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Elevator girl Fran (Shirley MacLaine), "best of the operators," must handle flirts like clerk Bud Baxter (Jack Lemmon).

MOVIE REVIEW

The story of an apartment

DIRECTOR-WRITER BILLY WILDER's last excursion into offbeat humor was in *Some Like It Hot*, set in the wacky 1920's. Now, in United Artists' *The Apartment*, he tells an outspoken love story of the more serious 1960's. A satiric comment on how to win big-city "success," the movie stars Jack Lemmon (also of *Some Like It Hot*) and Shirley MacLaine. The two are among the 31,259 employees in the "ant pile" of a Manhattan business firm. Lemmon as the bachelor Bud Baxter is unique among this vast crowd because he has an apartment convenient for some of the married executives' use when on holiday from their wives. With his apartment key, the young man swiftly rises above the ranks. But everything gets snarled when his girl, Shirley, gets involved with his boss. Shrewd director Wilder offsets what could be a seamy theme with a light touch and a tender, bitter-sweet handling of two young people who "get took" in the big city.

continued

For a more friendly Fran, bachelor Bud prepares a spaghetti dinner on a tennis racket: "I'm a pretty good cook—but a lousy housekeeper."





Bud is delighted when his boss, Sheldrake (Fred MacMurray), takes an interest in him.

THE APARTMENT continued

Bud finds his own key to “success”

The Apartment was written for the light *far-
ceur* talents of Jack Lemmon, who, its direc-
tor-writer says, can bring off a crazy comic-
tragic role better than any other young film
actor today. In an equally strong role, Shirley
MacLaine portrays “a girl from out of town,”
as Wilder describes her, “who tried to be a sec-
retary, but flunked her spelling test, only to
become a pathetic pawn to be pushed around.”

continued



*Sheldrake borrows the key
to Bud's apartment
and dates the elevator girl.*

Bud gets a promotion and moves his things to a glass cubicle of his own.



THE APARTMENT continued

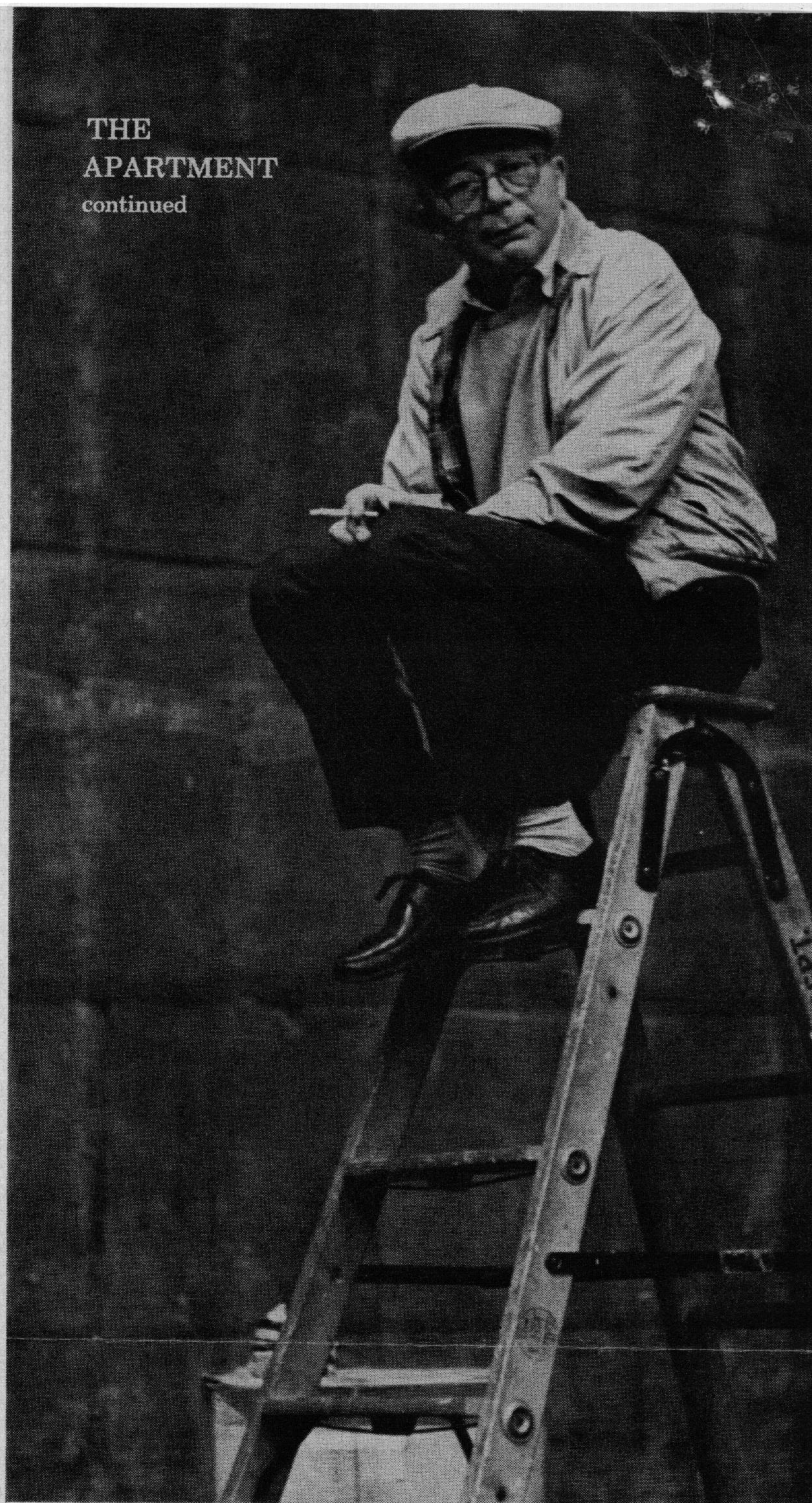


Fran tries suicide when affair with Sheldrake ends in disillusionment. Bud finds her in his own apartment.

Brought together by the tragic mix-up, the two quit their jobs and plan a new life away from the "ant pile."

continued

THE
APARTMENT
continued



A king of sophisticated movie comedy, puckish director Wilder aims to make audiences forget their popcorn bags when watching his pictures.

“I like a contented atmosphere.”

Viennese-born director Billy Wilder, 53, a winner of three Academy Awards, is a fast-thinking, fast-talking pixy of a man who sparks ideas and is still enthusiastic about movie making after 30 years in the business. He says, “I’m a normal man who doesn’t wear puttees or smoke a pipe. I like a contented atmosphere on my sets, with no slave driving and no talking in whispers. I don’t overestimate what we’re doing. Our main purpose is to get the people in for two hours, have them forget their popcorn bags and watch something that isn’t too highfalutin, and not too shallow either. I prefer to take the simplest possible story, like *The Apartment*, and add my own directorial ornamentations to it.”

The Apartment, Wilder says, is about “the two kinds of people who make up the world—those who take and those who ‘get took.’ It touches upon the emancipation of a little modern man who gets tired of pushing for ‘status’ and realizes there are some things more important than graduating from an obscure desk to a glass-walled office.”

Two major sets were used in the movie: Bud Baxter’s seedy brownstone-front flat in New York’s West 60’s and what Wilder calls “a huge set combining two stages to represent an upper floor of a New York office building, to show the ‘ant pile’ in which such people live and work. This gigantic set is our chariot race.”

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