A&M records. Herb recalled, 'The first note I heard from this tape was Karen's voice. It was amazing. This voice was buzzing into my body.'

It was 1969 and The Carpenters were on their way. They had a minor hit with a cover of The Beatles' Ticket to Ride, but it was their second single that changed everything. Written by Burt Bacharach, Close to You was a worldwide hit and The Carpenters were voted best new artist at The Grammys in 1970.

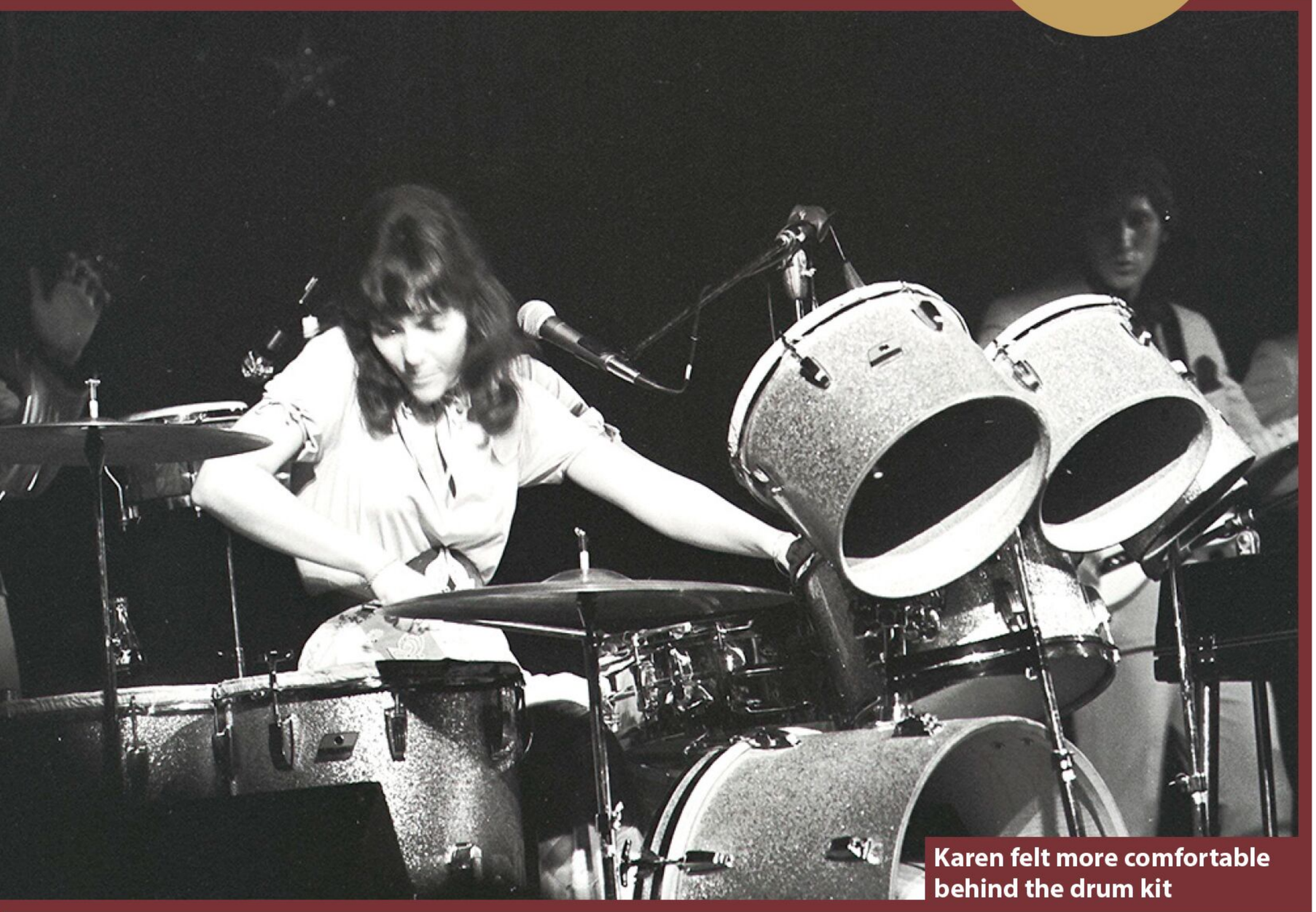
CREATIVE SUCCESS

Richard was seen as the creative force – he chose the music and scored the lush arrangements that so suited Karen's voice. It was Richard who spotted the song, We've Only Just Begun – then being used in a TV commercial. It would go on to become the wedding song for a generation. The Carpenters became a hit machine pumping out perfectly crafted pop gems – Yesterday Once More, Goodbye to Love, Superstar, For All We Know – for their eager fans who lapped up what the edgier music critics dismissed as 'soft rock'.

But success came at a price. By their second album, Karen was no longer playing the drums and, without her drum kit to hide behind, she became paranoid about her appearance. She had always been self-conscious about what she perceived as 'chubbiness' and now she went on a rigid diet, but was never satisfied with her look. As time went on this obsession got out of control and Karen was in the grip of a then little-known illness – anorexia nervosa. Misnamed the slimmer's disease, it is now better understood to be linked to a need for the sufferer to take control of their life – by rigidly controlling what they eat.

DID YOU KNOW?

Madonna was a big fan, saying, 'Karen Carpenter had the clearest, purest voice. I'm completely influenced by her harmonic sensibility.'



Karen felt more comfortable behind the drum kit

As Karen's weight loss became apparent – often there would be a collective gasp from the audience when she came on stage – those around her would try to get her to eat. As band member John Bettis later recalled, 'From the outside the solution looks so simple. All a person has to do is eat. So we were constantly trying to shove food at Karen...' Of course it didn't work.

In 1975, Karen collapsed and ended up in hospital and the band's European tour was cancelled. The stress took its toll on Richard too, who developed an addiction to sleeping pills and he took time off to enter rehab in 1979 – fortunately with success.

Tellingly, it was while Richard was off the scene that Karen took a step that seemed very much like she was taking back control. She decided to record a solo album – with raunchier songs, often with a disco edge. Karen remembered this as one of the happiest times in her life. But A&M records didn't like what they heard and, most importantly, neither did Richard. She was persuaded not to release the album. Her bid for freedom hadn't worked.

This setback was followed by a disastrous marriage to handsome property developer Tom Burris after a whirlwind romance. On the surface he had seemed like the perfect partner but, not only did he hide his vasectomy from Karen (when she longed for children), he also spent her money and, after the wedding, became abusive and cruel about her appearance.

DANCING IN THE DARK

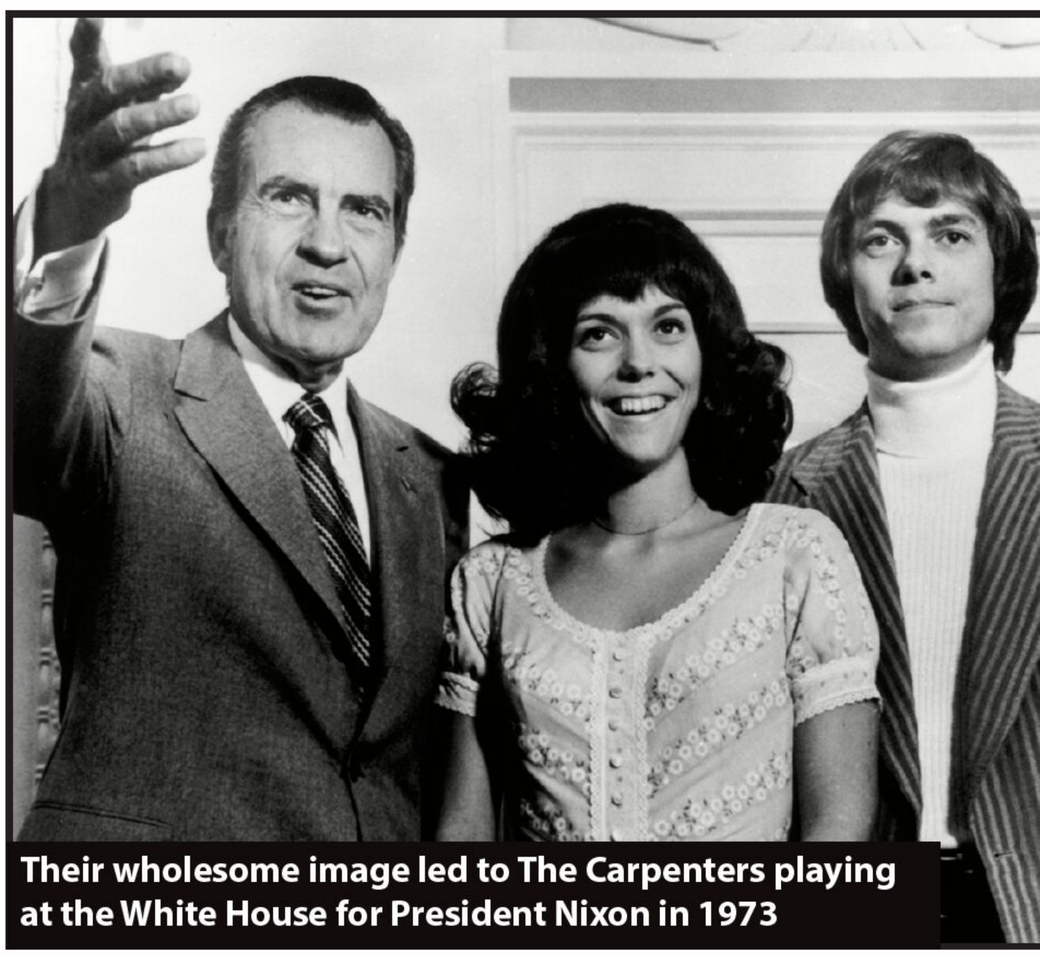
They soon split up but the damage was done and nothing could have been worse for Karen's fragile self-esteem. By now The Carpenters' hit-making magic had slowed down too. After many years in denial, in 1981 Karen decided she had to face up to her anorexia and sought therapy in New York. The therapist wasn't a qualified doctor, however, and Karen failed to put on weight. He later claimed her parents' lack of support and understanding contributed to her problems. Dangerously underweight, Karen had to be admitted to hospital and enter an artificial-feeding programme. As a long-time friend commented, 'She went to New York to try. It just wasn't the right way to do it... We were dancing in the dark.'

