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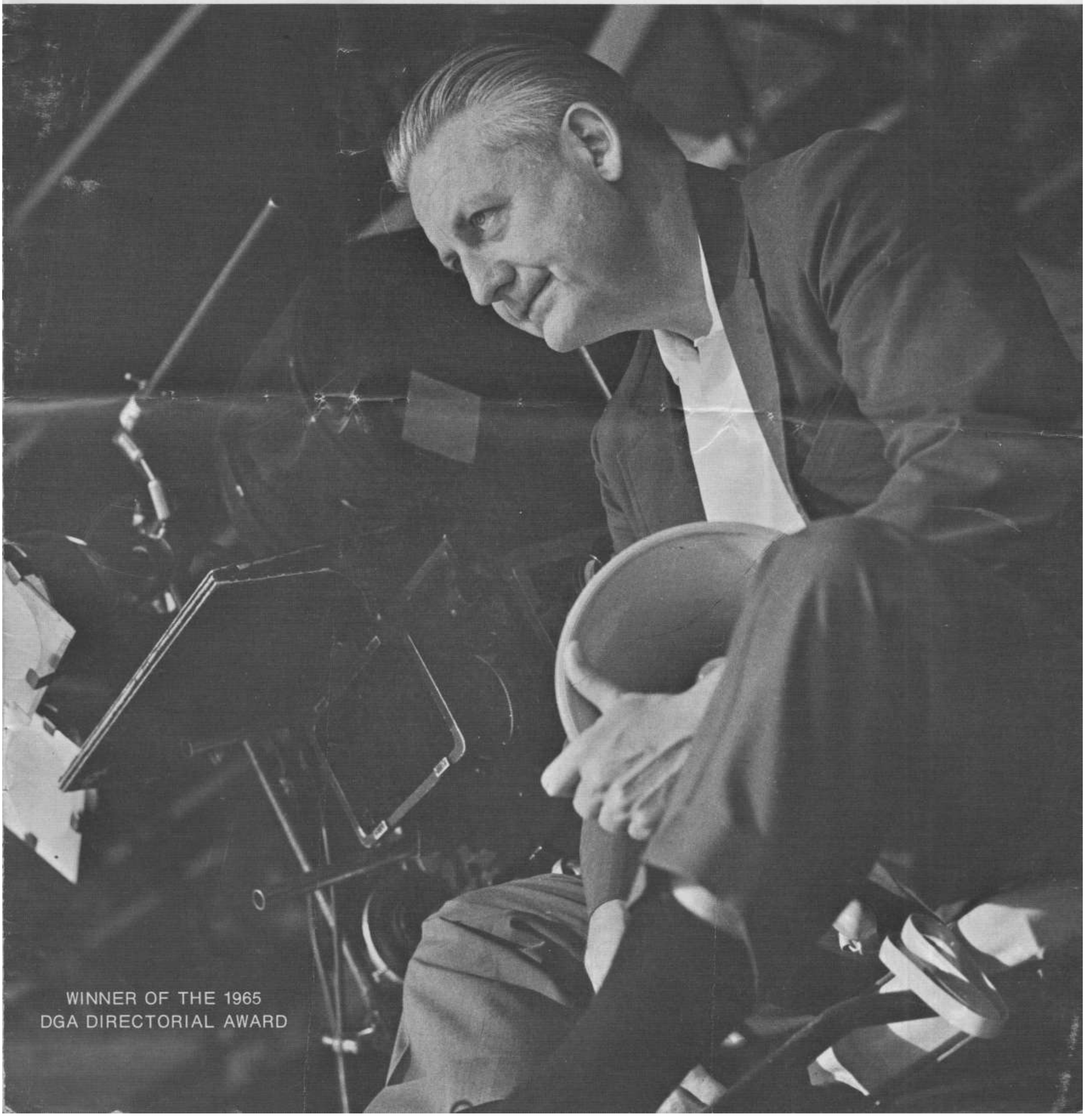
The Directors Guild of America

