

Interviews: Christmas Stars Shine With Mickey Rooney, Ernest Borgnine, Tippi Hedren, Larry Hagman

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on December 24, 2009 - 9:10am

- [Alfred Hitchcock](#) [2]
- [Andy Hardy](#) [3]
- [Charlie Chaplin](#) [4]
- [Dallas](#) [5]
- [Ernest Borgnine](#) [6]
- [Hollywood Celebrities Show](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [I Dream of Jeannie](#) [9]
- [Interview](#) [10]
- [Joe Arce](#) [11]
- [Larry Hagman](#) [12]
- [Mickey Rooney](#) [13]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [14]
- [The Birds](#) [15]
- [Tippi Hendren](#) [16]

CHICAGO – On this Christmas Eve, we will bask in the light of sparkling film stars, and honor their legacy. Mickey Rooney, Ernest Borgnine, Tippi Hedren and Larry Hagman met admirers at the Hollywood Celebrities Show.

The older stars are the most fascinating and best attended towards at these type of events. There is a sense of regal elements to their bearing, but at the same time a knowledge that they were possessed in another era, simpler perhaps, but still significant in this time of online and DVD access to the older canon.

Let us spend time briefly this Christmas Eve with the following legends of film, as HollywoodChicago and the ace of all aces, photographer Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto, connect to the living embodiments of our film history past at the Hollywood Celebrities Show in Rosemont, Illinois.



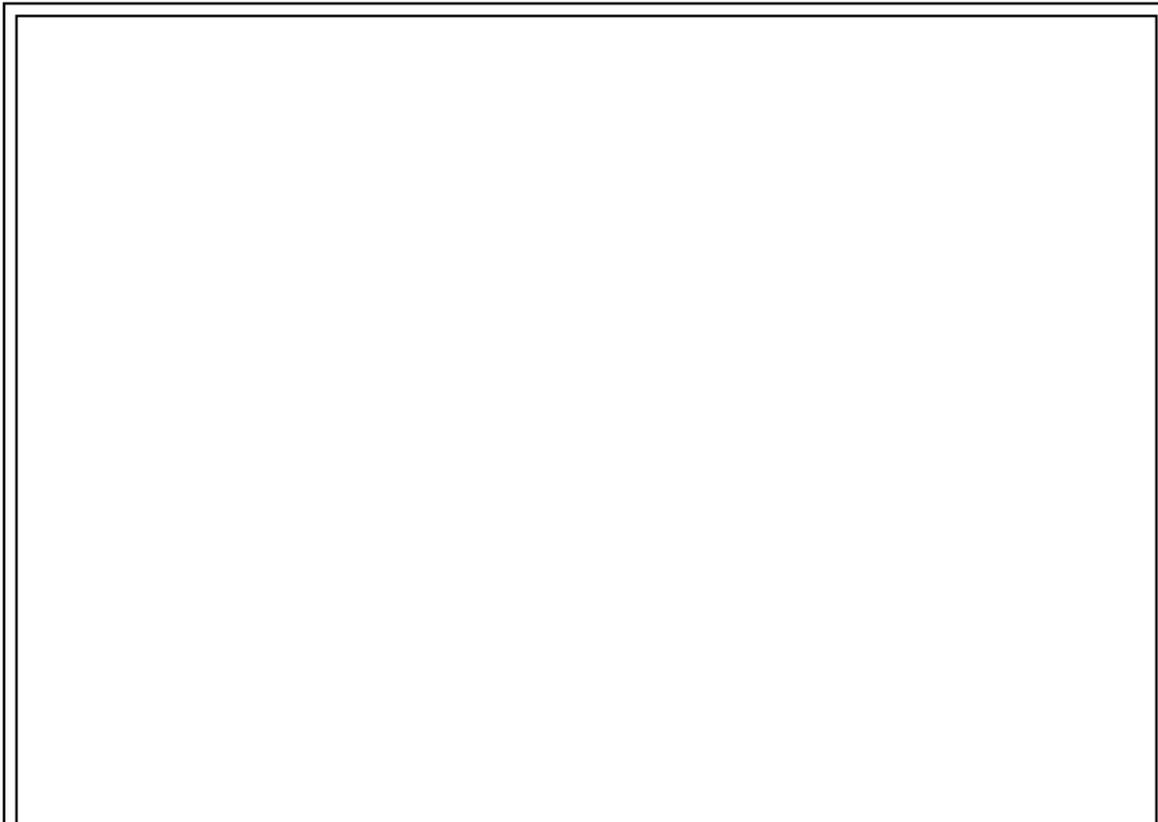
Mickey Rooney, Film and Box Office Titan for Metro Goldwyn Mayer