Back in California, Karen seemed on the surface to be eating. But unbeknown to her family she was secretly taking ipecac syrup, a liquid that induces vomiting, to keep her weight down.

On 4 February 1983, she was found unconscious from a heart attack and medics were unable to revive her. What Karen didn't know was that ipecac slowly dissolves the heart muscles. She had accidentally killed herself, aged just 32.

A heartbroken Richard would become the guardian of The Carpenters' legacy, releasing albums of unheard tracks, including, finally, in 1996, Karen's solo album.

Today the genius of The Carpenters, Richard's arrangements, combined with Karen's voice, is musically acclaimed. They were never cool, but, like ABBA, their reputation has grown over the years. While we will never tire of hearing Karen's soaring voice, it remains desperately sad that her spirit never had the chance to do the same.



Their wholesome image led to The Carpenters playing at the White House for President Nixon in 1973

Monkey's mission was to escort Tripitaka safely to India

Monkey Magic

Chris Hallam attempts to unravel the magical world of Monkey…

The ensemble cast often played different characters from episode to episode

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2007, an opera entitled, Monkey: Journey to the West based on the stories, was performed. The stage version was created by Chinese director, Chen Shi-Zheng working alongside British musician, Damon Albarn (of the band, Blur) and comic book artist, Jamie Hewlett.

Watching BBC2 on a Friday evening at 6pm these days would usually mean the chance to catch up with the latest edition of a gentle, celebrity-based game show. But at the dawn of the Eighties, the same timeslot offered something very different as viewers were transported to another realm, a world of magic, action and adventure in a land where people could travel from place to place by sitting on a cloud and in which their mouths don't always seem to move entirely in sync with what they are saying. For children throughout the land, Friday evenings meant just one thing: Monkey. In the UK, the series ran for 52 episodes (in fact, two 26-part series) from November 1979 until April 1981.

THE PUNKIEST MONKEY

Every episode would start in the same way: with a title sequence featuring a mysterious voiceover climaxing with a bolt of lightning striking an egg, triggering the hatching and subsequent birth of Monkey, who literally bursts out of the shell. The show would then launch into Monkey Magic, a title theme so catchy and memorable that many people even today wrongly remember the show as being called Monkey Magic rather than just Monkey.

Monkey star Masaaki Sakai is still a regular face on Japanese TV

Much about this is, of course, very odd. Why, for example, is a monkey – a mammal – hatching from an egg? Also, why does the eponymous hero, apparently literally a monkey when he is born, become a human man by the time he reaches adulthood? These are good questions. The theme song only really explains that he was 'born from an egg on a mountaintop' and that he was 'the punkiest monkey that ever popped'. But the oddness doesn't stop there.

This is the tale of how Monkey (Masaaki Sakai), a clownish 7th Century warrior and monkey king is imprisoned under a mountain as punishment for disobeying the gods. He is then freed and recruited to go on a quest to travel from China to India by a Buddhist priest called Tripitaka (Masako Natsume) to retrieve some religious scrolls. They are joined by two former angels who have been cast out of heaven: Sandy, a moody philosopher type (Shirō Kishibe) and Pigsy (played first by Toshiyuki Nishida and then by Tonpei Hidari in the second series), a lust-crazed pig-monster.

Monkey is a warrior, armed with a magical staff gifted by a dragon king, that he can shrink and grow at will. Among Monkey's other powers are the means to summon up a special cloud he can fly around on and the ability to shape-shift. On one occasion, he transforms into a girl to fool Pigsy while another time, he changes into a hornet.

The sheer novelty of Monkey being broadcast as a Japanese series dubbed into English and with so many unique and unusual fantasy and comic elements made it an immediate cult favourite with British TV audiences. As long-term fan, Lee Atkinson recalls, 'No-one had done this at the time. We hadn't seen this on British television. As a kid it was easy to impersonate. The sound effects were easy to do with your mouth and we all like to swing broomsticks around and pretend we're kung-fu masters.'

JOURNEY TO THE WEST

While the sideburns and kung-fu-style fight sequences now make the show seem like very much a product of the late Seventies, Monkey had, in fact, been around for a long time in various forms. The stories had been adapted from a 16th Century Chinese book called Journey to the West by Wu Cheng'En by British writer, David Weir. A prolific scriptwriter, Weir had previously translated The Water Margin (1973-74), turning that Japanese series, again, based on a Chinese novel, into a success on British TV.

British talent also played a vital role in Monkey's production with the likes of Andrew Sachs and Miriam Margolyes, David Collings and Peter Woodthorpe among the actors providing the dubbed voices for the English language version of the programme. Japanese actor, Masaaki Sakai, who played Monkey on screen, had first found fame performing with Japanese rock band, The Spiders in the Sixties. The traditionally male role of Tripitaka was given to the decidedly female Masako Natsume after it was decided she fit the requirements of the part more closely than any of the men who had auditioned.

The gang had many adventures and with the original book of Journey to the West running to 100 chapters long, Monkey could have potentially lasted a very long time. As it was, the show never managed to bring the story to its natural conclusion on TV and it came to an end on BBC2 in 1981, despite being repeated for many years after that. Even today, more than 40 years after it was first broadcast, a solid fan base still remains. The impact of Monkey seems destined to echo through the annals of TV history forever.

90TH ANNIVERSARY

ELVIS PRESLEY™

LIMITED EDITION GOLD-PLATED LADIES' WATCH

The ultimate celebration of his life, music and legacy

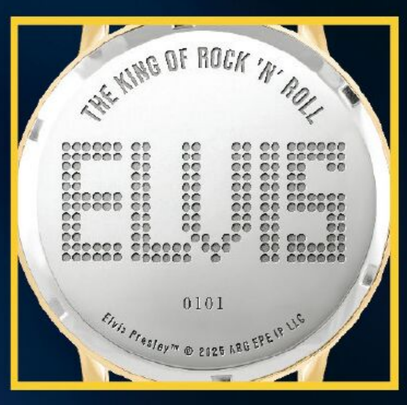
Artwork by acclaimed artist Nate Giorgio

Limited to 9,999 editions worldwide

Precision quartz movement

Glitters with over 60 SVENKA™ Crystals

SIGNATURE PRODUCT



Shown larger than actual size. Measures 1.2 inches (3 cm) in diameter (excluding crown). Adjustable slide buckle closure.

PAY NOTHING NOW

PRIORITY ORDER FORM

Please Respond Promptly

To: The Bradford Exchange, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA

YES! Please order __ (Qty) of **THE 'KING OF ROCK 'N' ROLL™, GOLD-PLATED LADIES' WATCH** for me as described in this advert.

Complete today or Call 0333 234 3888

Title.....Name.....
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address.....

.....

Postcode..... Phone.....

Email Address.....

Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Please note, we may contact you via mail, email and mobile with information about your reservation. For details of our privacy policy, please go to www.bradford.co.uk/privacypolicy or contact us at the above address or phone number.

The Bradford Exchange · Since 1973 ·

526-EAS30.01

Order Ref:460890

Celebrating the 90th Annivesary of The King of Rock 'n' Roll

With his dreamy smile, his show-stopping moves, his one-of-a-kind voice and captivating looks, Elvis Presley™ had it all and stole the hearts of millions around the world. On the 90th Anniversary of Elvis' birth, celebrate the musical legend with the officially licensed *'King of Rock 'n' Roll™' Gold-Plated Ladies' Watch* – featuring the **artwork of Nate Giorgio** and only available from The Bradford Exchange.

Handcrafted with Nate Giorgio artwork and over 60 Svenka™ crystals

Expertly handcrafted and richly gold-plated, this **precision Quartz movement** timepiece showcases a **full-colour portrait of Elvis Presley, by renowned artist, Nate Giorgio**. Resplendent in his iconic Las Vegas jumpsuit, Elvis is captured mid-lyric. The bezel sparkles with **over 60 genuine Svenka™ crystals**, while each quarter hour is **studded with a further crystal**. The engraved casing reverse features further tributes and **individual numbering**, whilst the mesh watch **strap is adjustable**.

Limited to just 9,999 editions worldwide - order yours now!

Limited to just 9,999 uniquely numbered editions, this gold-plated watch will be accompanied by a Certificate of Authenticity and our famous 120-day money-back guarantee. It will be available for just 5 interest-free instalments of £29.99 – that's only £149.95 (plus £9.99 S&S)*. Pay nothing now – complete and return your Priority Order Form today!

ELVIS ™ and ELVIS PRESLEY ™ are trademarks of ABG EPE IP LLC Rights of Publicity and Persona Rights: Elvis Presley Enterprises, LLC © 2025 ABG EPE IP LLC elvis.com | © Nate Giorgio | © The Bradford Exchange. * S&S - Shipping & Service. Offer applies to UK only. The first 100 edition numbers may be secured at a higher price whilst stocks are available. 526-EAS30.01

Scan me!

