

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

www.AlexFilmSociety.org Tickets: 818.243.2539

Saturday, September 19, 2009 at 8 pm only!

Alex Film Society opens its 16th season with the

Tenth Annual VAUDEVILLE EXTRAVAGANZA!

at Glendale's historic Alex Theatre.

VAUDEVILLE is One Big Night of Fun and Frolic! The most anticipated family event held annually at the grand theatre, the show is a "hurricane of fun and frolic" paying tribute to the Alex's vaudeville roots. The one-night-only event is an eclectic mix of the sort of variety acts that made vaudeville so beloved by a generation of fans. Learn what your great-grandma was talking about...

Headlining this year will be:



the **NIGHT BLOOMING JAZZMEN**
playing nostalgic tunes
from the vaudeville era.

Then, live on stage will be:



Does It All Add Up?
Arthur Benjamin
Mathemagician

Full of Air! Hilarious Artistry of
Skip Banks
The Balloon Man



America's Sharpest Specialty Artist!
Larry Cisewski
Guinness World Champion Knife Thrower



As Always The Card Girl
Lisa Casillo-Burnes

Back by Popular Demand!
Chipper Lowell Experience
Two-Time Award Winner
Comedy Magician of the Year!



True to the vaudeville genre, the evening concludes on the big screen with a classic comedy film and other short subjects. Don't miss it this year!

Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009 at 2 pm and 8 pm only!

THE HAUNTING (1963) M-G-M



Is the Alex Haunted? Join World renowned Psychic-Medium & Parapsychological Investigator Michael J. Kouri and find out! Robert Wise adapted Shirley Jackson's novel THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE into one of filmdom's most memorable horror films.

A paranormal investigator (Richard Johnson) decides to investigate a 90-year old haunted house aided by two women with recent psychic

experiences (Julie Harris and Claire Bloom) and the owner's skeptical nephew (Russ Tamblyn). A true ghost story of the first degree, *The Haunting* is perfect spook fare to put you in the Halloween spirit. Presented In 35mm black and white and CinemaScope. Runs 2 1/2 hrs.

Saturday, Nov. 28, 2009 at 2 pm and 8 pm only!



12TH ANNUAL THE THREE STOOGES BIG SCREEN EVENT!

Larry, Moe and Curly (and sometimes Shemp!)

The Dozenal Three Stooges® Big Screen Event! More info in July 2009 when tickets will go on sale. All 2000 fans who attended in 2008 know what a great time this will be!



VOICE of the THEATRE

Journal of the **ALEX**
FILM SOCIETY

Vol. 15, No. 3, July 25, 2009, 2 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Alex Film Society presents RODGERS and HAMMERSTEIN'S *The King and I*



Getting to Know Rodgers and Hammerstein

by Annick J. Downhower

Tonys, Academy Awards®, Pulitzer Prizes, Grammys, and an Emmy®, these honors were bestowed on hit musicals created by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II during their 18 year partnership. Responsible for songs such as "Some Enchanted Evening" and "My Favorite Things," both men were raised around music and theatre.

Hammerstein had a theatre pedigree: his opera impresario grandfather built the Manhattan Opera House; his father managed a leading vaudeville theatre; and his uncle was a Broadway producer. Hammerstein studied pre-law at Columbia University. The Varsity Show was a popular annual event at Columbia and Hammerstein began

writing lyrics for it. Hammerstein's work was so popular that he discarded his law plans and instead entered the theatre. He teamed with various composers, creating stage successes including *Rose-Marie*, *The Desert Song*, and the Jerome Kern-Hammerstein mega-hit, *Showboat*.

In 1920, the work Richard Rodgers and lyricist Lorenz Hart created was chosen for another edition of *The Varsity Show* and the team of Rodgers and Hart was born. Among their Broadway hits were *Jumbo*, *Babes in Arms*, and *Pal Joey*. Their partnership lasted until 1942 when drinking caused Hart's early death.