The Mickster, as he himself will remind you, was the biggest box office star for three straight years in 1939, '40 and '41, during the golden age of the studio system – and this was the time of “Gone With the Wind,” “The Wizard of Oz,” World War Two and the end of the depression. And Mickey Rooney still survives.

His first film was in the silent era, where he is cast as a “midget” in “Not to Be Trusted (1926)” This led into his 1927-36 series, before Andy Hardy, as Mickey McGuire (McGuire was a popular comic strip of the time). He joined MGM in 1937 by portraying Andy Hardy in “A Family Affair,” and created one of the most enduring characters in movie history.

His performing partnership with Judy Garland, his multiple marriages, “Breakfast at Tiffany’s,” his ups and downs and various comebacks are all part of the equation for this star still standing. He even is known in this generation for his appearance in the original “Night at the Museum.”

Also from the interviewer’s notebook: it is the first time I have met someone who has met Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And Eleanor too, I assume.





The Mickster: Mickey Rooney at the Hollywood Celebrities Show, Oct. 17th, 2009
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com: In the last 25 years, which characters have you played that you consider memorable?

Mickey Rooney: All of them. My wife Jan and I just finished a picture in Chicago. It is tentatively titled 'The Pharaohs of Chicago.'

HollywoodChicago.com: Your family were vaudevillians. Considering the nature of being 'on the road' in show business, what do you consider to be your hometown?

Rooney: I was born Joe Yule in Brooklyn, New York. My family left there when I was born. I'm really a California boy.

HollywoodChicago.com: Which film that you starred in do you believe made the most impact on American culture?

Rooney: I think the Andy Hardy series. Did you know it was one of President Roosevelt's favorites? I met Roosevelt, and every president thereafter.

HollywoodChicago.com: Why do you think there is so much controversy regarding your portrayal of Mr. Yunioshi in 'Breakfast at Tiffany's'?

Rooney: There is no controversy. Look, Jerry Lewis, Katharine Hepburn and Paul Muni have done the same thing. There was no intent in my portrayal.

HollywoodChicago.com: One of your more underrated roles was as the skipper's (Lionel Barrymore) son in 1937's 'Captains Courageous.' What did you think of director Victor Fleming at the time, and were you surprised two years later when he was the credited director for both 'The Wizard of Oz' and 'Gone With the Wind'?

Rooney: No. He was a fine director. One of the golden age directors I remember best was 'Woody' Van Dyke, who was also a Marine. There were a lot of great directors at the time.

Directors are very different today, but I enjoyed working with Ben Stiller on 'Night at the Museum.' My wife Jan and I are working on a reality show, and our first guest was Ben Stiller.

HollywoodChicago.com: Which of the great MGM stars made the most impact on you as a child actor at the time?

Rooney: Nobody really made an impact on me. Not even Clark Gable. In fact I played Gable's character as a child in the movie 'Manhattan Melodrama' [1934].

HollywoodChicago.com: That was the film John Dillinger had watched right before he was killed by the FBI at the Biograph Theater here in Chicago.

Rooney: I know that theater. Jan and I had our picture taken in front of it recently.

HollywoodChicago.com: You work with many veteran's groups. Tell me about that.