FASTEST WAY TO ORDER

www.bradford.co.uk/elvisgoldwatch

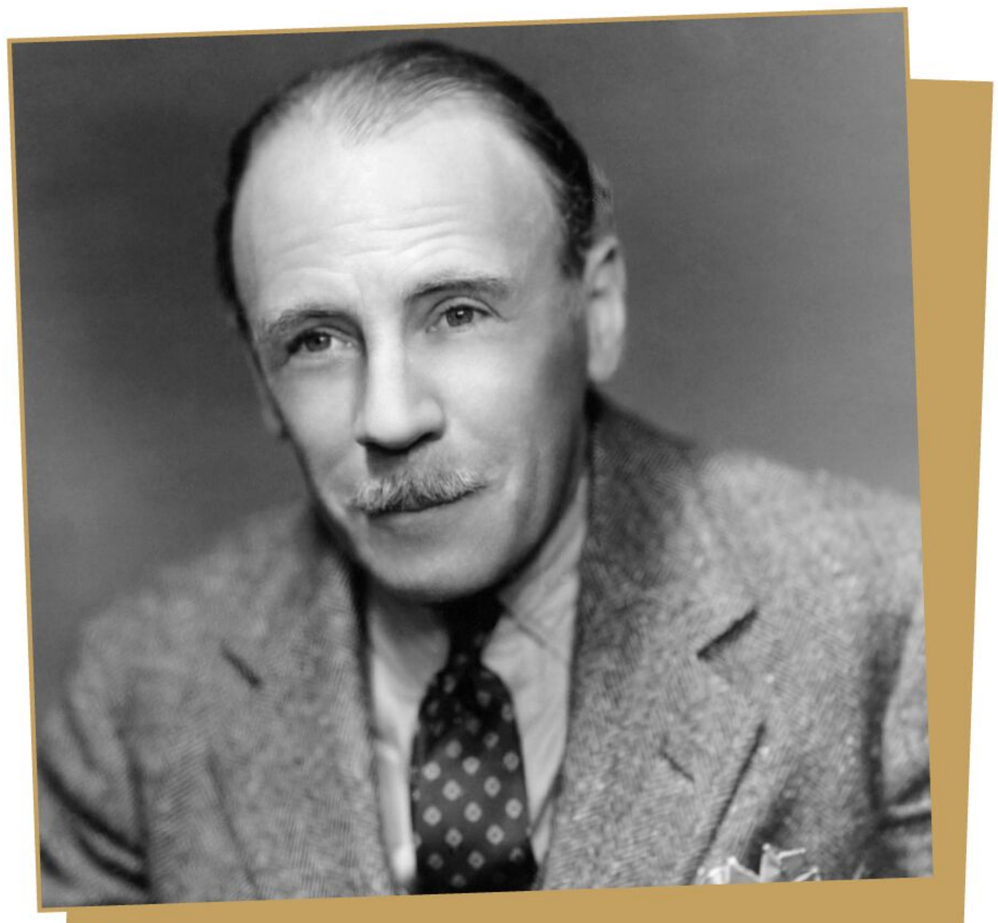
***Or call on* 0333 234 3888**

Lines are open: Mon-Thurs 10-6 Fri 9-5 Sat 9-4

and quote reference code 460890

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

Forgotten Heroes of Comedy...



In the Golden Age of Hollywood there are a clutch of glittering comedies that feature a rather scatty, always engaging character actor. With baldpate and pencil moustache, this is London-born Roland Young, and he brought a unique, otherworldly urbane quality to Tinsel Town... direct from the West End and Broadway.

Although his father hoped young Roland would follow his footsteps and become an architect, the lad landed a place at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. He made his stage debut, in Find the Woman, in 1908, and less than five years later was appearing in New York, in Hindle Wakes. Steeped in rustic English charm, Young was proudly a Brit abroad. Indeed, he would happily hop between London and New York for much of his life.

He starred in two successful comedy plays, Good Gracious Annabelle! and A Successful Calamity, before service with the United States Army rudely interrupted his career. Playwright Clare Kummer, who had written the comedies, penned another romp, Rollo's Wild Oat, which opened at the Punch and Judy, in New York, in November 1920. Young was Rollo, Clare's daughter, Majorie, was Lydia. They married during the run, in 1921, and the following year he made his first film in Hollywood.

Roland started at the top: playing Doctor John Watson to John Barrymore's Sherlock Holmes (1922). At the end of the decade Young signed a three-year contract with MGM, but found his most interesting roles on loan to other studios, including, in 1931, playing Jeanette MacDonald's husband in Don't Bet on Women (1931).

'He brought a unique, otherworldly urbane quality to Tinsel Town'

Film mogul Alexander Korda invited Young back to Britain, casting him as the Marquis of Buckminster, a bachelor desperate to find a wife, in Wedding Rehearsal (1932); and as George Worthington Fotheringay, in The Man Who Could Work Miracles (1936), a special-effects laden fantasy based on the HG Wells novel.

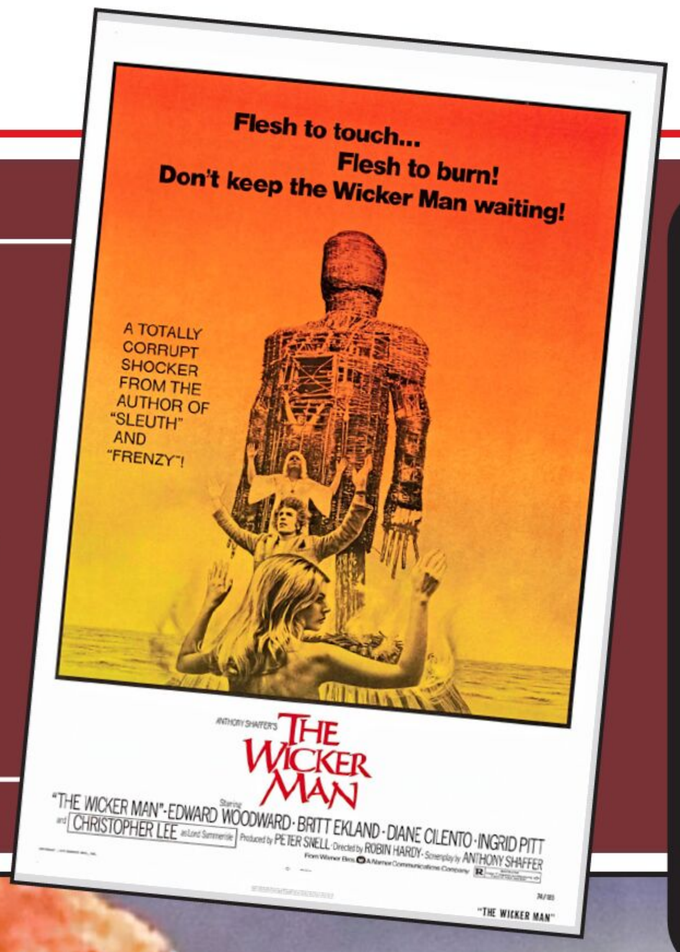
Back in Hollywood there were even more weird goings on when Young played the eponymous Topper (1937), a mild-mannered banker who is haunted by the spirits of Constance Bennett and Cary Grant! Young was nominated for an Academy Award for his performance – losing out to Joseph Schildkraut for The Life of Emile Zola. Young returned for two sequels, Topper Takes a Trip (1938) and Topper Returns (1941). Young played Uncle Willie in The Philadelphia Story (1940), and supported Bob Hope in The Great Lover (1949). He even brought heart-warming comic relief to Agatha Christie's And Then There Were None (1945). His dogged Detective William Henry Blore is hilariously stumped at every step of the way... until he gets it!

Young was filming right up until his death, at home in New York in 1953, and received two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1960. One for his film work, and one for television.

Visit the website of Robert Ross, Britain's Comedy Historian, at robertross.co.uk

MOVIE MASTERCLASS No.41

Cult classic The Wicker Man (1973) was a new kind of British horror film that didn't have to rely on violence or gore to make audiences feel uneasy



Uptight police Sergeant Neil Howie (Edward Woodward) arrives on Summerisle, a remote community off the coast of Scotland, to investigate the reported disappearance of a local schoolgirl. With the island inhabitants denying all knowledge of the missing 12-year-old, Howie becomes convinced they're hiding something. A devout Christian, he is increasingly shocked to discover pagan rituals and sexual promiscuity are rife among the islanders. He becomes convinced that the girl has been murdered as part of a ritual sacrifice, but what Howie doesn't realise until he challenges the community's leader, Lord Summerisle (Christopher Lee), is that he has been lured there deliberately and has a vital part to play in helping ensure the success of that year's crop.

According to writer Anthony Shaffer, Christopher Lee approached him looking for an original project, saying he wanted, 'to do a film without women who look like Barbara Windsor running up and down papier mâché corridors screaming'. The pair, together with producer Peter Snell, bought the rights to David Pinner's novel Ritual for £15,000. A later dispute about how much the book influenced Shaffer's screenplay, resulted in Pinner's name being removed from the credits.

British Lion Films was in financial trouble and needed to get the film in production quickly and on a tiny budget. Although set in May, filming took place in October and November, with fake leaves and blossom glued to the trees. The cast, whose costumes were often skimpy (or non-existent), struggled with the freezing temperatures.

Britt Ekland's infamous naked dance scene took 13 hours to shoot. Ekland, although happy to appear topless, demanded a body double for her behind. She later regretted the decision saying, 'They put in the ugliest, biggest bottom in the world. Mine was much smaller and much nicer.'

First-time director Robin Hardy considered David Hemmings and Michael York before casting Edward Woodward as Sergeant Howie. Woodward described the experience as, 'seven frantic weeks of sleepless nights… and a kind of wartime Blitz camaraderie.'

Woodward refused to visit the site where the Wicker Man was being built. His shocked reaction to the 36ft combustible tower at the climax of the film is genuine. He later told film critic Mark Kermode that it was the most terrifying moment of his six-decade career.

Christopher Lee considered Lord Summerisle the finest performance of his career, although he was unhappy with the way the final film was edited prior to release.

Gable's B-17 Flying Fortress bomber was named 'Ain't it Gruesome'

Gunning for GABLE

When Clark Gable joined the war, his biggest fan, Adolf Hitler, wanted him captured as a propaganda coup, reveals Brian J Robb

Captain Clark Gable, front right, with his bomber crew

DID YOU KNOW?

Gable only recorded five official flight missions, but it's believed he participated in many more off the books, partly to 'hide' from the Germans.

