**Singin’ In the Rain, (1952)**

Directed by Stanley Donen  
Screenwriters Betty Comden and Adolf Green

Chapter 1: Singin’ In the Rain  
*Was voted the 10th Greatest Film of all time by Entertainment Weekly, being the highest ranked musical.*

This film is the favorite of critics, fans and most everyone in general, a film that encourages repeat viewings.

PowerPoint presentation includes:

- 1895, considered to be the birth of cinematography in America.
- 1895-1927, the Silent Era of film.
- 1927, sound was introduced. First film was produced by Warner Brothers Studio, *The Jazz Singer, the Story of Al Jolson*.
- 1930’s, is considered the Golden Era of Radio, with such shows as *The Green Hornet, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Abbott and Costello*.
- 1940’s, is considered the Golden Era of Film. This era started in 1939 with such films as *The Wizard of Oz, Wuthering Heights, and Gone with the Wind*.
- 1939, Television was invented and introduced at the New York World’s Fair, but didn’t begin mass production until after World War II.
- 1950’s, is considered the Golden Era of Television, with such hits as *I Love Lucy* (1951-1957), *Ed Sullivan Show* and *The Milton Berle Comedy Cavalcade*.

One of the reasons **this film is interesting to watch is that it depicts this time period of the transition from silent movies to talking pictures 1927-1929**. The stories in this movie are **based on true stories that happened during this transition**. The inspiration of producer **Arthur Freed**, who wrote the title song in 1928 for MGM’s *A Broadway Melody*.

**All of these songs were in the libraries of MGM studios and they were all considered hits of their time, so by releasing a movie, utilizing these songs, it was a sure win and profit maker for the studio. The script was written after the songs, and so it had to generate a plot into which the songs would fit.**

**Pan and Scan** and **Letterbox** and **Widescreen** formats for DVD and Videotaped sales.

A **widescreen** image is a film, computer, or television image with a wider and shorter aspect ratio than the standard Academy frame developed during the classical Hollywood cinema era. Silent film was projected at a ratio of four units wide to three units tall, often expressed as 4:3 or 1.33:1. The addition of sound-on-film soundtracks and a thicker frame line in order to hide
physical splices in prints caused the frame dimensions to standardize by 1932 to Academy format, which is actually 1.37 but often erroneously called 1.33.

Widescreen was first widely used in the late 1920s in some shorts and newsreels, including Fox Grandeur News and Fox Movietone Follies of 1929, both released on May 26, 1929 in New York City in the Fox Grandeur process. Other films shown in widescreen were the musical Happy Days (1929) which premiered at the Roxy Theater, N.Y.C., on February 13, 1930, starring Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell and a 13 year old Betty Grable as a chorus girl, and the western The Big Trail (1930) starring John Wayne and Tyrone Power, Sr. which premiered at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood on October 2, 1930, both of which were also made in the 70mm Fox Grandeur process. RKO released Danger Lights with Jean Arthur, Louis Wolheim, and Robert Armstrong on August 21, 1930 in a 65mm widescreen process known as NaturalVision, invented by film pioneer George K. Spoor. United Artists released The Bat Whispers directed by Roland West on November 13, 1930 in a 70mm widescreen process known as Magnifilm.

By 1932, the Depression had forced studios to cut back on needless expense and it wasn’t until the 1950s that wider aspect ratios were again used in an attempt to stop the fall in attendance due, partially, to the emergence of television in the U.S. Source: Wikipedia

Pan and scan is one method of adjusting widescreen film images so that they can be shown within the proportions of an ordinary 4:3 aspect ratio television screen, often cropping off the sides of the original widescreen image to focus on the composition’s most important aspects. Some film directors and film enthusiasts disagree with pan and scan cropping, because it can remove up to 45% (on 2.35:1 films) of the original image, changing the director's original vision and intentions. The vertical equivalent is known as “tilt and scan” or “reverse pan and scan”. Source: Wikipedia

Letterboxing is the practice of transferring widescreen film to video formats while preserving the film’s original aspect ratio. Since the video display often has a square aspect ratio, the
resulting videographic image has mattes (black bars) above and below it; LTBX is the identifying acronym for films and images so formatted.