Rooney: We need to give the veterans more credit. I was decorated in the Second World War by General Patton for entertaining the troops then. And I think we should revere the fact that in America they fought for us and we should tell our children that.

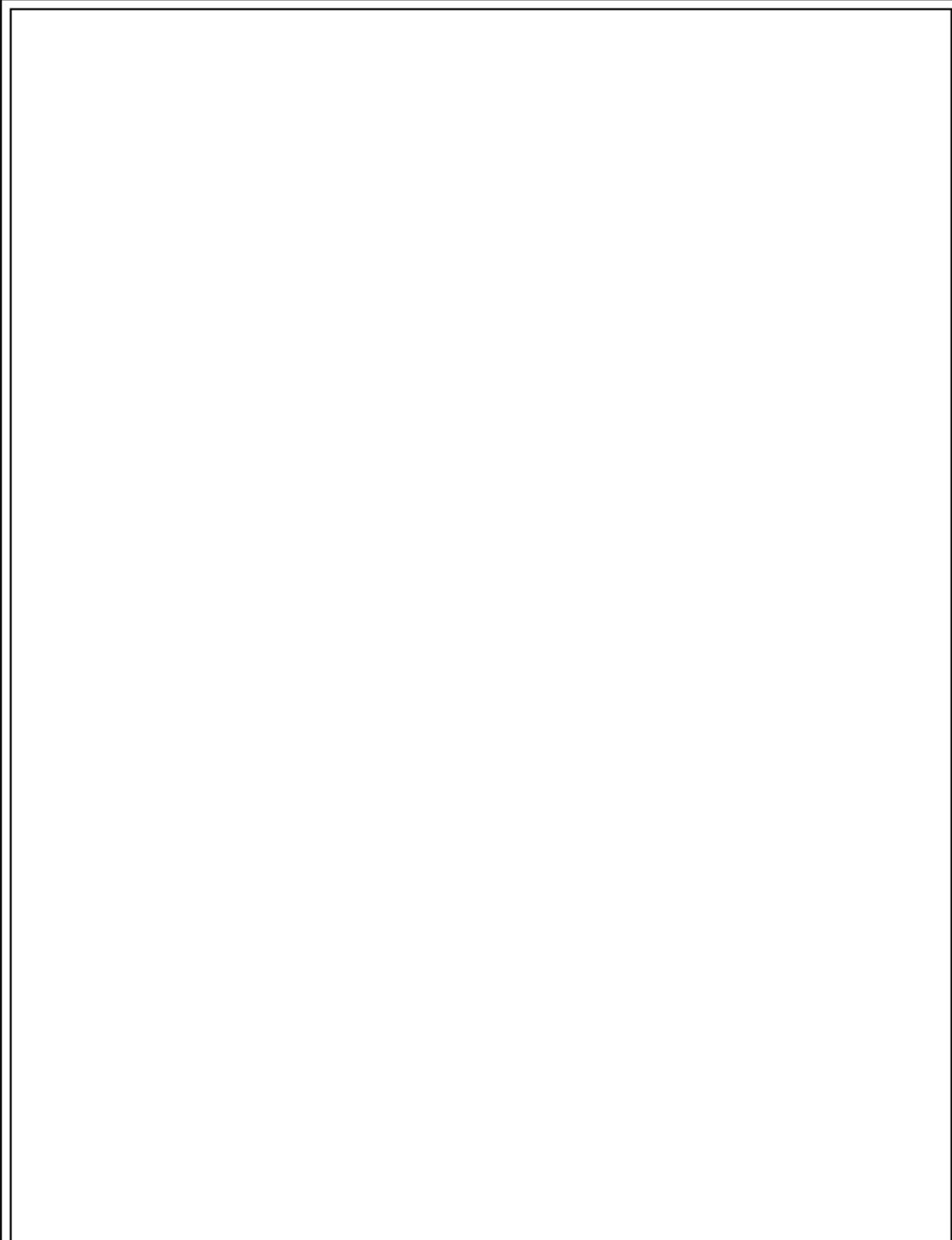


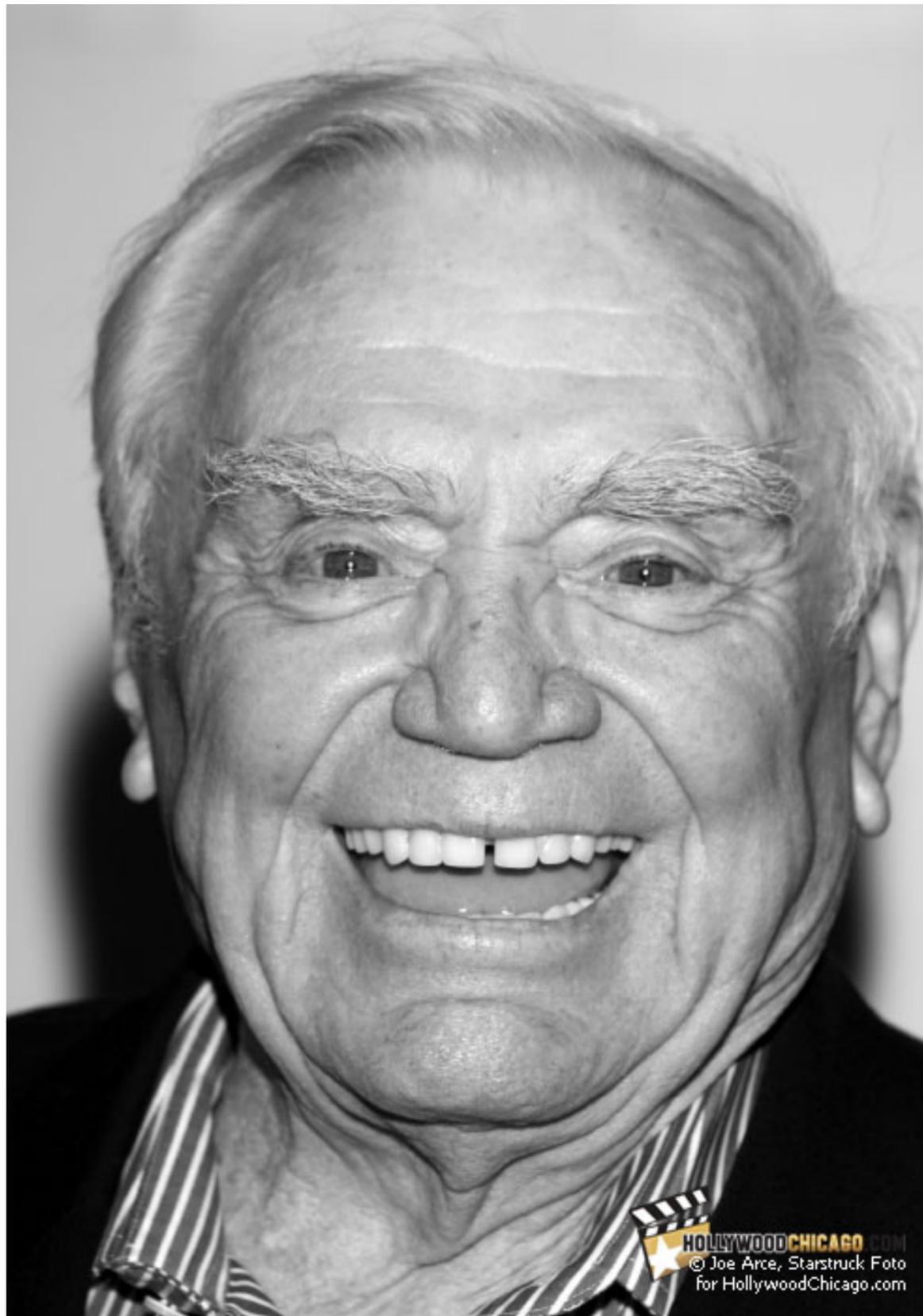
Ernest Borgnine, Oscar Winner for "Marty"

The unflappable Ernie Borgnine, 92 years young, has worked as a major movie star for over two generations. He will always and forever be known to "persons of a certain age" as the unlucky-in-love butcher in 1955's *Marty*, for which he won the Academy Award for Best Actor.