Presents a

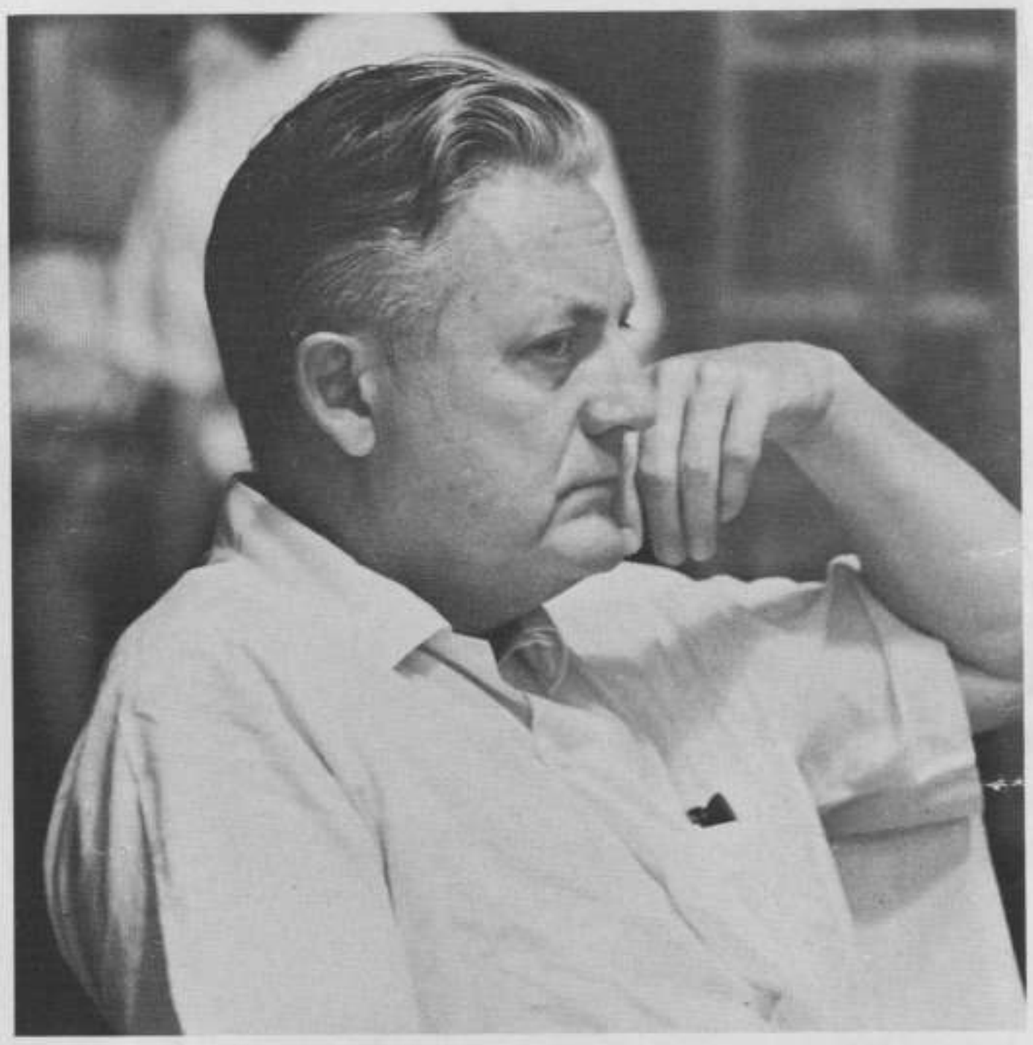
Retrospective showing of eight Films

by

ROBERT WISE



WISE • THE MAN



AND HIS MOVIES

A Boy's Fascination Becomes A Man's Work

The movies were in Robert Wise for a long long time before Robert Wise got into the movies.

They could well have been in his blood at birth. As a kid, driven by a fascination approaching compulsion, he ogled three or four movies a week back home in Connersville, Indiana. To this day he recalls in awe, "It seems I could never get enough of them."