By the Forties, Clark Gable was the undisputed King of Hollywood, crowned by the film industry and starstruck audiences. In the Thirties Gable made his breakthrough in films including Possessed (1931) and Red Dust (1932), which promoted him to rugged romantic leading man status. He scored a Best Actor Oscar for 1934's screwball comedy It Happened One Night, with 1939's Gone with the Wind bringing another nomination. Also in 1939 the much-married Gable wed Carole Lombard. His rise seemed unstoppable – then came the Second World War and Adolf Hitler, who showed a peculiar personal interest in Gable.

Gable featured as a war correspondent in 1942's Somewhere I'll Find You, but he'd soon play a role in the real thing. Having completed To Be or Not to Be (1942), Lombard wanted to do her bit following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. She participated in War Bond rallies, raising $2 million in a single evening in her home state of Indiana. Lombard, her mother, and Gable's press agent Otto Winkler were due to return by train. Desperate to get back to Gable, Lombard opted to fly. On 16 January 1942 TWA Flight 3 crashed into Potosi Mountain, killing all on board.

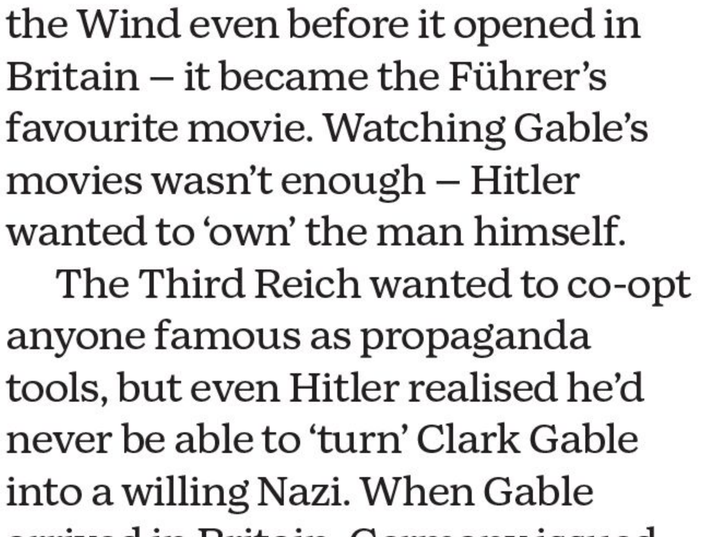
Gable was devastated by the loss of his 33-year-old wife. After a period of mourning, Gable returned to complete Somewhere I'll Find You, having lost 20lbs. Although President Roosevelt suggested the 41-year-old actor could best serve his country in patriotic movies, Gable joined the US Army Air Forces on 12 August 1942. Gable wasn't interested in a cushy time – he wanted to see real action.

From the US base at RAF Polebrook near Peterborough, throughout 1943 Captain Gable flew multiple combat missions over Europe, including Germany, in a B-17 Flying Fortress bomber. He almost lost his life twice, once when his flak-damaged aircraft was attacked by enemy fighters, and once when enemy fire just missed his head. MGM bosses panicked when they thought they could lose their top star. After several missions, some off the books, Gable returned to California and was promoted to Major in the Motion Picture Unit. By the summer of 1944, he'd been discharged – at the urging of MGM's Louis B Mayer.

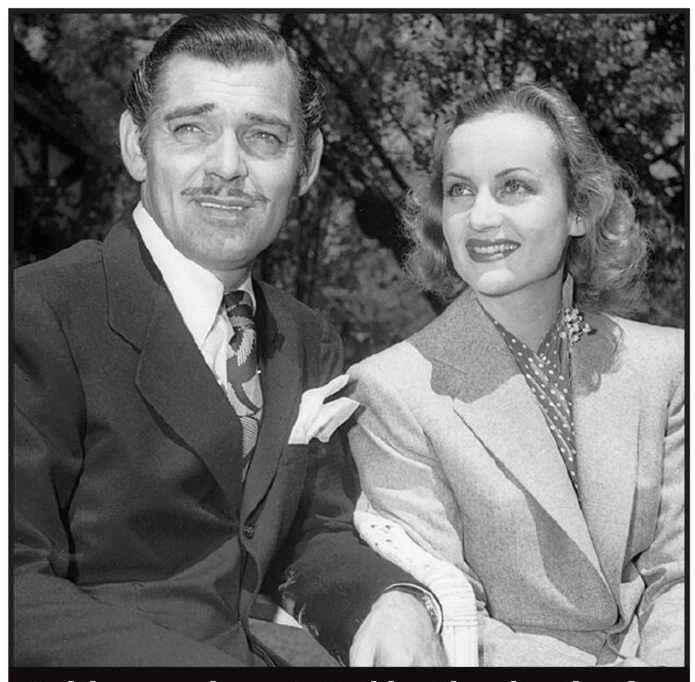
LOOK OUT, HITLER!

Clark Gable had one very infamous fan: Adolf Hitler! MGM's News of the Day announced Gable's joining the war effort by declaring, 'Watch out, Mr Hitler, Lieutenant Clark Gable is headed your way!' Despite that, Hitler admired Gable declaring him his favourite actor, perhaps due to Gable's German ancestry on his mother's side. German magazines even claimed Gable was related to Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, with 'Gable' based on the German 'Goebel'. Hitler had a smuggled film print of Gone with the Wind even before it opened in Britain – it became the Führer's favourite movie. Watching Gable's movies wasn't enough – Hitler wanted to 'own' the man himself.

The Third Reich wanted to co-opt anyone famous as propaganda tools, but even Hitler realised he'd never be able to 'turn' Clark Gable into a willing Nazi. When Gable arrived in Britain, Germany issued an ominous message saying they 'hoped to see him soon...'. According to Gable biographer Warren Harris, Hitler's solution was to order Hermann Göring, Chief of the Luftwaffe, to bring Gable to him. In



At the Motion Picture Unit, Gable made the movie Combat America (1945) and instructional shorts on flying B-17s



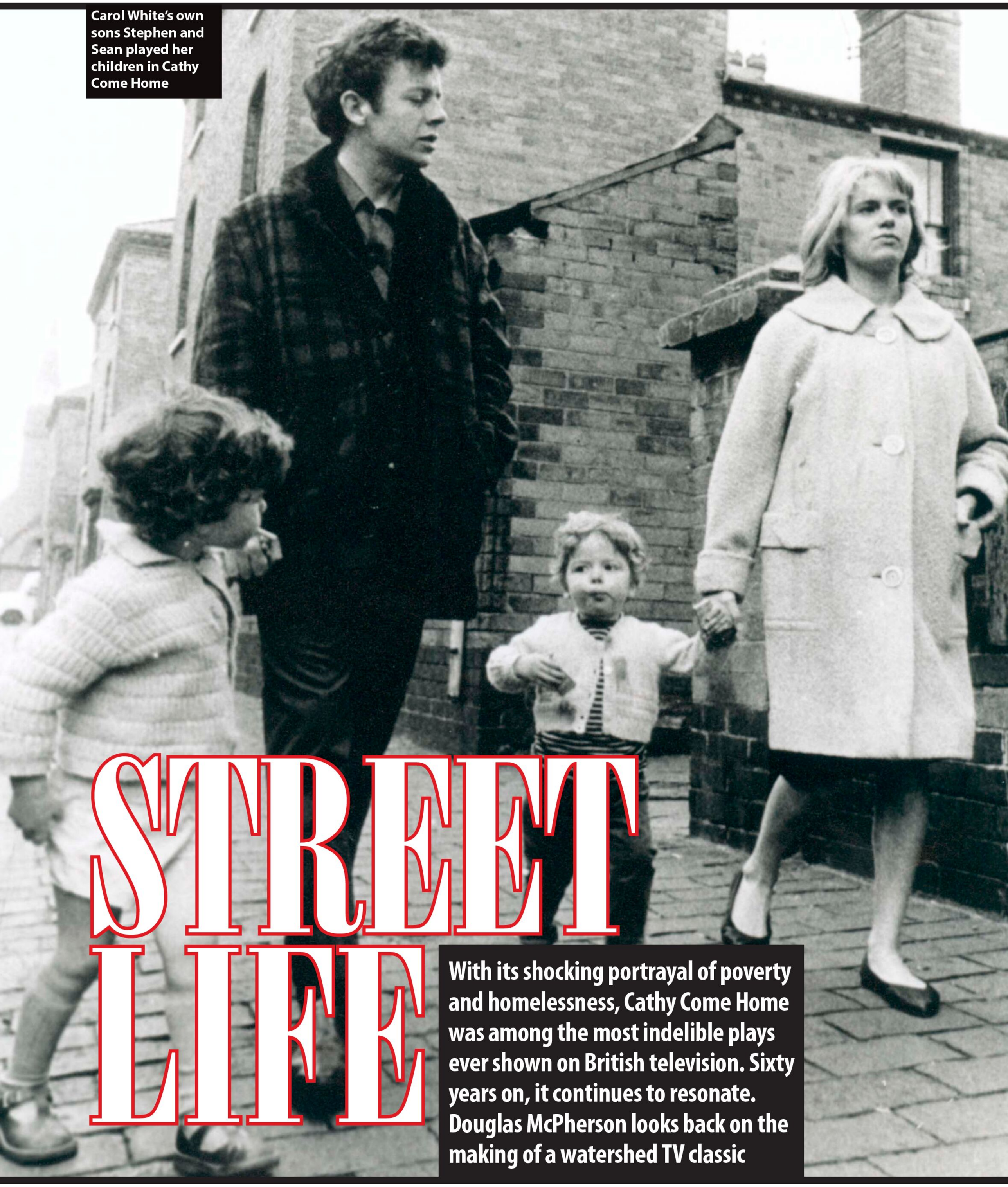
Gable was devastated by the death of his wife Carole Lombard

turn, Göring issued an order to all German pilots – whoever shot down and captured Gable alive would be rewarded with a $5000 bounty!