Rodgers, foreseeing his friend's demise, had received Hart's blessing

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Film Calendar

•Saturday, September 19th,
8 pm only!
**10th Annual
Vaudeville Extravaganza**

•Saturday, October 24th,
2 and 8 pm
The Haunting

•Saturday, November 28th,
2 and 8 pm
**12th Annual
The Three Stooges
Big Screen Event!**

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Richard Rodgers (L) was partnered for many years with Lorenz Hart but found new riches in his collaboration with Oscar Hammerstein the 2nd.

to team with Hammerstein. Their first production was 1943's *Oklahoma!*, innovative in its full integration of story, songs, and dance numbers.

Impressed by *Oklahoma!*, 20th Century-Fox requested Rodgers and Hammerstein write musical numbers for a re-make of the 1933 film *State Fair*. Rodgers had previously worked in Hollywood in the early 1930s. At that time, he had found "studio moguls always seemed to have a certain antipathy toward people from the Broadway theatre... they never were really happy about our being there." *State Fair* (1945) won the team an Oscar© for the song "It Might As Well Be Spring," but Rodgers and Hammerstein still returned to Broadway.



Gertrude Lawrence had been a musical theatre legend for thirty years (often teamed with Noel Coward) when *The King and I* opened on Broadway in 1951. She died suddenly in 1952 of liver cancer.

Their post-World War II stage hits included *Carousel* and *South Pacific*. *The King and I* resulted when Broadway leading lady Gertrude Lawrence

asked Rodgers and Hammerstein to write a musical stage version of Margaret Landon's novel *ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM*. Lawrence was known for a dynamic stage presence and a determined will. To balance that, Rodgers and Hammerstein desired a strong actor for the king. When relatively-unknown Yul Brynner auditioned, Rodgers and Hammerstein correctly judged his "controlled ferocity" to be the perfect match for both Lawrence and the role of the king.

In the mid-1950s, 20th Century-Fox again approached Rodgers and Hammerstein. Executives thought *Oklahoma!* would be a perfect first production for the Todd-AO film format which captured wide angle shots using a single camera. Rodgers and Hammerstein were interested in this prospect until witnessing a major blow-up between executives Michael Todd and George Skouras. The tension almost killed the deal but eventually tempers cooled. *Oklahoma!* (1955) went on to big-screen success but, according to Rodgers, "Except for *South Pacific* (1958), Oscar and I left the moving pictures to moving picture people."

Despite keeping their distance from the film version of *The King and I* (1956), Rodgers and Hammerstein's theatrical decisions carried over into that Hollywood production. Choreographer Jerome Robbins created the dances, including "The Small House of Uncle Thomas" ballet, for the stage production. He did his first film work for *The King and I* (1956) and would return to Hollywood and win an Academy Award© five years later. Yul Brynner made the role of the king his own both on stage and screen. He won Best Actor for his film performance, one of five Oscars© the 1956 movie was awarded. Another of the Academy Awards© went to Irene Sharaff who designed the elaborate costumes for both stage and screen.

In the late 1950s, Rodgers and Hammerstein's Broadway hits continued with *Flower Drum Song* and *The Sound of Music*. Sadly, their partnership ended in 1960 when Hammerstein died of cancer. Rodgers, who had worked only with Hart and Hammerstein, continued composing but never again had a permanent collaborator. Following Rodgers' 1979 death, he was honored with his name on a Broadway theatre. But, the ultimate tribute to both Rodgers and Hammerstein is the enjoyment audiences continue to derive from their evergreen musicals. 📺

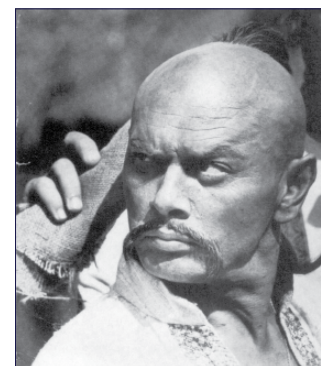
AFS Member Annick J. Downhower is a frequent contributor to the Voice of the Theatre

Brynner was a passionate photographer and took many photos on sets. The book *YUL BRYNNER, PHOTOGRAPHER* was put together by his daughter, herself a photographer. He was married four times, the first three ending in divorce. He had three children and adopted two others. His fourth wife was a dancer in *The King and I* shows. They married in 1983. From 1977 to 1985, Brynner starred in a Broadway revival of *The King and I* as well as subsequent national and international tours of the show. The day of his four thousandth performance, Brynner discovered he had inoperable lung cancer. He continued starring in *The King and I* for two more years. Over the course of 34 years, Brynner gave 4,663 performances as the King of Siam.