That Bob Wise eventually got to Hollywood had nothing to do with that childhood appetite. The move was a matter of circumstance and at the time the circumstance was hardly propititious. Bob's dad had lost his grocery business, a casualty of the depression, and Bob had to leave college after just one year and go to work. It turned out that Hollywood was where the work was because Bob's elder brother David was out there, an accountant at RKO. Using his influence, brother David managed to get the kid brother's foot in the door of the cutting department. And the career which was to see the man carting off Oscars started with the boy lugging cans of film from cutting room to shipping room to projection hall.

The young man, then as now, was devoted to the task at hand. His appetite for films, insatiable as a kid, became a quiet passion. He watched film cutters at work as if they were makers of magic, never had any place to go when there was a job to do. That he was the right kind of kid to have around became self-evident. Nine months after starting work as a film porter he was made an assistant to a sound and music cutter, continued to demonstrate that he and overwork were highly compatible. At one stretch he toiled two and a half days – with only a couple of hours of sleep – to help get George Stevens' *Alice Adams* ready for a sneak preview.

Two years later he was promoted to assistant to film editor Bill Hamilton, one of the aces of the industry. A marvelous listener and hence an inspirer of teachers, it followed that Wise was an outstanding pupil. He learned his lessons well. Hamilton told him, "Always make the scene play when you're cutting it, even if it isn't exactly what the director had in mind when he shot it." And he learned the agony and the frustration a film cutter suffers when a vital piece of footage is missing because the director didn't shoot it. If Bob Wise has a phobia, the missing hunk of film is it. He exclaims, "One of the maxims of Hollywood that I don't agree with is that if you're an ex-editor you'll shoot less film as a director. I think the truth is completely the reverse. I'm not stingy with film. I probably shoot much longer than I should and take far too much film. But I know the experience of having been shorted in the cutting room."

In 1939, after what amounted to a six year apprenticeship, Wise edited his first film, *Bachelor Mother,* and late in 1940 drew the editing assignment of a lifetime, Orson Wells and *Citizen Kane*. The incorrigible Orson, Mephistophelean to the core, demonstrated for all eyes and all time that most of the cinematographic rules were made to be broken. Wise absorbed it all.

In 1943 the director of a film Wise was editing encountered production problems, fell terribly behind schedule and was finally dismissed. Wise was asked to finish directing the picture, *Curse of the Cat People*. Eager as he was to direct, Wise had reservations about taking over from a man he had been working with. But when the front office made it clear that it would be somebody else if not him, Wise accepted.

Thirty-one films and twenty-three years have rolled since *Curse of the Cat People,* but after all that time and all of his triumphs Wise remains the same man in manner and emotion – quiet, stable, totally adjusted, unspoiled, dedicated, sincere, devoid of pretense, energetic, patient, curious, studious, organized and still quite immune to the rigours of hard work. He is a Hollywood anomaly. Success has not spoiled him.

The way Wise works and the goals he has set for each film haven't changed either. There is no check list of "musts" but there is a set of principles common to every project, the hallmarks of a Wise film.

Among the first is credibility. "Film is a very realistic medium," Wise says, "our audience must believe everything we put up there on the screen. It starts with the casting itself. We try to get people who realistically fit into the role and the background. And that goes for make-up – whether you use it or don't use it, and for wardrobe. The clothes must look like the things the people would wear, not something created by Hollywood. And that applies to sets. For a long time, I've had a theory about Hollywood exterior sets: they don't look quite real in the daytime. At MGM, for *Somebody Up There Likes Me,* we built marvelous reproductions of New York streets. They were great, but somehow the atmosphere was not convincing in the daytime. Nighttime is a different thing. You don't see as much, can get away with more. On my insistence we finally shot the day scenes in New York and the night action on the backlot and it worked beautifully."

Wise even went to great pains to maintain an air of credibility in *The Day the Earth Stood Still,* a science fiction picture. He chose a section of the mall near the Washington monument as the landing site for the flying saucer because the scenery was familiar. He keyed in on people reacting to the strange ship, "people we recognize and know, people in who's place we could put ourselves – for it is very important to the believeability of the story that members of the audience be able to identify with people they see on screen."

Credibility in a film is an appendage of involvement, another basic Wise tent and one he states in no uncertain terms, "I feel" he declares, "a need and an obligation to hook the audience, to get them involved with my people and my story, so deeply involved they can never escape."