When Gable heard the news, he brushed it off, but inwardly worried that his being a target put his fellow airmen in added danger. His fear was that Germany planned to not only capture him, but that they'd make a spectacle of him, even touring him around Germany as a captive in a cage.

Gable had enlisted as he had a lingering death wish following his loss of Lombard. As he said to Otto Winkler's widow Jill, 'I'm going in, and I don't expect to come back, and I don't really give a hoot whether I do or not...' He also claimed, 'If a plane I'm in ever gets hit, I'm not bailing out.' You might say he didn't give a damn...

As an aerial gunner, Gable more than did his bit for the war effort. His cavalier attitude to whether he'd survive or not may have been tempered by news of Hitler's odd interest in him personally. Being captured by the Nazis and put on display was to Gable a fate worse than death. He survived the war a hero, while Hitler ended his war dead in a Berlin bunker. Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Gable went on to make a further 27 movies before his death, aged 59, in 1960. He also married a further two times. Perhaps thanks to the bounty he put on the actor's head, Hitler helped save Clark Gable's life.



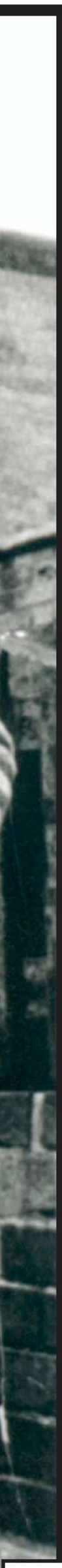
Carol White's own sons Stephen and Sean played her children in Cathy Come Home

STREET LIFE

With its shocking portrayal of poverty and homelessness, Cathy Come Home was among the most indelible plays ever shown on British television. Sixty years on, it continues to resonate. Douglas McPherson looks back on the making of a watershed TV classic

DID YOU KNOW?

Carol White's own life story was told in TV film The Battersea Bardot (1994), with White played by Wendy Morgan.



Mention of Britain in the Sixties often evokes a colourful, optimistic world of miniskirts and Mini cars, The Beatles and Carnaby Street. But there was a bleaker side to life in a country still impoverished by the effects of the Second World War, that was reflected in a string of socially aware kitchen-sink dramas.

Among the most lastingly impactful was Cathy Come Home (1966), a brutally realistic story of a family's descent into homelessness that a British Film Institute poll in 2000 rated as the second-best British TV programme ever made (after Fawlty Towers). In 2005, industry magazine Broadcast named it the UK's most influential TV programme of all time.

'Cathy herself has become an emblem of the suffering of homeless people,' said its director Ken Loach on the drama's 50th anniversary in 2016.

Cathy was the sixth film that Loach directed for The Wednesday Play series, which launched on BBC1 in October 1964 with a brief of tackling contemporary issues.

His fourth, Up the Junction, which aired in November 1965, dealt with back-street abortion – a hot topic of debate in the lead-up to the legalisation of terminations in 1967. As well as drawing complaints for its subject matter and bad language, Up the Junction was also accused of confusing viewers with its docu-drama style, which blended fact and fiction. 'We were very anxious for our plays not to be considered dramas but as continuations of the news,' said Loach, who continued the approach in Cathy, using voiceovers to add real-world statistics to the action.

Cathy Come Home was written by former documentary maker Jeremy Sandford whose wife, Nell Dunn, wrote Up the Junction. Both works were based on their experience of living in Battersea.

The story follows the eponymous heroine (played by Carol White, who had also starred in Up the Junction) who hitchhikes to London from the provinces in search of a more exciting life. Things go well when she marries cheery lorry driver Reg (Ray Brooks) and they have two children.

OFF THE CUFF

When Ray is injured in an accident and unable to work, however, the couple rapidly slide down the housing ladder, first staying with Reg's mother, then being evicted from a council house and living in a caravan, until they're eventually separated when Cathy moves into a short-term women's shelter.

The final scene finds Cathy homeless in a railway station where social workers forcibly take her children into care.

In contrast to most TV dramas up to that point, which were shot in the studio, Cathy was filmed almost entirely on location, using handheld 16mm cameras, which gave it a gritty realism.

For Brooks, fresh from starring in the big screen sex comedy The Knack ...and How to Get it (1965), it was an eye-opener.

'When we went to east London for filming, I couldn't believe the kind of circumstances that people were living in,' he said at the Homeless Film Festival in 2012. 'When we filmed in Birmingham on that caravan site, that was very frightening. I couldn't believe people were living in such straitened circumstances.'

Shot in four-and-a-half weeks, much of the play was improvised.

'You'd get a page that said, "Cathy and Reg go walking in the park", and the rest was blank,' Brooks recalled. 'Ken would say, "I want you to talk about trying to get a flat." And that's what we did. Long before Mike Leigh, we improvised everything.'

The final scene was shot at 3am in Liverpool Street Station, with real passengers unaware that the taking of Cathy's children wasn't real.

'If we'd staged it with extras walking past it wouldn't have had the same impact,' said Loach. 'We just put it in a real place and let it happen.'

Broadcast on 16 November 1966, Cathy was watched by 12 million people – a quarter of the population – and repeated the following week.

As one of the first programmes to throw a spotlight on homelessness and an unkind care system, the play was a catalyst for public discourse.

'Cathy was a very, very important and positive statement about the failure of the welfare state,' said John Bird, who founded The Big Issue in 1991.

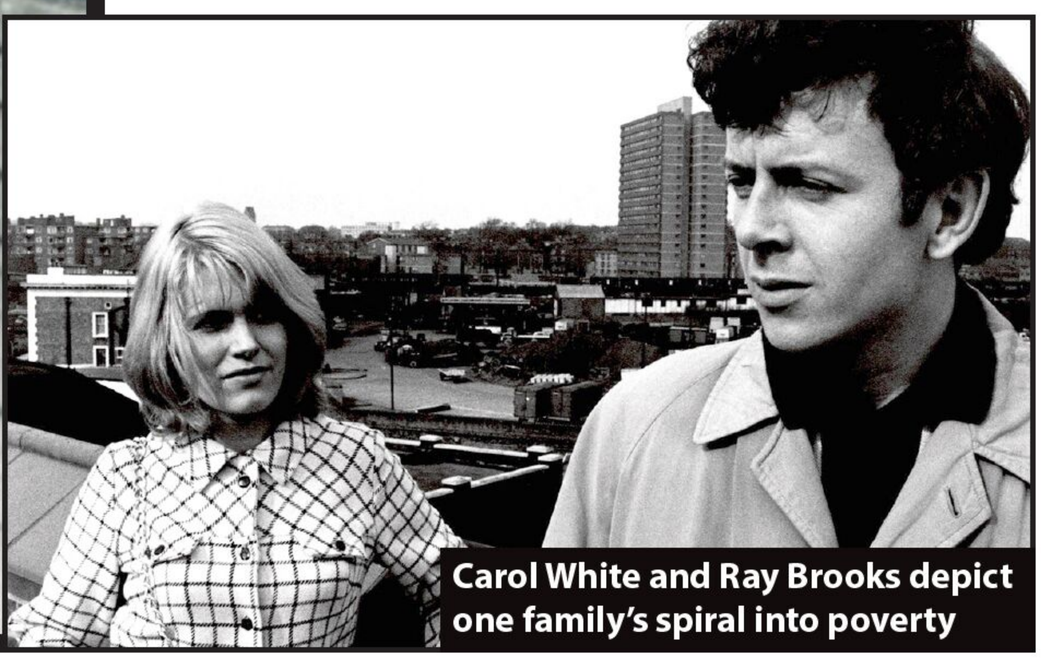
Questions were asked in Parliament and there was a huge swell of support for the homeless charities Shelter, which formed around the time of the broadcast, and Crisis, which launched a year later.

Loach went on to direct the similarly improvised film, Poor Cow (1967) also starring White, and the classic Kes (1969). Meanwhile Ray Brooks became the voice of Mr Benn and a favourite face on TV, including as Joe Macer in EastEnders (2005-7).

Cathy and Poor Cow made White one of the most recognised actors of the Sixties, but she sadly fell into her own tragedy of alcoholism and drug abuse and died in 1991, aged just 48.

The play itself has only grown in stature as an iconic piece of TV. In 2012, it topped a list in The London Standard of the TV programmes that changed the world.

When Loach looked back after half a century, however, his one regret was that very little had actually changed for real-life couples like Reg and Cathy.



Carol White and Ray Brooks depict one family's spiral into poverty

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

Marlene Dietrich had only very recently arrived in the US from Germany when she stopped by the City Lights film set to meet silent-movie legend Charlie Chaplin.

She had come to make the film Morocco (1930) for director Josef von Sternberg who had been instrumental in launching her film career after casting her as a cabaret singer in The Blue Angel (1930).

Von Sternberg had already made quite an impression on Chaplin and his United Artists partners when the then 30-year-old director made silent film The Salvation Hunters (1925) for the meagre budget of $4800. Mary Pickford immediately engaged him to write and direct her next feature and Chaplin commissioned von Sternberg to make A Woman of the Sea (1926) as a comeback vehicle for Edna Purviance. However, disappointed with the picture, Chaplin refused to distribute it. The failure saw von Sternberg return to Berlin, Germany, which is where he met Dietrich.

City Lights (1931) had become a troubled production, filmed over the course of three years, partly thanks to Chaplin's search for perfection but also due to financial pressures owing to a bill for back taxes and a recent (and publicly very acrimonious) divorce. Nevertheless it ultimately became Chaplin's personal favourite film.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dietrich starred in six films for von Sternberg between 1930 and 1935. He was instrumental in creating the star's glamorous and mysterious femme fatale image, leading critics to debate whether the credit for Dietrich's fame belonged more to the actress or von Sternberg.

Masters of reinvention

Over three decades Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat made a huge impact on British cinema, so why aren't their names better known? asks Steve O'Brien

DID YOU KNOW?

Sidney Gilliat was the son of George Gilliat, the one-time editor of the London Evening Standard.