Letterboxing is the alternative to the full-screen, pan-and-scan transference of a widescreen film image to videotape or videodisc. In pan-and-scan transfers, the original image is cropped to the 1.33:1 (4:3) aspect ratio of the standard television screen, whereas letterboxing preserves the film’s original image composition seen in the cinema.

Letterboxing was for use in 4:3 television displays when widescreen television was in its technologic infancy. Any Academy ratio (1.33:1) film will appear stretched and distorted to fill the widescreen television display, avoided by pillar boxing the image either via the TV set or the DVD player. Occasionally, an image broadcast at 4:3 appears letterboxed on a 4:3 or a 16:9 or wider aspect ratio television screen. This effect is common on personal video websites and old documentaries, neither the original image’s top and bottom have been matted or it appears stretched and wider than normal, making the people appear fat. Source: Wikipedia

**Aspect Ratio:** *Television 4:3, Film 4:6, demonstrate on the image in front of them.*

**Chapter 2: Main Title**

Interesting shot here; if you look carefully you can see the cars are 1936 automobiles and not 1927 automobiles. This is lifted from the original version of *A Star Is Born (1936)*, and is what we call stock footage. **Stock footage** is footage that is taken from a previous movie and inserted.

**MGM Studio incorporated in 1924. Original budget was 1.9 million,** unsure of the final budget as studio executives were replaced during production.

Betty Comden stated that these songs should stay in their era, as a result they came up with the idea of using the transitional period of 1927 as their setting.

**Chapter 3: Dora Bailey at The Chinese**

This opening, this premiere scene is one of three openings that was written for the film by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. They had worked previously with Arthur Freed and Leonard Bernstein. **Came to Hollywood in 1950 to work on Freed’s film Singin’ In The Rain. Only thing they knew was the title of the film and that the film was to be written around Freed’s music.**
The script was written after the songs, and so it had to generate a plot into which the songs would fit.

After finding out that they were to use the songs of Arthur Freed (also the producer) and Nacio Herb Brown, screenwriters Comden and Green went on strike claiming their contract stated that they were to write the lyrics, unless the score was by either Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, or Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. Two weeks later, and with a new agent, they discovered that there was no such clause, it was only a fabrication of their former agent, and subsequently got back to work.

The role of Cosmo was written with Oscar Levant in mind, but instead was immortalized by Donald’ O’Connor

**Two Types of mistakes in Films**

1. **Continuity** – this is a mistake in the editing, where something doesn’t match from one cut to the next, i.e. glass of wine, costume, or prop.
2. **Anachronism** – this is a mistake in the chronological dating of something. Normally happens in period films, for example the presence of something that was invented after the period selected for the movie.

**Three Openings to the movie:**

1. **Premiere** of a new movie
2. **Interview** with the stars
3. **Boy meets Girl**

**Biography for Gene Kelly**

Date of birth 23 August 1912, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
Date of death 2 February 1996, Beverly Hills, LA, CA. (complications from two strokes) Birth name Eugene Curran Kelly Height 5’ 7”

**Spouse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patricia Ward</th>
<th>(20 July 1990 - 2 February 1996) (his death)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne Coyne</td>
<td>(6 August 1960 - 10 May 1973) (her death) 2 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betsy Blair</td>
<td>(22 September 1941 - 3 April 1957) (divorced) 1 child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trivia**

- During World War Two, Gene Kelly was a sailor stationed at the U S Naval Photographic Center in Anacostia, DC (where the documentary “Victory at Sea” would later be assembled for NBC-TV). He starred in several Navy films while on active duty there; and in “civilian” films while on leave.
- Had a half-moon shaped scar on his left cheek caused by a bicycle accident he had as a young boy.
- Was "dance consultant" for Madonna’s 1993 "Girlie Show" tour.
• **Singin’ in the Rain was awarded the Laurence Olivier Theatre Award in 2001 (2000 season)**

for Outstanding Musical Production with choreography from Gene Kelly.