Borgnine got into acting simply because he didn't want to work in a factory after getting out of the Navy – yes, Quentin McHale was a real Navy man – after World War II. He received his big break portraying Sgt. "Fatso" Judson in the classic "From Here to Eternity" (1953), and endeared himself to spurned showgirls everywhere by beating up Frank Sinatra in the picture.

His character roles on film and TV ("McHale's Navy") have provided a steady and comfortable career. He proved his chops again as an octogenarian in "11'-09"-01," a short film cooperative produced in 2002 which had September 11th themes. In it, he played a lonely widower in New York City in a segment directed by Sean Penn.





Marty on the Town: Ernest Borgnine, October 17th, 2009
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com: How did working with Sean Penn in the September 11th film help you to get over 9/11?

Ernest Borgnine: I don't think I'll ever get over 9/11. I didn't feel much about the situation at the time of that shoot as much as feeling the character. All I could sense was the genius of Sean Penn. Not many people have seen that film, but everyone who has seen it loves it very much.

HollywoodChicago.com: You seem to such a nice guy, did you ever have trouble playing some of mean SOB's you've played in your career?

Borgnine: Not as all. (laughs)

HollywoodChicago.com: Who was the most interesting person or actor you personally got to meet after you gained fame and won your Oscar for 'Marty'?

Borgnine: I never got to meet them, but my wish list included Edward G. Robinson and Alan Hale, Sr. Those old great character actors, they were really beautiful people. We miss them because there is nobody like that in the business anymore, unfortunately.

HollywoodChicago.com: In your long life and career, do you think there is anything better about America now than when you were a younger man?

Borgnine: I don't think so. We've got faster automobiles, and everyone lives faster, but I don't know whether it's worth it or not. Because nobody stops to enjoy what life is all about. By going so fast, I think they're missing out on a helluva lot of good stuff.

HollywoodChicago.com: Who was the toughest director you ever worked for and why?

Borgnine: I never worked for a tough director, they were all very nice to me. They were all wonderful people.

HollywoodChicago.com: Finally, what do you want to do tonight, Marty?

Borgnine: (Laughs)

★ **Tippi Hedren, star of Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" and "Marnie"**

Tippi Hedren was a struggling actress and model in the early 1960s when a rotund British director named Alfred Hitchcock saw her on the "Today Show" and knew he could mold her into one of his signature blonde characters.

What followed was Hedren's unforgettable debut in "The Birds" (1963), followed by the underrated "Marnie" (1964), both directed by Hitchcock. Although the rest of her career hasn't been as notable, her advocacy of African Lion preservation and being Melanie Griffith's mother has cemented her legacy.



Hello, Marnie: Tippi Hedren, October 17, 2009
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com: Alfred Hitchcock's style was the formula for your early career. How was it to shift gears and work for the great Charlie Chaplin in his last film as a director, 'The Countess of Hong Kong?'

Tippi Hedren: The two directors operated at opposing modes. Everything was meticulously prepared by Hitchcock, to the point where he had it so well organized that he worked from 9-to-5. You ever heard of that (laughs)? He was prepared so beautifully that it spoiled me on other productions. Hitch was very funny on the set, loved dirty limericks and he loved to 'hold court.'

Chaplin on the other hand was extremely serious. Because it was his first directing job in a long time, everybody wanted to be in the film, even as a walk-on, just to say they worked with Chaplin. Charlie would act out all our roles for us, he would play my part, Sophia's (Loren) part, Marlon Brando's, his son Sydney. Then afterward he would say, 'now you do it.' Brando did not like working like that at all (laughs).

HollywoodChicago.com: In which role in your long career did you feel most free as an actress?

Hedren I liked doing Marnie the best. I loved the character, loved her duplicity.