When critics talk of the great British filmmakers of the Thirties, Forties and Fifties, there are names that are almost always brought up – Alfred Hitchcock, Powell & Pressburger, David Lean, Carol Reed... But often forgotten, and unjustly so, is the writing/directing partnership of Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat. It's very possible you've never even heard of them – when Gilliat passed away in 1994, followed by Launder three years later, their deaths barely registered on the media Richter scale. Yet take a look at their filmography and you'll see some of the most successful and beloved movies of cinema's Golden Age – The Lady Vanishes (1938), Night Train to Munich (1940), Green for Danger (1946), The Belles of St Trinian's (1954)... Individually, their names are attached to more than 100 films, together, almost 40, and yet they're rarely talked about these days. Where their filmmaking contemporaries continue to enjoy lavish retrospectives at the BFI and feature-length documentaries honouring their importance, Launder and Gilliat remain uncelebrated and under-appreciated.

It's possible that their greatest strength as filmmakers is also the reason they're not as venerated as Hitchcock, Lean or Powell. Unlike those more auteur-like directors they didn't have a signature style or a preferred genre. Over the course of their decades-long careers, they dabbled in virtually every category of film, from escapist thriller to saucy comedy, gritty drama to comic horror. 'Versatility,' Gilliat once said, 'was always our curse.' They even created two characters, Charters and Caldicott, who appeared across multiple movies, pre-dating the 'cinematic universe' that Marvel Studios claims to have invented, by 70 years.

FIZZING DIALOGUE

Both had started out in the early Thirties as screenwriters, Gilliat penning such fare as The Ghost Train (1931), Rome Express (1932) and The Man Who Changed His Mind (1936) while Launder was behind films including The Black Mask (1935) and Oh, Mr Porter! (1937). Their first joint credit was on the 1933 comedy Facing the Music, but it was their script for Alfred Hitchcock's 1938 adaptation of Ethel Lina White's novel The Wheel Spins, soon to be retitled The Lady Vanishes, that would be their breakout movie.

If you want an example of the fizzing dialogue and vivid characterisation for which Launder and Gilliat would become known, you need look no further than this classic of pre-war cinema. It helped that the writers' macabre sense of humour aligned so much with their director's and, in fact, several of the pair's movies after this would echo Hitchcock's trademark mix of suspense and whimsy.

Launder and Gilliat's most significant add-on to White's story were two cricket-mad eccentrics, Charters and Caldicott, played in the film by Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne. The characters, who, in The Lady Vanishes are more interested in the results of the Test Match than the missing Miss Froy, proved such a standout that the writers revived them for the 1940 wartime drama Night Train to Munich, directed by that other giant of British cinema, Carol Reed. Like The Lady Vanishes, this too was an adaptation of a book, in this case Gordon Wellesley's Report on a Fugitive, but with the inclusion of Charters and Caldicott, Launder and Gilliat's stamp is on it completely. The characters' ➤

Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne played Charters and Caldicott in four films including The Lady Vanishes (*left*) and Night Train to Munich (*above*)

dialogue is sharp and playful, 'I bought a copy of Mein Kampf,' Charters tells Caldicott. 'Occurred to me it might shed a spot of light on all this. I understand they give a copy to all the bridal couples over here.'

It's something that elevates what might have otherwise been a fairly routine thriller into something much more memorable.

Introduced almost as background colour in The Lady Vanishes, and upgraded to supporting characters in Night Train to Munich, Charters and Caldicott were made leads for the 1940 spy comedy Crook's Tour. They guested again in the Home Office-commissioned propaganda film Millions Like Us (1943), but a planned fifth appearance, in the Launder and Gilliat-penned and Launder-directed I See a Dark Stranger (1946), failed to materialise. The script had Charters and Caldicott once more as support, but with Radford and Wayne's fame now considerably greater, the pair demanded more screen time. Launder and Gilliat refused, and the two actors left the movie, their roles rewritten for two new characters, Captain Goodhusband (Garry Marsh) and Lieutenant Spanswick (Tom Macaulay).

In some ways, parting ways with Radford and Wayne would prove a blessing for Launder and Gilliat, freeing them up to explore different kinds of films, without the need to parachute in their famous comic creations. They'd made their directing debut with Millions Like Us, and from then on would be (largely, anyway) in control of their own screenplays, sometimes directing together, but mostly on their own, showing an insatiable need to challenge themselves in a variety of genres.

From the comedy of St Trinian's to the 'kitchen sink' style of Only Two Can Play, the pair refused to be pigeonholed

THE ST TRINIAN'S YEARS

In 1945, they set up their own production company, Individual Pictures, giving them even more autonomy. From here on, they decided to continue to write together, but direct – as the name of their company indicated – individually. 'Co-directing didn't work,' Gilliat told the author Brian McFarlane in 1992. 'Frank was very easy with actors, whereas I was very diffident.' Not that they were tied to each other creatively – one of the reasons their partnership survived so long is that they allowed themselves space to write and direct projects outside of the Launder-Gilliat marriage. Gilliat alone wrote and directed the fine thriller Green for Danger (1946), while the 1950 comedy The Happiest Days of Your Life saw Launder writing and directing. But whatever they did on their own, they would always come back to each other.

Fittingly, it was a Launder-Gilliat co-write that would become their

Trains appear in several of Launder and Gilliat's films including The Ghost Train *(above)* and Oh, Mr Porter! *(right)*

biggest hit since The Lady Vanishes.

The Belles of St Trinian's was a comedy inspired by Ronald Searle's school-based comic strips and starred Alastair Sim in dual roles as headmistress Miss Millicent Fritton and her twin brother, Clarence. The film was a commercial and critical smash, with Kine Weekly calling it a 'wacky, side-splitting collegiate extravaganza.'

In fact, the movie was such a success that it spawned a sequel in 1957, Blue Murder at St Trinian's, with Launder once more directing. The Pure Hell of St Trinian's (1960) and The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery (1966) duly followed.

Even in between St Trinian's features, they continued to spread their wings. The pair's 1959 comedy Left Right & Centre has little in common with the broad farce of the St Trinian's series. A crisp satire of the British political system, it's more Boulting Brothers than Carry On, while 1962's Only Two Can Play (directed by Gilliat, but from a script by Bryan Forbes) was a character-driven comedy-drama rooted in the kitchen-sink tradition. There was no genre, it seems, off limits to them.

Their output became less frequent in the second half of the Sixties, and their last project as a duo was 1972's thriller Endless Night, based on the Agatha Christie novel. It was released to mixed reviews, with Christie herself saying of the film, 'It got flatter and less interesting every minute.' A final St Trinian's movie (without Gillat's involvement), The Wildcats of St Trinian's, was released in 1980 and would be Launder's last directing credit.

Gilliat died in 1994, at the age of 86, with Launder passing away three years later, aged 91. There was a smattering of obituaries in the press, but otherwise their deaths went unnoticed.

Yet even beyond the official Launder-Gilliat features, their influence spread wide. 1979's star-drenched remake of The Lady Vanishes kept Charters and Caldicott in the character mix, while the BBC produced a six-episode series based around the two cricket-loving well-borns in 1985. Even the St Trinian's series was rebooted in 2007 and 2009, both films owing a sizable debt to the movies made by Frank and Sidney five decades earlier.

While they never enjoyed the respect and acclaim of their golden-age peers, there's much to cherish in the pair's vast and varied filmography. If you want to understand the character and social and political temperature of the UK in the mid-20th Century, you need look no further than the films of Launder and Gilliat, the great unsung heroes of British cinema.

DID YOU KNOW?

Aside from their appearances in movies, Naunton Wayne and Basil Radford also played Charters and Caldicott in a series of BBC radio productions.

Relax
Rewind
Replay...

Reel obsession

Brian Thompson of Newcastle upon Tyne shares his favourite films that he'll happily watch again and again

I first saw **2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY (1968) (1)** when I was eight years old, far too young to appreciate it. However, when I saw it again a few years later it became my favourite film of all time. The sheer genius and vision of Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C Clarke to make a landmark film about the origin and future of man, and it's still relevant today.

Lindsay Anderson's much parodied masterpiece **IF.... (1968) (2)** is about the strict British boarding school regime, and the students, led by a brilliant Malcolm McDowell, who revolt against the system. I first saw it in the Seventies, and it has stayed with me ever since. A mixture of colour and black and white, fact and fantasy and the haunting music, Sanctus, really gets inside your head.

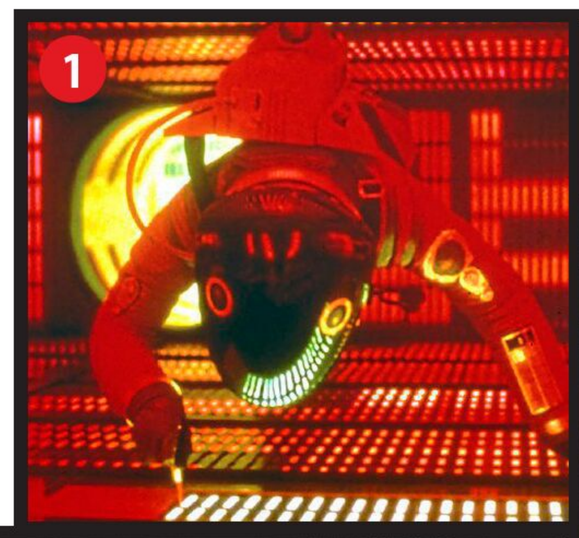
Rock music and gangsters clash in the landmark British film **PERFORMANCE (1970) (3)**, which encapsulates the drug-fuelled, trippy decadence of the late Sixties. Mick Jagger, as rock star Turner, and James Fox, as gangster Chas Devlin, collide in a battle of wills and ego, both seeing something of themselves in each other. The soundtrack is rightly regarded as one of cinema's best.