**Biography from Leonard Maltin’s Movie Encyclopedia:** The enduring image of this handsome, robust performer gaily dancing to and crooning “Singin’ in the Rain” (in the classic 1952 film of the same name), one of the most frequently repeated sequences in movie history, shouldn’t obscure the other impressive achievements in his lengthy, generally distinguished career. A dancer since childhood, Kelly studied economics at Penn State and the University of Pittsburgh, but had the misfortune of graduating during the Depression and was forced to take menial jobs to support himself. At one time a dancing teacher, he finally parlayed his natural ability into a chorus-boy assignment on the Broadway stage. In 1940 he won the leading role in Rodgers and Hart’s “Pal Joey,” which catapulted him to stardom. During this period he also choreographed several hit plays, including the 1941 production of “Best Foot Forward.” It was probably inevitable that Kelly should wind up in Hollywood, where the film musical had produced some of the screen’s most popular players.

Kelly’s good looks, Brahmsy physique, and vigorous, athletic dancing style set him apart from most male dancers, and while he lacked Fred Astaire’s stylish elegance, he more than made up for it with his own ebullience and winning personality. Paired with Judy Garland in For Me and My Gal (1942), he got off to a fine start, making a hit with audiences and eliciting favorable reviews. Kelly spent most of his film career at MGM, home of the fabled Arthur Freed unit, which produced Hollywood’s finest musicals. DuBarry Was a Lady, Pilot #5, The Cross of Lorraine and Thousands Cheer (all 1943) gave Kelly prominent exposure and allowed the MGM publicity machine to build upon his initial success.

In 1944 the studio loaned him to Columbia for Cover Girl (opposite Rita Hayworth) and to Universal for Christmas Holiday (opposite Deanna Durbin in a downbeat musical drama); being paired with those company’s top musical stars added luster to his own career, and in Cover Girl he helped design his first bravura solo specialty, the ingenious double-exposure number “Alter Ego.” He returned to Metro a top draw, and started exercising more control over his work on-screen. In Anchors Aweigh (1945) he and choreographic partner Stanley Donen concocted a brilliant and innovative dance sequence with the animated Jerry the Mouse. (The musical also earned Kelly a Best Actor Oscar nomination, and marked the first of three screen teamings with Frank Sinatra, whom he taught to dance.) Ziegfeld Follies (1946) teamed him with Fred Astaire for the amusing “Babbitt and the Bromide” number. Words and Music (1948), a dubious biography of songwriters Rodgers and Hart, enabled him to make a guest appearance performing an impressive rendition of Rodgers’ “Slaughter on 10th Avenue” ballet. The Pirate (1948) teamed him with Judy Garland in a particularly exuberant musical, and The Three Musketeers (also 1948) allowed Kelly, as D’Artagnan, to use his graceful body movements in a nonmusical swashbuckler. Take Me Out to the Ball Game (1949), a modestly entertaining baseball musical, gave Kelly and Donen screen credit for contributing the picture’s storyline. Only Living in a Big Way (1947), a notorious flop about postwar reacclimation, marred Kelly’s late 1940s winning streak. Kelly and Donen earned their director’s stripes with On the Town (1949), the wonderful Betty Comden-Adolph Green-Leonard Bernstein musical about sailors on leave in New York, New York, in which Kelly also starred. Among its other distinctions was the fact that this musical left the confines of a Hollywood studio and filmed its exteriors on location.