HollywoodChicago.com: What is the background of the film 'Roar' [1981] and the Roar Foundation?

Hedren I did two films in Africa in the early 1970s. During that time many environmentalists were beginning to warn that if we didn't take care of the animals in the wild by the year 2000, they would be gone.

At that time my husband was a producer, and we decided to do a movie about the animals in the wild, and the problems they were having with encroaching civilization. We were kicking around ideas on which species to focus on, and that question was quickly answered when we went to a game preserve. There was a house that was abandoned by the game warden because it had flooded during the rainy season. The game warden had moved out, and a pride of lions had moved in.

It was awesome to see. They were sitting in the doors, napping outside the house. So we thought, there we have it.

HollywoodChicago.com: Given the influence of male directors in your life, what advice would you give young women today about the nature of what men want from women?

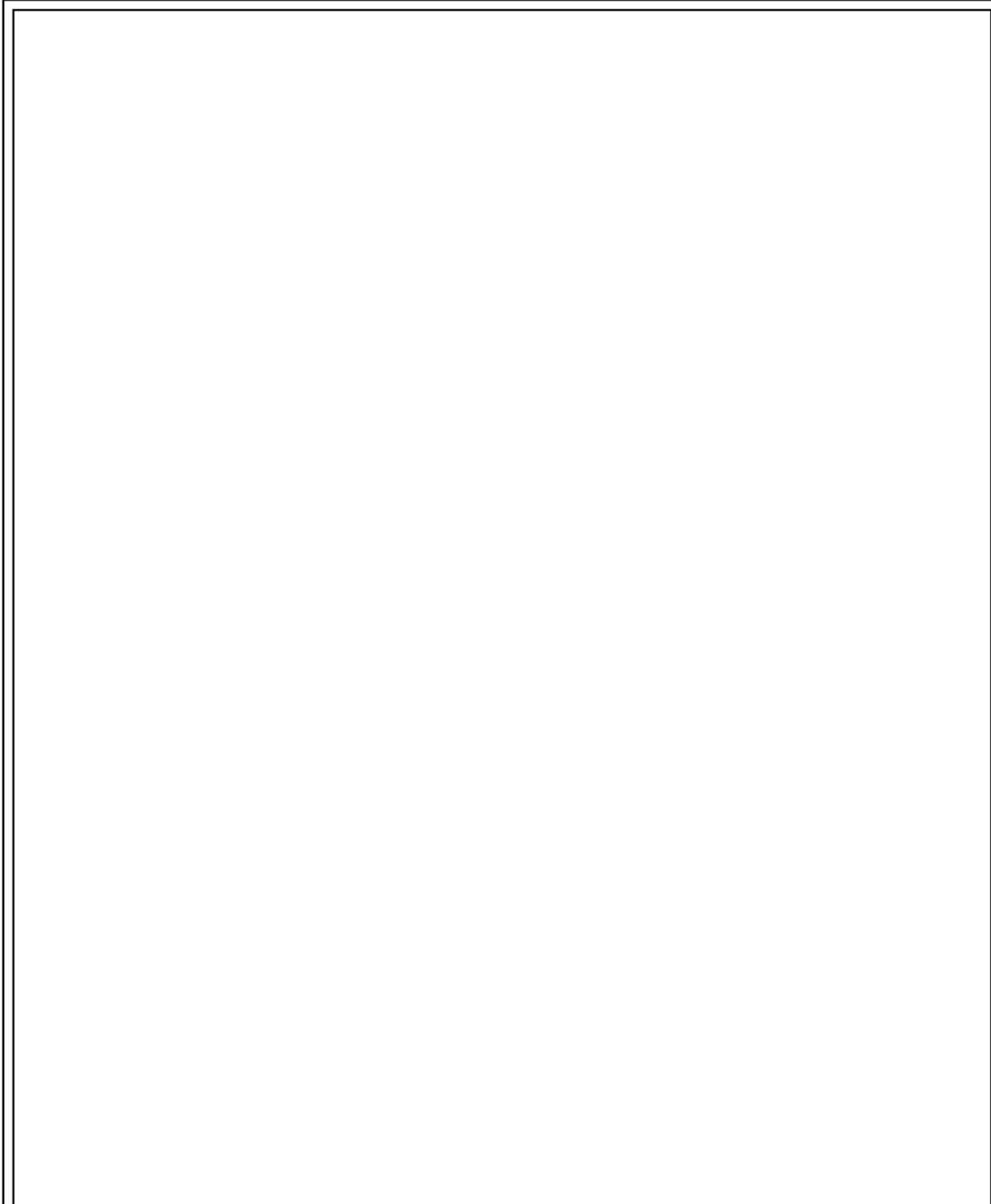
Hedren Stay away from what men want from women. Stay away from that. If you want to maintain your dignity and sanity.