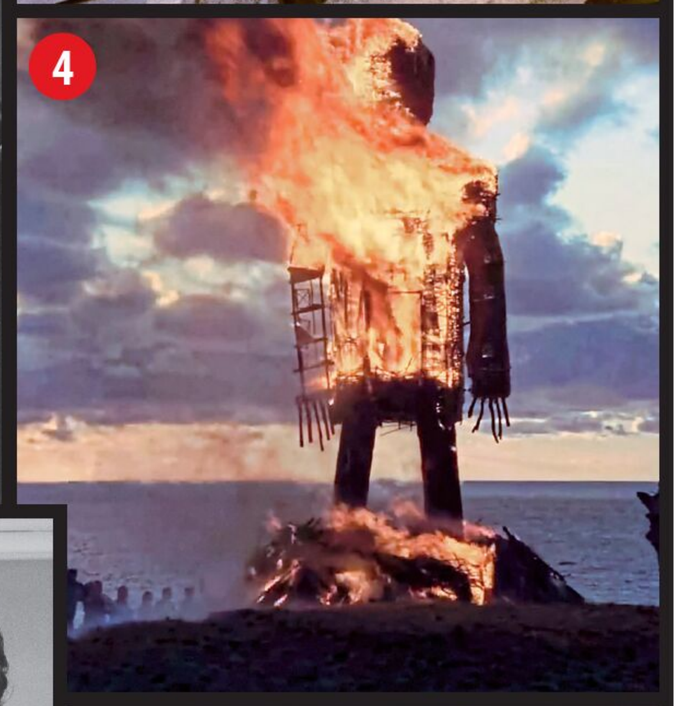
On first release, the studio didn't know what to do with **THE WICKER MAN (1973) (4)** so they paired it as a B feature with Nicolas Roeg's Don't Look Now. In my opinion, it's the daddy of all Folk Horror cinema.

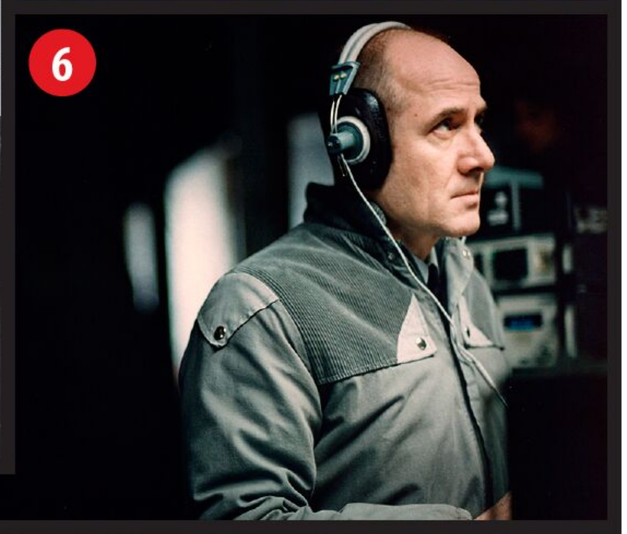
Directed by Robert Fuest, **THE FINAL PROGRAMME (1973) (5)** stars Jon Finch as Jerry Cornelius, the anti-hero of Michael Moorcock's humorous, dystopian novels. It's a film you'll either love or hate – Moorcock apparently hated it – but I've loved it since first seeing it in 1978 at Science Fiction Club. It's a psychedelic sci-fi joy.

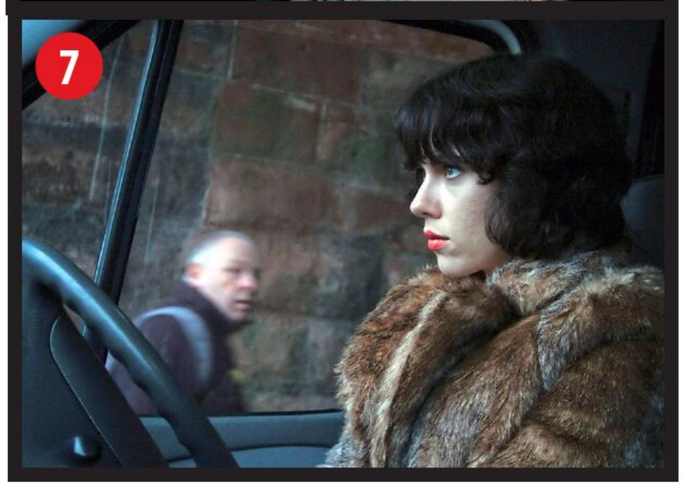
Winner of the Oscar for Best Foreign Language film, one critic described **THE LIVES OF OTHERS (2006) (6)** as 'the best film in any language' and I couldn't agree more. Set in the brutal regime of East Germany in the Eighties, it charts the redemption of Stasi official Wiesler (Ulrich Mühe) after months of covert spying on a playwright and his girlfriend. Sadly, Mühe didn't live to see the acclaim the film received.

In **UNDER THE SKIN (2013) (7)** Scarlett Johansson plays an alien who drives around Scotland in a transit van, picking up single men then taking them to an unknown location to be used as food. Director Jonathan Glazer is a genius! Filmed covertly with non actors, it's packed with unforgettable imagery. Easily one of the best films of the last few years!





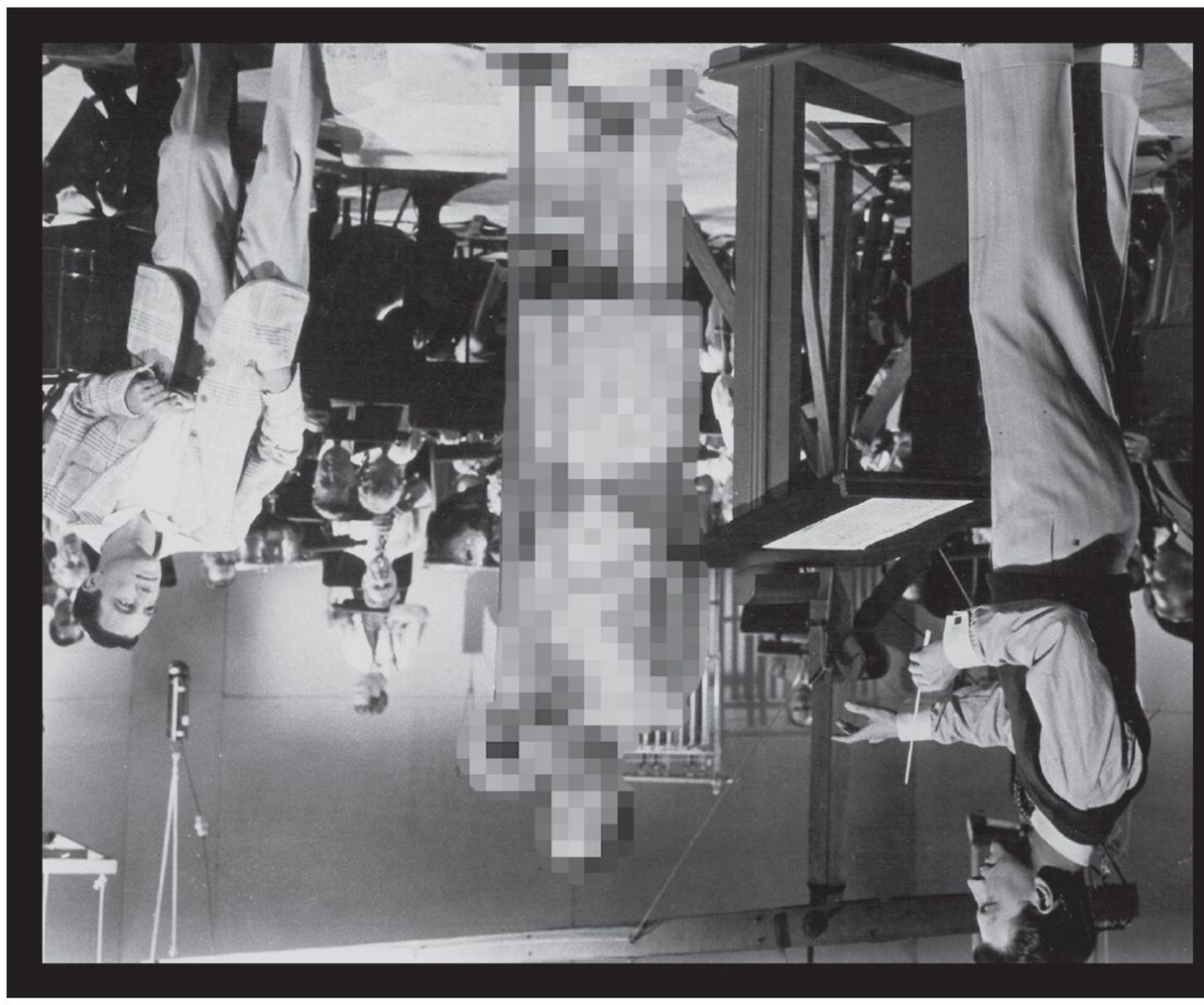




Tell us your magnificent seven films and why they mean so much to you. Contact details on page 3

Answers

Are you a movie buff?
1 Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. 2 Korea. 3 Hawkeye Pierce (Donald Sutherland), Trapper John (Elliott Gould), Duke Forrest (Tom Skerritt). 4 Gary Burghoff playing Radar O'Reilly. 5 Major Margaret 'Hot Lips' Houlihan. 6 Mike Altman, the 14-year-old son of the film's director Robert Altman. 7 Rene Auberjonois.
Who am I? Deanna Durbin.
In A Spin: All About Eve, Now Voyager, Special Agent, Of Human Bondage, The Petrified Forest.
Pixellate: Debbie Reynolds.



PIXELLATE

Who is the young starlet singing for Gene Kelly and Donald O'Connor in this scene from Singin' in the Rain (1952)

Screen Test

Quiz

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

Who am I?

How many clues do you need to identify this star?