Though his aim is to hook audiences Wise invariably insists on hooking himself first. "I'm not one to make pictures just for myself," he explains, "But I couldn't very well work on a project I did not feel very strongly about personally." That the subjects which have often appealed to him were often highly-charged, controversial matters never deterred Wise from trying to make them into popular motion picture fare. That he has succeeded time after time attests to his powers of filmic communication. As the selection of films in this brochure points up, many of his pictures are in the "message" category.

The *Body Snatcher* demonstrates that corruption breeds corruption. *The Day the Earth Stood Still* warns that we had better learn how to control our bombs. *Executive Suite* comments on the responsibilities of the business executive and *Somebody Up There Likes Me* shows that a punk can be rejuvenated and *I Want to Live* documents the grim barbarity of Capital Punishment. *Odds Against Tomorrow* argues that hate destroys and *West Side Story* denounces racial antagonisms. A man vitally interested in the human situation and in the world in which he lives, Wise eschews screaming his messages. "People won't come to see something that is obviously a message picture, with a big heavy theme pounding," he says, "I think the only way you can hope to get them into the theater is to intrigue them with the story and make your statement only as a by-product of that story, through the characters in the development of the story and in the development of the characters themselves."

Bob Wise picked the eight films comprising this retrospective showing, not because they were big hits – either commercially or artistically, but because he feels they are most representative of the best work he could do at a given job at a given time.

To those who will be seeing the films during the Guild Presentations, Wise says simply, "I would hope that individuals viewing them would find from the earliest pictures up to the latest, certain basic feelings and qualities and attitudes that were constant and consistent through all of the films. And very much at the same time I would hope they would find a growth in my technique and in my picture-making style and form – and in what my pictures have to say."

1945
THE BODY SNATCHER

In Scotland in the late 1700s, cadavers were not available to the medical profession through legal channels so research-minded doctors simply acquired them illegally – from grave robbers. *The Body Snatcher*, a chilling study of this illicit traffic, based on a short story by Robert Louis Stevenson is appropriately grisly and gruesome. But it does not impress by shock and terror alone. Adding dimension, director Wise, emphasized the relationship between Boris Karloff, the conscienceless grave-robber (when a corpse is ordered and none lies fresh in a new grave, he creates one) and Henry Daniell, honored medic and regular body buyer. The character study fascinates its director – "the contest of wills, the body-snatcher exerting and enforcing a strong and evil hold on the doctor."

Production	RKO
Executive Producer	Jack Gross
Producer	Val Lewton
Director	Robert Wise
Screenplay	Philip MacDonald and Carlos Keith; based on a short story by Robert Louis Stevenson.
Photography	Robert de Grasse
Film Editor	J. R. Whittredge
Sound	Bailey Fesler
Assistant Director	Harry Scott
Art Directors	Albert S. D'Agostino and Walter Keller
Set Decorators	Darrell Silvera and John Sturtevant
Costumes	Renie
Music	Ray Webb
Musical Director	C. Bakeleinkoff

CAST

Gray	Boris Karloff
Joseph	Bela Lugosi
MacFarlane	Henry Daniell
Meg	Edith Atwater
Fettes	Russell Wade
Mrs. Marsh	Rita Corday
Georgina	Sharyn Moffett
Street Singer	Donna Lee

1961
WEST SIDE STORY

West Side Story was Bob Wise's first musical and it brought him his first Oscar. But from the moment he and co-Director Jerome Robbins started plotting the transfer of the stage classic to the screen, they were haunted to the point of intimidation by a key problem: how could they film the remarkable dance numbers – which dazzled theater audiences – so they'd be credible to movie audiences attuned to reality?

After months of deliberation Wise concluded that the opening scene would have to solve the problem.

He hit upon a plan: "High angle shots taken from a helicopter shooting straight down on the canyons and streets and forms and shapes of New York would achieve an honest view of the city but one never before seen on screen. The view would be stylized, somewhat abstracted, startling, electrifying – larger than life. After seeing it, audiences would be in the mood to accept whatever followed as quite within the realm of plausibility, even the spectacle of young toughs dancing wildly in the streets."