After making Summer Stock (1950) with former costar Judy Garland, Kelly took a dramatic role in that year’s Black Hand which cast the dark-haired performer as an Italian-American criminal. Although directed by Vincente Minnelli, An American in Paris (1951) bore Kelly’s mark just as strongly. (He is a lifelong Francophile.) His singing and dancing were never better showcased, and the lengthy Gershwin ballet that climaxes the film is one of the highpoints of Kelly’s career. It earned him a special Academy Award that year. He took a supporting part in an all-star, picaresque drama, It’s a Big Country (also 1951) before joining forces with Donen for Singin’ in the Rain (1952), arguably the finest movie musical of all time, and a delightful spoof of Hollywood’s chaotic transition from silent films to sound. Supported by Donald O’Connor and Debbie Reynolds, Kelly the Actor turned in one of his best performances, while Kelly the Dancer/Choreographer provided inventive terpsichore and Kelly the Codirector contributed dynamic staging. With this one film he reached the apogee of his career. Kelly went dramatic again in The Devil Makes Three (1952), and then had to face the fact that MGM was scaling back its career, shouldn’t


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**Acting**

Acting had never been Kelly’s strongest suit, but he was tailor-made for the part of a charming heel in Marjorie Morningstar (1958). He was less ideal in the role of a cynical reporter, inspired by H. L. Mencken, in Inherit the Wind (1960). By this time Kelly was content to spend most of his time behind the camera. He directed The Happy Road (1957, in which he also starred), The Tunnel of Love (1958), Jackie Gleason’s pantomime vehicle Gigot (1962), a 1965 telefilm remake of Woman of the Year the all-star comedy A Guide for the Married Man (1967), the overstuffed musical Hello, Dolly! (1969), and The Cheyenne Social Club (1970). Kelly appeared both in old film clips and newly shot footage, in MGM’s musical compilation film, That’s Entertainment! (1974). He agreed to direct new sequences (which teamed him with Ziegfeld Follies dancing partner Fred Astaire) for the 1976 sequel and also appeared as one of the “hosts” of the second sequel, That’s Entertainment! III (1994). He made subsequent screen appearances in Viva Knievel! (1977), Xanadu (1980), Reporters (1981), and That’s Dancing! (1985). Kelly was married to actress Betsy Blair from 1941 to 1957.

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**Actor - filmography**

1. **Christmas at the Movies (1991) (TV Host)**

**Actress**


**Primary source film historian Ronald Haver, compiled and Copyright © 2004 by Jay Seller, PhD Facts on celebrities from the Internet Movie Database**
Chapter 4: The Stars Arrive

0:03:28

Here is the second opening, which is the movie star in New York City giving an interview to one of those bogus fan magazines, detailing his long struggle to the top in a completely phony story.

Chapter 5: Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont

The third opening will not appear for a while, but is the star meeting a young girl (boy meets girl) in NYC and being infatuated with her and losing track of her and going back to Hollywood.

Continuity: Cosmo’s violin Bowe breaks and the hairs can be seen flapping about, yet when they finish the piece the bow is fixed.

Chapter 6 Their Story from the Beginning 0:05:00

In 1939, The Wizard of Oz started Arthur Freed’s work at MGM studios. Well, the writing team was going crazy, they had three potential openings, and could not decide on which one to use, and as they were discussing the options, Betty Comden’s husband walked through the room and said, “Why not use all three and place it at the
Chinese Theatre in Hollywood?” and the rest is history for Singin’ In The Rain.

Chapter 7 Fit As a Fiddle 0:05:52
Stanley Donan and Gene Kelley directed this project together; it is especially noticeable in the choreography that takes place between the camera and the dancers in the numbers. These two guys had a long standing working relationship in Hollywood, thus the pairing together on this project was just natural. Their backgrounds were familiar and like this vaudeville routine, which they both knew, Kelley would do the choreography and Donan would stage the action for the camera.