1 I was born on 4 December 1921 in Winnipeg and given the name Edna Mae.

2 I signed to MGM at the age of 14 and made my debut in Every Sunday (1936) with Judy Garland.

3 My films Three Smart Girls (1936) and One Hundred Men and a Girl (1937) helped save Universal studios from bankruptcy.

4 I shared the Academy's 1939 Juvenile Award with Mickey Rooney.

5 In 1946 I was the second-highest paid female star in the US, but at 27 I walked away from the limelight.

1 What does the acronym M*A*S*H stand for?
2 In which country was the unit based?
3 Three surgeons share a tent (nicknamed The Swamp) can you name the characters and the actors who played them?
4 Which actor played in both the film and subsequent TV series?
5 What was the name of the head nurse played by Sally Kellerman?
6 Who wrote the lyrics to the theme song, Suicide is Painless?
7 Which future Star Trek actor played Father Mulcahy?

Are you a movie buff?

M*A*S*H IS 50 YEARS OLD THIS YEAR. HOW MUCH DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THIS DARK COMEDY DRAMA?

So what about love?

Thaw and Hancock first met in 1969

John Thaw and Sheila Hancock's marriage was hardly a bed of roses but, as Nick Smurthwaite reveals, their love prevailed

DID YOU KNOW?

Thaw auditioned for RADA by performing a speech from Richard III wearing a Teddy Boy outfit he'd bought specially because he thought it would impress the examiners. Clearly, he was right because, like Hancock, he was accepted to the prestigious school at the age of 16.

When John Thaw and Sheila Hancock first got together in the early Seventies – before The Sweeney (1975-78) and Inspector Morse (1987-2000) had appeared on our screens – it was Hancock not Thaw who was the better known of the two. Ever since The Rag Trade (1961-63) and Mr Digby Darling (1969-71) she'd been a familiar face on TV and a versatile talent on stage.

But it wasn't long before the craggy features and brusque manner of her second husband were a permanent fixture on TV screens at home and abroad, making him one of the most admired and highly paid actors in the world.

What his legion of fans never realised was that John Thaw privately struggled with alcoholism and depression throughout the Seventies and Eighties, in fact right up until seeking help in the mid-Nineties. Luckily for Thaw, Hancock and his three daughters stood by him throughout their shared ordeal, despite Hancock's own battle with cancer.

'CHAOTIC BATTLEFIELD'

Thaw's reluctance or inability to face his own demons very nearly cost him his marriage. In her 2004 book, The Two of Us, Hancock says at its worst, their relationship descended into, 'an ugly, chaotic battlefield', and that Thaw became, 'emotionally impossible to reach'.

It was all a far cry from the romantic idyll of their early years when they were cast together in a play, appropriately titled So What About Love? in 1969. Hancock had already been cast and wasn't impressed when producer Michael White suggested up-and-coming actor John Thaw to play opposite her. 'I said we needed a bigger name as I didn't want to shoulder the burden of drawing an audience on my own,' she revealed.

Things didn't improve when she and Thaw were brought together. She recalls, 'Sitting hunched deep in an armchair was a surly young man who said nothing. His head, resting on his hand, barely turned my way when I said "Hello". He flicked his eyes in my direction and grunted. "OK, you rude little bugger," I thought.'

But as they got to know each other during rehearsals, Hancock decided the rude little bugger, nine years her junior, was funny enough, sexy enough and astute enough to be worth getting to know. She writes, 'He was not someone to tangle with. There was a fear and insecurity in him that I recognised and understood. He could see through my bluster.'

In the last week of the tour, Thaw admitted to his co-star, married at the time to the actor Alec Ross, that he had fallen in love with her. 'It's a nuisance,' he added at the time, with characteristic northern bluntness. 'And the bugger is, I know this is for the rest of my life. I don't play games. I love you.'

Though her marriage had had its ups and downs, Hancock explained to Thaw as gently as she could that she had no intention of leaving Ross and they went their separate ways. However, they were reunited a few years later following the premature death of 49-year-old Alec Ross from oesophageal cancer.

When they were married in 1973, Hancock and Thaw each had daughters (Abigail and Melanie) by their previous partners and later they had a daughter of their own, Joanna. Though he supported Hancock's feminist stand on many issues, Thaw often complained that he was surrounded by women. He sought refuge in a succession of prime-time series (The Sweeney, Inspector Morse, Kavanagh) and a constant supply of alcohol.

FINDING HELP

Morse came along at a time when their marriage was in turmoil. Hancock writes, 'Why did he continue to be so wretched when Morse was such a success from the start? His moods were now becoming more frequent and impenetrable. Where he had been funnily cynical he became at times viciously cruel. It was incomprehensible.'

Hancock sought advice from friend and reformed alcoholic Anthony Hopkins, who explained the only person who could help Thaw was Thaw himself.

Meanwhile, Hancock was getting on with her own career, as well as dealing with health problems. After her breast cancer diagnosis, they lived apart for 18 agonising months, and Thaw hit rock bottom. All he cared about, according to Hancock, was his access to alcohol. What finally turned it round was the intervention of the celebrity therapist Beechy Colclough in 1995.

In the end all it took was one week of intensive therapy to convince the actor that he could manage – and manage so much better – without the demon drink. Thaw later claimed his new-found sobriety was, 'like a cloud lifting', and Hancock rejoiced in being reunited with the man she'd married. She wrote, 'Of course there were still fights but they were the sort we enjoyed. No cruelty, no fear. We both made a real effort to grow up.'

All three of the couple's daughters, including Melanie and Joanna seen here, became actresses

NEXT ISSUE

A man of morals Gregory Peck's passionately held political beliefs landed him on Nixon's enemies list

Hollywood lost interviews
Barbra Striesand explains the truth about her 'difficult' reputation

Behind the scenes secrets of Hollywood classic Sunset Boulevard

Fired from the Golden Shot
Bob Monkhouse fighting for his job

Cartoons with a conscience
Childhood favourites from Filmation

Remembering stars Peter Lorre, Jack Hawkins, Tammy Wynette, Marti Caine, Eddie Cochran and many more

On sale April 10

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

FREE CLASSIC POSTER

Based on the story The Devil's Brood, House of Frankenstein (1944) was a sequel to the previous year's Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man. The plot picks up 20 years later when Doctor Neimann (Boris Karloff) and hunchback, Daniel (J Carrol Naish), escape from jail. Promising revenge on his former associates the pair travel to revive Dracula (John Carradine) and discover Frankenstein's monster (Glenn Strange) and The Wolfman (Lon Chaney Jr) preserved in an ice cave. Neimann then kidnaps his nemeses, Ullman (Frank Reicher) and Strauss (Michael Mark) and plans to transfer their brains into the monsters' bodies, cursing them to live tragic lives. But when the full moon rises, jealousy and double-crosses ensure things do not go to plan.

With a budget of $354,000 and a 30-day shooting schedule it was Universal's most expensive horror film at that time

Boris Karloff, the highest paid actor on the film, was the first to play Frankenstein's Monster but he'd stipulated that he never wanted to play the part again. Glenn Strange said how much he appreciated Karloff's help coaching him in the Monster's mannerisms.

Bela Lugosi was originally slated for the part of Dracula, but when shooting was delayed Lugosi was unavailable and John Carradine stepped in. Lon Chaney Jr, meanwhile, was making the third out of five appearances as The Wolf Man.

The gypsy girl who becomes the object of Daniel's affection was played by 19-year-old Elena Verdugo, who later appeared in TV drama Marcus Welby, MD (1969-76). Universal usually re-dubbed screams for horror movies, but Verdugo's shriek was so convincing it's in the final film.

Although Glenn Strange was the least famous actor to play the monster, his face appeared on many of the merchandising products

ALL TOGETHER..!

FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER!
WOLF MAN!
DRACULA!
HUNCHBACK!
MAD DOCTOR!

HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN

Starring

BORIS KARLOFF LON CHANEY
with
JOHN CARRADINE J. CARROL NAISH
ANNE GWYNNE PETER COE ELENA VERDUGO LIONEL ATWILL

Screen Play by Edward T. Lowe Based on a Story by Curt Siodmak
Directed by ERLE C. KENTON Produced by PAUL MALVERN A UNIVERSAL PICTURE

UNIVERSAL

Sizes to fit you

Feel good furniture

HSL

EST. 1968

Spend & Save up to

£500

*on Chairs, Sofas, Beds & More**

with code: Press0325

UK's largest choice of Riser Recliners prices from £895^

Trustpilot ★★★★★ Rated 'Excellent'

HANDMADE in YORKSHIRE

Back Support Chairs **from £499**^

Adjustable Beds **from £1,299**^

Posture Support Sofas **from £995**^

CALL US
01924 507050
seven days a week

REQUEST
a free brochure
at hslchairs.com

VISIT
your local
HSL Showroom

BOOK
a free Home
Demonstration

*Spring Spend and Save applies to any full priced HSL Chair, Recliner, Riser Recliner, Sofa, Bed Base or Mattress. Excludes Accessories, Headboards, Stressless®, Himolla, Giuseppe Nicoletti products and our Spring Savings range. Discount is applied based on total order value, minimum spend £1,000 per order. Spend £1,000 to receive a £100 discount. Spend £2,500 to receive a £300 discount. Spend £4,500 to receive a £500 discount. Only one discount per household. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, promotional offer and cannot be used on retrospective purchases. Only valid on full priced items on orders placed between 01.03.25 – 30.04.25. Adjustable Beds and Riser Recliners are available VAT free for eligible customers. ^Prices refer to the smallest size of chair, sofa or bed in band A fabric. Adjustable Bed price does not include headboard. Products shown are the Bramham Riser Recliner, shown in Annecy Dove (from £2,285 VAT free price), Glenmore Button Back Fireside Chair, shown in Saloon Smoke (from £1,485), 4ft Standard Adjustable Bed and Mattress (from £2,170 VAT free price) and Burrows Classic 3 Seater Sofa, shown in Volante Indigo (from £2,785). Prices correct at time of going to print.

Media: **YOR25**