On June 30, 1985, Brynner took his final curtain call at the Broadway Theatre as the orchestra and audience serenaded him with "Auld Lang Syne." Yul Brynner died on October 10, 1985 in New York City.

His very last "performance" was by far his most dramatic and perhaps his most courageous. He left a powerful public service announcement stating smoking as the cause of his cancer, for broadcast after his death. This was a truly memorable exit from a dynamic film star who had always shrouded himself in drama and mystery. 📺

AFS Board Member Linda Harris is a frequent contributor to the Voice of the Theatre



Photos courtesy of: Marc Wanamaker/Bison Archives and www.doctormacro.info

THANK YOU!

Thanks to longtime AFS member Carol Shilling for her raffle basket creations and Michael Zarefsky's musical collection for setting the mood at our April 25th screening of *The Time Machine*.

Around 1969 Kerr decided that films were becoming too violent and full of explicit sex and she decided to focus on theatre and television. In 1975 she returned to Broadway to star in Edward Albee's play *Seascape*.

Deborah Kerr died on October 16, 2007 in Suffolk, England of causes related to Parkinson's disease.

In 1994 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences® gave Deborah Kerr an Honorary Oscar®. It was in recognition of Kerr as "an artist of impeccable grace and beauty, a dedicated actress whose motion picture career has always stood for perfection, discipline and elegance." What better summation of a career, of a life lived, could one ever hope to receive. 📺

AFS Board Member Dean Briggs, a professional actor, is a frequent contributor to the Voice of the Theatre



A CINEMASCOPE PICTURE
IN
CINEMASCOPE 55

by Brian Ellis

In the 1950's Hollywood fought TV with a variety of gimmicks and improvements including the wide screen process known as CinemaScope. In 1956, 20th Century Fox introduced CinemaScope 55 to address the problem of poor resolution of the available camera negative stocks.

Their solution was to use a negative that was nearly 4 times the size of the standard 35mm frame. Using anamorphic lenses (the heart of CinemaScope) they squeezed the image 2:1 on the 55.625mm camera negative. The resulting original negative was then reduction printed onto 35mm release stock for exhibition, effectively increasing the resolution of the final print.

At one time Fox hoped to make the 55mm negative a projection standard but the costs to theaters was prohibitive and only two features, *The King and I* and *Carousel* were shot in the format. Cinemascope 55 was abandoned for the 65/70mm non-anamorphic process (Todd A/O) mainly due to the poor quality inherent in the anamorphic lenses then available.

AFS Board Member Brian Ellis is a frequent contributor to the Voice of the Theatre.



Left: Standard 35mm negative.
Right: CinemaScope 55mm negative.

Become A Member of the Alex Film Society!

The Alex Film Society relies on membership support and tax deductible donations to present our classic film events. Our volunteer Board and members make it possible.

Please fill out our application form and join us as members and donors.

**BECOME A MEMBER
OF THE ALEX FILM SOCIETY!**

Mail this application with a check to: **ALEX FILM SOCIETY**
P. O. Box 4807, Glendale, CA 91222-0807

Name(s) _____
please print _____

Org/Business _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

☐ I (WE) CAN VOLUNTEER. Please call.

☐ Enclosed is my (our) donation of \$_____.

(discount admissions good for every screening)

☐ Patron \$100 (Eight discount passes) ☐ Family/dual \$40 (Eight discount passes)

☐ Individual \$25 (Two discount passes) ☐ Senior/Students! \$15 (One discount pass) Seniors over 60 Full time student or graduation date _____

Please list your two favorite films: _____

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Perspective: Yul Brynner



Yul Brynner, mysterious and captivating leading man, was the son of Boris Bryner, a Swiss-German-Mongolian engineer, and Marousia Blagavidova, the daughter of a Russian doctor. He was born in Vladivostok, Russia, on July 11, 1920, and named Yul after his grandfather. In 1941, Brynner took his ailing mother to New York City for medical treatment. Barely fluent in English, he learned his first role – Fabian, in a touring company of *Twelfth Night* – from a dictionary. His career had its ups and downs for the next decade. In February, 1946, he made his debut on Broadway playing poet Tsai-Yong opposite Mary Martin in the musical *Lute Song*. Directed by John Houseman, *Lute Song* also starred twenty-six-year-old Nancy Davis in her first and only Broadway appearance. A year later he was rejected after a screen test at Universal Studios for looking “too Oriental.”