Production	Mirisch - UA
Producer	Robert Wise
Directors	Robert Wise
	Jerome Robbins
Screenplay	Ernest Lehman
Music	Leonard Bernstein
Lyrics	Stephen Sondheim
Associate Producer	Saul Chaplin
Conductor of the Musical Score	Johnny Green
Choreography	Jerome Robbins
Production Designer	Boris Leven
Cinematographer	Daniel Fapp
Costume Designer	Irene Sharaff
Assistant Director	Robert Relyea
Production Manager	Allen K. Wood
Film Editor	Thomas Stanford
Visual Consultant	Saul Bass
Sound	Fred Lau
Props	Sam Gordon
Makeup	Emile La Vigne
Vocal Coach	Robert Tucker
Assistant	Howard Jeffrey
Choreographers	Margaret Banks

CAST

Maria	Natalie Wood
Tony	Richard Beymer
Riff	Russ Tamblyn
Anita	Rita Moreno
Bernardo	George Chakiris
Lieutenant Schrank	Simon Oakland
Officer Krupke	William Bramley
Doc	Ned Glass
Glad Hand	John Astin
Madam Lucia	Penny Santon
Consuelo	Yvonne Othon
Rosalia	Suzie Kaye
Francisca	Jeanne Miya
Anybodys	Sue Oakes
Graziella	Gina Trikonis
Velma	Carole D'Andrea

ROBERT WISE'S DIRECTORIAL CREDITS

CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE - RKO - 1944
Produced by Val Lewton; screenplay by DeWitt Bodeen; photographed by Nicholas Musuraca; edited by J. R. Whittredge; music by Roy Webb. CAST: Simone Simon, Kent Smith, Jane Randolph, Ann Carter, Elizabeth Russell, Eve March

MADEMOISELLE FIFI - RKO - 1944
Produced by Val Lewton; screenplay by Joseph Michel and Peter Ruric from stories by Guy De Maupassant; photographed by Harry Wild; edited by J. R. Whittredge; music by Werner Heyman. CAST: Simone Simon, John Emery, Kurt Kreuger, Alan Napier, Helen Freeman

THE BODY SNATCHER - RKO - 1945
Executive producer, Jack J. Gross; produced by Val Lewton; screenplay by Philip MacDonald and Carlos Keith from a story by Robert Louis Stevenson; photographed by Robert DeGrasse; edited by J. R. Whittredge; music by Roy Webb. CAST: Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Henry Daniell, Edith Atwater, Russell Wade, Rita Corday

A GAME OF DEATH - RKO - 1946
Executive producer, Sid Rogell; produced by Herman Schlom; screenplay by Norman Houston from a story by Richard Connell; photographed by J. Roy Hunt; edited by J. R. Whittredge; music by Paul Sawtell. CAST: John Loder, Audrey Long, Edgar Barrier, Russell Wade, Russell Hicks

CRIMINAL COURT - RKO - 1946
Executive producer, Sid Rogell; producer, Martin Mooney; screenplay by Lawrence Kimble from a story by Earl Felton; photographed by Frank Redman; edited by Robert Swink; music by Paul Sawtell. CAST: Tom Conway, Martha O'Driscoll, June Clayworth, Robert Armstrong, Addison Richards, Pat Gleason

BORN TO KILL - RKO - 1947
Executive producer, Sid Rogell; produced by Herman Schlom; screenplay by Eve Greene and Richard Macaulay from a novel by James Gunn; photographed by Robert DeGrasse; edited by Les Millbrook; music by Paul Sawtell. CAST: Lawrence Tierney, Claire Trevor, Walter Slezak, Phillip Terry, Audrey Long, Elija Cook, Jr., Isabel Jewell, Esther Howard, Kathryn Card

MYSTERY IN MEXICO - RKO - 1948
Produced by Sid Rogell; associate producer, Joseph Noriega; screenplay by Lawrence Kimble from a story by Muriel Roy Bolton; photographed by Jack Draper; edited by Samuel E. Beetley; music by Paul Sawtell

