

Document Citation

Title	Burt Lancaster stars in 'Atlantic City'
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Paramount Pictures</i>
Date	
Type	press release
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	4
Subjects	Lancaster, Burt (1913-1994), New York, New York, United States
Film Subjects	Atlantic City, Malle, Louis, 1980

from

paramount pictures

BURT LANCASTER STARS IN "ATLANTIC CITY": RICH MAN,
POOR MAN, BEGGAR MAN, THIEF, DOCTOR, LAWYER, CHIEF

One of Hollywood's "magic people," actor Burt Lancaster won and has kept the admiration of four decades of movie-goers with his rugged good looks and aggressive masculinity. He has stretched and expanded his creative horizons constantly, portraying more than 70 diverse characters, each quite unlike any he has played before.

In the new Louis Malle Film, Paramount Pictures' "Atlantic City," Lancaster stars as Lou, an aging, small-time hood who has been living on the fringes of the city's underworld for the last 40 years. Directed by Malle, the film was produced by Denis Héroux and written by John Guare. Lancaster becomes fascinated with his young, beautiful neighbor, played by Susan Sarandon.

Michel Piccoli, Hollis McLaren and Kate Reid as Grace star along with Lancaster.

There are few perennial stars in films--Cooper, Gable, Cagney, Davis, Hepburn, Crawford, Grant, Wayne, Bergman--but none had a more auspicious debut than Lancaster. He grew up in East Harlem, New York, and won a basketball scholarship to New York University, made his show business debut as a circus acrobat. He worked under the big top for seven years before



PARAMOUNT PICTURES CORPORATION 1 GULF + WESTERN PLAZA NEW YORK N.Y. 10023

becoming a floor walker in the lingerie department of a large Chicago store.

When World War II broke out, Lancaster was assigned to the Special Services Division of the Fifth Army, and performed acrobatics for the Allied troops in Australia, North Africa and Italy. While in Italy, he married Norma Anderson, a U.S. military entertainer. The couple has five children: James, William, Susan, Joanne and Sighele (pronounced "Sheila").

Lancaster made his New York stage debut in 1945 in "A Sound of Hunting." Although the play flopped, Lancaster was "discovered" and the following year appeared in his first Hollywood production as the Swede in Robert Siodmak's "The Killers." Both Lancaster and the Ernest Hemingway-inspired film were hits, and the actor never looked back.

Within two years, according to one of his co-stars, Edward G. Robinson, Lancaster was already displaying the "animal vitality and suppressed volcano inside that inevitably made him a star." By 1948, his name on the marquee was said to be worth a million dollars. That year he also produced his first film, and although "Kiss the Blood Off My Hands" barely broke even at the box-office, it did establish Lancaster as a man determined to control his own show business destiny. As if to underline that determination, Lancaster agreed to return to the circus for a four-week engagement in 1948.

By 1955 a string of smash hits had firmly established Lancaster as a superb actor--"Jim Thorpe - All American," "Come Back, Little Sheba," "From Here to Eternity," "The Rainmaker," "The Rose Tattoo" and "Vera Cruz"--but he nevertheless shocked Holly-

wood again by trying his hand at directing. The film, "The Kentuckian," was an artistic failure, and it took Lancaster 20 years to regain his courage to direct.

Lancaster formed a production company with Harold Hecht and in 1955 produced "Marty," the "sleeper" which walked off with Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Actor (Ernest Borgnine), Best Director (Delbert Mann) and Best Screenplay (Paddy Chayefsky). "Marty" also won Best Picture Award at the Cannes and Moscow film festivals that year.

In 1958 Lancaster's company produced "Run Silent, Run Deep," in which he starred with Clark Gable, and the following year Lancaster played opposite Laurence Olivier and Kirk Douglas in "The Devil's Disciple."

"Elmer Gantry" won Burt Lancaster an Oscar and the New York Film Critics' Award for Best Actor for his electrifying performance in the 1960 motion picture. Since then he has won two Best Actor awards from the New York Film Critics and has received numerous citations from foreign film festivals, including the Venice Film Festival Award, the Donatello, for his performance in "The Birdman of Alcatraz."

A man of many interests, Lancaster is an opera fanatic, and will often arrive in New York from the West Coast at 6:30 and go straight from the airport to the Metropolitan Opera House. His sensitive nature leads him to do impassioned films about the underdogs in this world--the poor, oppressed and the victims of prejudice. In Europe to make "The Train" in 1963, Lancaster flew to the United States for one day to join in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights march on Washington.

Lancaster has starred in more than 70 films, including such distinguished European features as Visconti's "Conversation Piece" and "The Leopard" and Bernardo Bertolucci's "1900."

While making "Atlantic City," an I.C.C.-International Cinema Corporation presentation of a John Kemeny-Denis Héroux production, Lancaster mused that he regards the process of growing older as simply a diminishing of curiosity. "As long as you are curious," he maintains, "you defeat age."

In 1975 Lancaster claimed that he was embarrassed to play a love story "unless it is about a 61-year-old man in love." Two years later he reiterated that remark to journalist Colin Danguard. His day as a romantic leading man were over "unless it is the part of an older man who becomes obsessed with a young girl."

Lancaster got his wish, when just days before his 66th birthday, he went before the cameras---without make-up, for the first time---in "Atlantic City," playing the romantic lead opposite Susan Sarandon, more than 30 years his junior.

#

#

#