Stanley Donan: Since he was a child Stanley Donan attended dance classes and debuted on Broadway at age 17. With the help of the producer 'Arthur Freed' and the actor Gene Kelly he became the chance to direct the musicals "On the Town (1949)", "Singin’ in the Rain (1952)" and "Love Is Better Than Ever (1956)" which revolutionized the genre. Another important work on his own was e.g. the musical version of the book of 'Antoine Saint-Exupery' "The Little Prince (1974)". As producer he turned to the genre of comedy, e.g. "Surprise Package (1960)", but he also produced some films of other genres. "If we remade 'Singin’ in the Rain' today, when Gene Kelly sings in the rain I think he’d be looking around to make sure he wasn’t going to get mugged." "For me directing is like having sex: when it’s good, it’s very good; but when it’s bad, it’s still good." With the possible exception of Vincente Minnelli, no other director has made as many classic musicals.

A former choreographer, he met Gene Kelly on Broadway and eventually followed him to Hollywood, where they co directed three masterpieces at MGM: On the Town (1949), its semi sequel It's Always Fair Weather (1955), and what may be the most popular of all movie musicals, Singin' in the Rain (1952). On his own, he did such other memorable tuners as Take Me Out to the Ball Game (1949), Royal Wedding (1951), Give a Girl a Break (1953), Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954), and Funny Face (1957). He also co produced and co directed two classic Warner musicals with George Abbott: The Pajama Game (1957) and Damn Yankees (1958). All of these are marked by infectious high spirits, innovative choreography (e.g., Fred Astaire’s dance on the ceiling in Royal Wedding Kelly dancing on roller skates in Fair Weather), and a thorough command of the medium (he was the first musical director to effectively exploit Cinemascope).

When studio musicals went out of fashion, Donen turned to sophisticated romantic comedy, producing and directing such charmers as Indiscreet (1958), The Grass Is Greener, Surprise Package (both 1960), and the definitive Hitchcock pastiche, Charade (1963). He found it increasingly difficult to find material worthy of his taste and stylishness, and experienced ups and downs with his later output, including the cult Faust spoof Bedazzled a perceptive romantic drama, Two for the Road (both 1967), a homosexual comedy, Staircase (1969), Lerner and Loewe's last musical, The Little Prince (1974), a bloated Roaring 20s action-comedy, Lucky Lady (1975), a clever parody of 1930s Warner Bros. films, Movie, Movie (1978), and even an outer space thriller, Saturn 3 (1980). Donen’s last film to date is the sex farce Blame It On Rio (1984), but his is a talent too lively and distinctive to remain idle for long. In 1993 he made his Broadway directing debut with the short-lived "The Red Shoes."

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Director - filmography
2. "Moonlighting" (1985) TV Series
5. Movie Movie (1978)
6. Lucky Lady (1975)
8. Staircase (1969)
10. Two for the Road (1967)
11. Arabesque (1966)
12. Charade (1963)
14. Surprise Package (1960)
15. Once More, with Feeling (1960)
17. Indiscreet (1958)
18. Kiss Them for Me (1957)
20. Funny Face (1957)
22. It’s Always Fair Weather (1955)
23. Deep in My Heart (1954)
24. Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954)
25. Give a Girl a Break (1953)
26. Fearless Fagan (1952)
27. Singin’ in the Rain (1952)
28. Love Is Better Than Ever (1952)
29. Royal Wedding (1951)
30. On the Town (1949)
Donald O'Connor was not the first choice for this part, Freed wanted Oscar Levant, but as the script was developing along the lines of a light comedy, they realized that Oscar just wouldn’t work, he couldn’t sing or dance.

**Donald O’Connor started out as a child star at Paramount Studios** in their musicals. He had a long history of vaudeville and his father was a major performer in the vaudeville circuit. Donald O’Connor knew baggy pants comedy for which this is an excellent example, although the audience would not have reacted the way this audience reacts, as the routine is excellent. Donald O’Connor was considered a second string player at this time, and not a featured player.