In 1948, Brynner put aside his stage acting ambition and joined the fledgling television industry directing episodes of “Studio One” and “Omnibus”. But then Brynner fell in love with the script of *The King and I* – a story written especially for stage legend Gertrude Lawrence. Rex Harrison and Alfred Drake were considered for the role of the king. Mary Martin

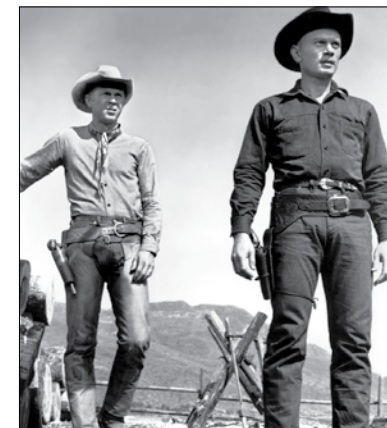
recommended Brynner for the role. *The King and I* opened on Broadway at the St. James Theatre on March 29, 1951. It was a first-night smash. Brynner won a Tony® and it remained on Broadway for 1,246 performances.

Although Brynner had appeared on screen only once in 1949's *Port of New York*, when 20th Century Fox announced production of the movie version, there was no doubt who would play the king – it was the role of Anna that was up for grabs. Dinah Shore and Maureen O’Hara’s names were tossed around. It was Brynner who pressed for Deborah Kerr. His son, Rock Brynner (YUL: THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING) maintains there was no love lost between Brynner and his bosses. “From the start, his relationship with Fox was confrontational; his rapport with the film’s producer, Charles Brackett, and veteran director, Walter Lang, were no better.” “He threatened to walk off the set if his ideas weren’t instantly adapted,” Lang told Newsweek.”

“His imagination, suggestions and instructions were responsible for turning *The King and I* into a great movie.”

Deborah Kerr had a different take. “His imagination, suggestions and instructions were responsible for turning *The King and I* into a great movie.” *The King and I* (1956)

by Linda Harris



“Look, if I take my hat off, nobody will ever see you!” was Yul’s comment to Steve McQueen regarding his costars’ annoying penchant for upstaging.

premiered at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre on June 29, 1956. It was a huge success both critically and financially. At the Pantages RKO Theatre on March 27, 1957, Brynner won the Oscar® for Best Actor beating Lawrence Olivier, James Dean, Rock Hudson and Kirk Douglas. When actress Anna Magnani handed him his Oscar,



In 1957, Brynner receives the Oscar® for Best Actor

Brynner said, “I hope this is not a mistake – I’m not giving it back!” He had major roles in *The Ten Commandments* (1956), *Anastasia* (1956), *The Brothers Karamazov* (1958), *The Sound and the Fury* (1959) and *The Magnificent Seven* (1960).

Continued on Page 7

Perspective: Deborah Kerr



Deborah Kerr, nicknamed “The English Rose”, was nominated six times as Best Actress, but never won an Academy Award®. On the ballot in 1957 for *The King and I*, she lost to Ingrid Bergman’s portrayal of Anastasia opposite the very same Yul Brynner.

Born in Helensburgh, Scotland on September 30, 1921, she was a shy and insecure child and originally trained as a ballerina before deciding that acting might give her a better chance at success. Her first memorable film role was in *Major Barbara* (1941). In 1943 she played a trio of roles in the wonderful film *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* directed by Michael Powell. It was her portrayal of a conflicted nun in the film *Black Narcissus* (1947), however, that garnered her attention in America. The New York Film Critics named her Best Actress of the Year and soon she was ‘called’ to Hollywood and signed by MGM. Louis B. Mayer felt that the Scottish pronunciation of her last name Kerr, rhyming somewhere between ‘care’ and ‘cur’ should be changed to “Kerr (‘Car’) rhymes with Star!”