BLOOD ON THE MOON - RKO - 1948
Executive producer, Sid Rogell; produced by Theron Warth; screenplay by Lillie Hayward; adaptation by Harold Shumate and Luke Short from a novel by Short; photographed by Nicholas Musuraca; edited by Samuel E. Beetley; music by Roy Webb. CAST: Robert Mitchum, Barbara Bel Geddes, Robert Preston, Walter Brennan, Phyllis Thaxter, Frank Faylen, Tom Tully

THE-SET-UP - RKO - 1949
Produced by Richard Goldstone; screenplay by Art Cohn from a poem by Joseph Moncure March; photographed by Milton Krasner; edited by Roland Gross; music by C. Bakaleinikoff. CAST: Robert Ryan, Audrey Totter, George Tobias, Alan Baxter, Wallace Ford, Percy Helton, Darryl Hickman

THREE SECRETS - WARNER BROS. - 1950
Produced by Milton Sperling; screenplay by Martin Rackin and Gina Kaus; photographed by Sid Hickox; edited by Thomas Reilly, music by David Buttolph. CAST: Eleanor Parker, Patricia Neal, Ruth Roman, Frank Lovejoy, Leif Erickson, Ted de Corsia

TWO FLAGS WEST
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1950
Produced by Casey Robinson; screenplay by Robinson from a story by Frank Nugent and Curtis Kenyon; photographed by Leon Shamroy; edited by Louis Loeffler; music by Hugo Friedhofer. CAST: Joseph Cotten, Linda Darnell, Jeff Chandler, Cornel Wilde, Dale Robertson, Noah Beery

HOUSE ON TELEGRAPH HILL
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1951
Produced by Robert Bassler; screenplay by Elick Moll and Frank Partos from a novel by Dana Lyon; photographed by Lucien Ballard; edited by Nick DeMaggio; music by Sol Kaplan. CAST: Richard Basehart, Valentina Cortesa, William Lundigan, Fay Baker, Gordon Gebert

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1951
Produced by Julian Blaustein; screenplay by Edmund H. North from a story by Harry Bates; photographed by Leo Tover; edited by William Reynold; music by Bernard Herrmann. CAST: Michael Rennie, Patricia Neal, Hugh Marlowe, Sam Jaffe, Billy Gray

CAPTIVE CITY - ASPEN-UA - 1952
Produced by Theron Warth; screenplay by Karl Lamb and Alvin Josephy from a story by Josephy; photographed by Lee Garmes; edited by Ralph Swink; music by Jerome Moross. CAST: John Forsythe, Joan Camden, Harold J. Kennedy, Marjorie Crossland, Victor Sutherland

DESTINATION GOBI
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1952
Produced by Stanley Rubin; screenplay by Everett Freeman from a story by Edmund G. Love; photographed by Charles G. Clarke; edited by Robert Fritch; music by Sol Kaplan. CAST: Richard Widmark, Don Taylor, Casey Adams, Murvyn Vye, Darryl Hickman, Martin Milner

SOMETHING FOR THE BIRDS
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1952
Produced by Samuel Engel; screenplay by I.A.L. Diamond and Boris Ingster from stories by Alvin Josephy, Joseph Petracca, and Ingster; photographed by Joseph La Shelle; edited by Hugh S. Fowler; music by Sol Kaplan. CAST: Victor Mature, Patricia Neal, Edmund Gwenn, Larry Keating, Gladys Hurlbut, Hugh Sanders, Christian Rub, Wilton Graff, Archer MacDonald

THE DESERT RATS
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1953
Produced by Robert L. Jacks; screenplay by Richard Murphy; photographed by Lucien Ballard; edited by Barbara McLean; music by Leigh Harline. CAST: Richard Burton, Robert Newton, Robert Douglas, Torin Thatcher, Charles Davis, and James Mason as Rommel

SO BIG - WARNER BROS. - 1953
Produced by Henry Blanke; screenplay by John Twist from the novel by Edna Ferber; photographed by Ellsworth Fredricks; edited by Thomas Reilly, music by Max Steiner. CAST: Jane Wyman, Sterling Hayden, Nancy Olson, Steve Forrest, Elisabeth Fraser, Martha Hyer, Walter Coy