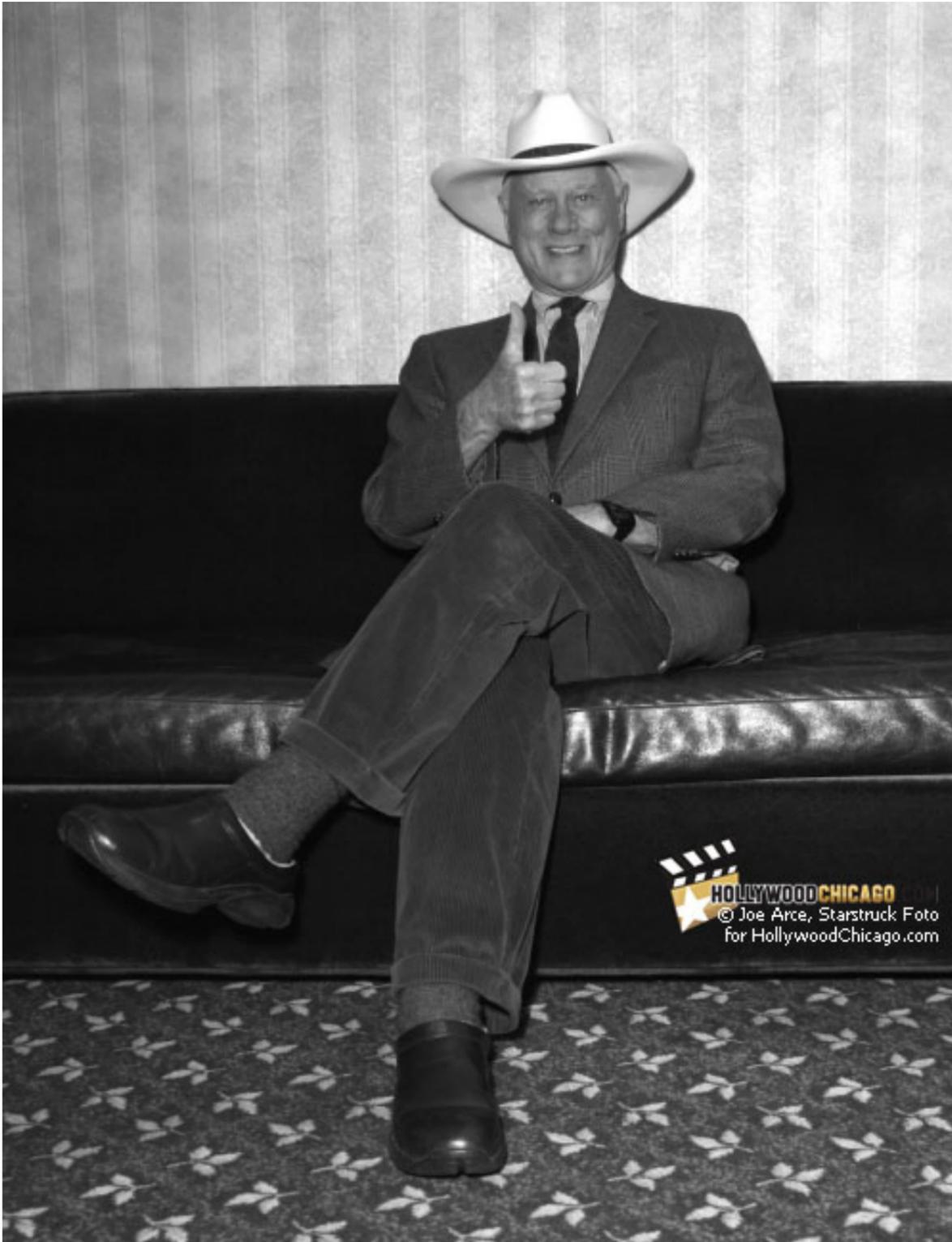


Larry Hagman is 'the' J.R. Ewing on "Dallas"

The larger-than-life Larry Hagman, survivor of two distinct television characters in his long show business career, is best remembered as the scheming, conniving Texas millionaire J.R. Ewing in the mega-popular "Dallas."

Hagman was born to Broadway chanteuse Mary Martin, and made his own Broadway debut in the mid-1950s. A key role in the cold war movie thriller, "Fail-Safe" [1964], led to his comic turn as Major Tony Nelson in the '60s sitcom favorite, "I Dream of Jeannie."





The Great J.R.: Larry Hagman, October 17th, 2009
Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com

HollywoodChicago.com: You grew up 'on the boards' with your famous mother. What was the atmosphere like on Broadway in the 1950s?

Larry Hagman: Panic. (laughs) My first show there was 'Comes a Day' with Judith Anderson, which was also George C. Scott's debut.

HollywoodChicago.com: You were truly excellent opposite Henry Fonda in 'Fail-Safe.' What was it like playing such a tense role, on a claustrophobic set, with the great Fonda?

Hagman: It was great, he taught me a lot. Simple things, like don't smoke. Because then the continuity gets all off, because they have to match where your cigarette has burnt down for every shot. Sh*t, I never did that again (laughs).

HollywoodChicago.com: What movie or TV appearance got you noticed enough to get the audition for Tony Nelson in 'I Dream of Jeannie'?

Hagman: I had already done 'Fail-Safe,' but it wasn't released yet. But everyone knew about the performance, which got me a foot in the door.

HollywoodChicago.com: In the film 'Nixon,' were you playing a more realistic and true-to-life version of J.R. Ewing?

Hagman: Sure. That's what pays off. I think that's what Oliver Stone wanted. I really liked doing that role.

HollywoodChicago.com: What was the greatest lesson your mother taught you either as an actor or a man?

Hagman: She always said know your lines, hang up your clothes and stay reasonably sober. Well, I followed two of them anyhow (laughs).

'The next Hollywood Celebrities & Memorabilia Show is scheduled for March 13th-14th, 2010. [Click here for more information.](#) [17] Click [Part One](#) [18] for the first article on the show, [Part Two](#) [19] for the second and [Part Three](#) [20] for the third.

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [22]



[21]

Senior Staff Writer
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [21]

© 2009 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 1:43am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/9571/interviews-christmas-stars-shine-with-mickey-rooney-ernest-borgnine-tippi-hendren-larry-ha>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/alfred-hitchcock>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/andy-hardy>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/charlie-chaplin>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dallas>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ernest-borgnine>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywood-celebrities-show>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/i-dream-of-jeannie>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/joe-arce>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/larry-hagman>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/mickey-rooney>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-birds>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tippi-hendren>
- [17] <http://hollywoodcelebrityshow.com/Rose.htm>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/9547/interviews-star-trek-wayne-s-world-growing-pains-three-s-company-at-the-hollywood-celebrit>
- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/9559/interviews-mash-up-original-film-trapper-john-md-at-the-hollywood-celebrities-show>
- [20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/9566/interviews-american-graffiti-and-laverne-shirley-at-the-hollywood-celebrities-show>
- [21] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [22] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>