Immediately Kerr found success in films exhibiting her as a refined and proper English lady. In 1949 she starred in the film *Edward My Son* and received her first Academy Award® nomination for Best Actress. Kerr soon, however, began to tire of these ‘refined and proper’ roles and sought out more

demanding ones. In the 1953 production of James Jones’ bestseller *FROM HERE TO ETERNITY* she portrayed Karen Holmes, the frustrated wife of a Pearl Harbor naval officer,



Cary Grant falls for Ms. Kerr in Leo McCarey’s shipboard romance, *An Affair to Remember* (1957)

a part originally intended for Joan Crawford. “I don’t think anyone knew I could act until I put on a bathing suit”, Kerr later said. She received her second Academy Award® nomination

“an artist of impeccable grace and beauty, a dedicated actress whose motion picture career has always stood for perfection, discipline and elegance.”

for her work in the film. On Broadway, Kerr garnered good reviews for her role as Laura Reynolds in *Tea and Sympathy* for which she received a Tony Award® nomination. She reprised her role on film in 1956. She starred with Robert Mitchum in *Heaven Knows Mr. Allison* (1957) and *The Sundowners* (1960) and received

by Dean Briggs



Deborah with costar Robert Taylor in the lavish MGM production of *Quo Vadis* (1951).

Best Actress Nominations for both films, Cary Grant toyed with her affections in *An Affair To Remember* (1957) and *Separate Tables* (1958) united her once again with Burt Lancaster with similar results... another Oscar® Nomination. *The Innocents* (1961) and *The Night of the Iguana* (1964) with Richard Burton were solid films from the era when dramas were still filmed in black and white. It was in Rodgers’ and Hammerstein’s *The King and I* (1956), however, that Kerr played one of her most memorable roles. Actress Gertrude Lawrence bought the rights to the book, *ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM* and brought the book to Rodgers and Hammerstein. The role of Anna was originally written for Lawrence and she opened on Broadway in 1951. Gertrude Lawrence died in 1952. With Yul Brynner, reprising his role as the King of Siam from Broadway, Kerr took over the role of Anna Leonowens, ‘Mrs. Anna’, for the film version. Kerr’s singing voice was dubbed by Marni Nixon.

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RODGERS and HAMMERSTEIN'S The King and I

CAST

Deborah Kerr.....Anna Leonowens
Yul Brynner.....King Mongkut of Siam
Rita Moreno.....Tuptim
Martin Benson.....Kralahome
Terry Saunders.....Lady Thiang
Rex Thompson.....Louis Leonowens
Carlos Rivas.....Lun Tha
Patrick Adiarte.....Prince Chulalongkorn
Alan Mowbray.....Sir John Hay
Geoffrey Toone.....Sir Edward Ramsay



CinemaScope - 1956 - 133 minutes
Twentieth Century - Fox Film Corporation Presents
Print Courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox



The 1952 Tony Award Winners. From L to R: O. Hammerstein 2nd, Gertrude Lawrence, R. Rodgers, Helen Hayes, Phil Silvers (Top Banana), Judy Garland (Special Award), and Yul Brynner.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Walter Lang.....Director
Darryl F. Zanuck.....Executive Producer*
Charles Brackett.....Producer
Ernest Lehman.....Screenplay
Margaret Landon.....Writer, ANNA AND THE KING OF SIAM
Oscar Hammerstein II.....Musical Play
Richard Rodgers.....Original Music
Leon Shamroy.....Cinematography
Robert L. Simpson.....Editor
John DeCuir/ Lyle R. Wheeler.....Art Direction
Paul S. Fox/ Walter M. Scott.....Set Decoration
Ben Nye.....Makeup Artist
Helen Turpin.....Hair Stylist
Eli Dunn.....Assistant Director
Irene Sharaff.....Costume Design
Warren B. Delaplain/ E. Clayton Ward.....Sound
Carlton W. Faulkner.....Sound Editor*
Robert Mayer.....Music Editor*
Alfred Newman.....Conductor
Doug Hubbard.....Special Effects*
Ray Kellogg.....Photographic Effects

* Uncredited