EXECUTIVE SUITE - MGM - 1954
Produced by John Houseman; associate producer, Jud Kinberg; screenplay by Ernest Lehman from a novel by Cameron Hawley; photographed by George Folsey; edited by Ralph E. Winters. CAST: William Holden, June Allyson, Barbara Stanwyck, Fredric March, Walter Pidgeon, Shelley Winters, Paul Douglas, Louis Calhern, Nina Foch, Dean Jagger

HELEN OF TROY - WARNER BROS. - 1955
Executive producer, Jack L. Warner; screenplay by John Twist and Hugh Gray from an adaptation by Gray and N. Richard Nash of Homer's The Iliad; photographed by Harry Stradling; edited by Thomas Reilly; music by Max Steiner. CAST: Rosanna Podesta, Jack Sernas, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Stanley Baker, Niall MacGinnis

TRIBUTE TO A BAD MAN - MGM - 1956
Produced by Sam Zimbalist; screenplay by Michael Blankfort from a story by Jack Schaefer; photographed by Robert Surtees; edited by Ralph E. Winters; music by Miklos Rozsa. CAST: James Cagney, Don Dubbins, Stephen McNally, Irene Papas, Vic Morrow, James Griffith

SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES ME
MGM - 1956
Produced by Charles Schnee; screenplay by Ernest Lehman from the autobiography of Rocky Graziano written with Rowland Barber; photographed by Joseph Ruttenberg; edited by Albert Akst; music by Bronislau Kaper; title song by Kaper and Sammy Cahn. CAST: Paul Newman, Pier Angeli, Everett Sloane, Eileen Heckart, Sal Mineo

THIS COULD BE THE NIGHT - MGM - 1957
Produced by Joseph Pasternak; screenplay by Isobel Lennart from short stories by Cordelia Baird Gross; photographed by Russell Harlan; edited by George Boemler; music by George Stoll; title song by Nicholas Brodszky and Sammy Cahn. CAST: Jean Simmons, Paul Douglas, Anthony Franciosa, Julie Wilson, Neile Adams, Joan Blondell, J. Carroll Naish

UNTIL THEY SAIL - MGM - 1957
Produced by Charles Schnee; screenplay by Robert Anderson from a story by James Michener; photographed by Joseph Ruttenberg; edited by Harold F. Kress; music by David Raksin. CAST: Jean Simmons, Joan Fontaine, Paul Newman, Piper Laurie, Charles Drake, Sandra Dee, Wally Cassell

RUN SILENT, RUN DEEP - UA - 1958
Produced by Harold Hecht; screenplay by John Gay from a novel by Commander Edward L. Beach; photographed by Russell Harlan; edited by George Boemler; music by Franz Waxman. CAST: Clark Gable, Burt Lancaster, Jack Warden, Brad Dexter, Don Rickles, Nick Cravat

I WANT TO LIVE! - UA - 1958
Produced by Walter Wanger; screenplay by Don Mankiewicz and Nelson Gidding, based on newspaper articles by Ed Montgomery and letters of Barbara Graham; photographed by Lionel Lindon; edited by William Hornbeck; music by John Mandel. CAST: Susan Hayward, Simon Oakland, Virginia Vincent, Theodore Bikel, Wesley Lau, Gage Clark, Joe DeSantis

ODDS AGAINST TOMORROW - UA - 1959
Produced by Wise; screenplay by Nelson Gidding and John O. Killens from a book by William P. McGivern; photographed by Joseph Brun; edited by DeDe Allen; music by John Lewis. CAST: Harry Belafonte, Robert Ryan, Shelley Winters, Ed Begley, Gloria Grahame

WEST SIDE STORY - MIRISCH-UA - 1961
Produced by Wise; co-directed by Jerome Robbins; screenplay by Ernest Lehman from the stage play by Arthur Laurents; associate producer, Saul Chaplin; photographed by Daniel Fapp; edited by Thomas Stanford; music by Leonard Bernstein; lyrics by Stephen Sondheim; music conducted by Johnny Green; choreography by Robbins. CAST: Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Russ Tamblyn, Rita Moreno, George Chakiris, Tucker Smith, Tony Mordente, Eliot Feld, David Winters, Bert Michaels, Robert Banas, Scooter Teague, Tommy Abbott, Harvey Hohnecker, David Bean, Sue Oakes, Gina Trikonis, Carole D'Andrea, Ned Glass, Simon Oakland, Bill Zuckert

TWO FOR THE SEESAW - MIRISCH-UA - 1962
A Robert Wise Presentation produced by Walter Mirisch; screenplay by Isobel Lennart from the stage play by William Gibson; photographed by Ted McCord; edited by Stuart Gilmore; music by Andre Previn. CAST: Robert Mitchum, Shirley MacLaine, Elisabeth Fraser, Eddie Firestone, Billy Gray

THE HAUNTING
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER - 1963
Produced and directed by Robert Wise; associate producer, Denis Johnson; screenplay by Nelson Gidding, based on novel "The Haunting of Hill House" by Shirley Jackson; photographed by Davis Boulton film editor, Ernest Walter; art direction, Elliott Scott; set decoration, John Jarvis; music, Humphrey Searle; sound, J. B. Smith. CAST: Julie Harris, Claire Bloom, Richard Johnson, Russ Tamblyn, Lois Maxwell, Fay Compton

THE SOUND OF MUSIC
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1965
Produced and directed by Robert Wise; associate producer, Saul Chaplin; screenplay by Ernest Lehman; from the stage musical with music and lyrics by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein; book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse; music supervised, arranged and conducted by Irvin Kostal; production designed by Boris Leven; director of photography, Ted McCord, A.S.C.; choreography by Marc Breaux and Dee Dee Wood; costumes designed by Dorothy Jeakins; set decorations, Walter Scott and Ruby Levitt; special effects, L. B. Abbott A.S.C. and Emil Cosa, Jr.; second unit supervision, Maurice Zuberano; film editor, William Reynolds, A.C.E.; assistant director, Ridgeway Callow; makeup by Ben Nye; hair styles by Margaret Donovan; sound by Murray Spivack and Bernard Freericks; puppeteers, Bil Baird and Cora Baird. CAST: Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer, Eleasnor Parker, Richard Haydn, Peggy Wood, Charmian Carr, Heather Menzies, Nicholas Hammond, Duane Chase, Angela Cartright, Debbie Turner, Kym Karath, Anna Lee, Portia Nelson, Ben Wright, Daniel Truhitte, Norma Varden, Gil Stuart, Marni Nixon, Evadne Baker, Doris Lloyd

THE SAND PEBBLES
20TH CENTURY-FOX - 1966
Produced and directed by Robert Wise; associate producer and second unit director, Charles Maguire; screenplay, Robert Anderson; based on the novel by Richard McKenna; production designed by Boris Leven, director of photography, Joseph MacDonald, A.C.S.; music by Jerry Goldsmith; conducted by Lionel Newman; production associate, Maurice Zuberano;-film editor, William Reynolds, A.C.E.; unit production manager, Saul Wurtzel; assistant director, Ridgeway Callow; sound, Bernard Freericks, Murray Spivack, Douglas O. Williams; second unit photography, Richard Johnson; set decorations, Walter M. Scott, John Sturtevant, William Kiernan; special photographic effects, L. B. Abbott, A.S.C., Emil Kosa, Jr.; costumes designed by Renie; makeup, Ben Nye, Bill Turner, Del Acevedo; hair styles by Margaret Donovan; technical adviser, Harley Misiner, MMC, USN (Ret.) CAST: Steve McQueen, Richard Attenborough, Richard Crenna, Candice Bergen, Marayat Andriane, Mako, Larry Gates, Charles Robinson, Gavin Macleod, Simon Oakland, Joe Turkel, Gus Trikonis, Shepherd Saunders, Ford Rainey, Barney Phillips, Richard Loo, Joseph Di Reda, James Jeter, Tom Middleton.