**Biography for Donald O’Connor Date of birth**
28 August 1925, Chicago, Illinois, A Date of death (details) 27 September 2003, Calabasas, California, USA. (Heart failure)

Donald O’Connor: A great all around talent who seldom got movie vehicles worthy of his abilities, Donald O’Connor is best remembered for his exuberant performance as Gene Kelly’s pal Cosmo Brown in the 1952 MGM musical Singin’ in the Rain and secondarily for his six on-screen gaffests with Francis the Talking Mule. His long career dates back to the fading days of vaudeville in the late 1920s and early 1930s, when he was part of a family act. At age 12 O’Connor made his film debut with his siblings in a nottoo-memorable programmer entitled Melody for Two (1937). The following year he was signed by Paramount to costar with Bing Crosby and Fred Mac Murray in a featured role in Sing, You Sinners (1938), and he appeared in a handful of pictures at the studio, including Tom Sawyer, Detective (1938, playing Huckleberry Finn) and Beau Geste (1939, playing Gary Cooper as a boy). O’Connor left the screen to return to what was left of vaudeville, but returned to Hollywood in 1942 and signed with Universal to star in their budget-minded youth musicals. What’s Cookin’, Get Hep to Love (both 1942), and Strictly in the Groove (1943) were typical of the forgettable fluff in which always-brash and energetic O’Connor starred during World War 2 (often paired with the equally energetic Peggy Ryan), and his postwar films, including Are You With It? and Feudin’, Fussin’ and A-Fightin’ (both 1948), were little better.

Francis (1949), a potboiler about an Army private who finds he is the only person who can carry on a conversation with an otherwise taciturn mule, proved to be a big hit with kids and led to five sequels with O’Connor (and one final entry with Mickey Rooney). His other starring vehicles, like The Milkman (1950), and Double Crossbones (1951) were invariably modest efforts, but after the success of Singin’ in the Rain (1952, with its show stopping “Make ‘Em Laugh” number), MGM did fashion a starring vehicle for him, the enjoyable I Love Melvin (1953), and he went on to better co-starring parts in Call Me Madam (1953, with Ethel Merman at 20th Century-Fox), There’s No Business Like Show Business (1954, with Merman and Marilyn Monroe, also at Fox), and Anything Goes (1956, with Bing Crosby and Mitzi Gaynor, back at Paramount). He was given the full star treatment in Paramount’s highly fictionalized version of The Buster Keaton Story (1957), but the movie flopped badly, and he made only a handful of films thereafter. On TV O’Connor was one of the rotating hosts of “The Colgate Comedy Hour.” (He was nominated for an Emmy as the Outstanding Personality of 1952, but lost out to Bishop Fulton J. Sheen.) He did win an Emmy the following year, and starred in three different incarnations of “The Donald O’Connor Show” for NBC in 1951 and 1954-55. In 1968 he hosted a short-lived talk show. Since leaving the screen, O’Connor has devoted considerable energy to the composition of concert music, and has also appeared extensively as a nightclub performer, teamed for years with Sidney Miller, and more recently with his Singin’ in the Rain costar Debbie Reynolds. He did a cameo as a vaudevillian in Ragtime (1981), and has appeared as Captain Andy in a popular touring stage revival of “Show Boat.” In 1992 he was chosen to play Robin Williams’ dreamy-eyed toy-manufacturer father in Toys and the following year released his own exercise-oriented videocassette, “Let’s Tap.”

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**Birth name,** Donald David Dixon Ronald O’Connor

**Spouse**
- Gloria Noble (1956 - 27 September 2003) (his death) 3 children
- Gwen Carter (7 February 1944 - 1954) (divorced) 1 child

**Trade mark** His ability to do somersault against walls during a musical number in films

**Trivia**
**Film Study lecture on Singin’ In The Rain (1952)**

Compiled by Dr. Jay Seller

- Had to have three days bed rest after the “Make ‘Em Laugh” sequence in *Singin’ in the Rain (1952)*.
- From a vaudeville family act, his father John Edward "Chuck" O'Connor was an acrobat with Ringling Brothers-Barnum and Bailey Circus as a "leaper." His mother was a circus bareback rider and dancer named Effie. One of seven children, three died in infancy, but the rest was incorporated into show business. His mother kept the family going with extended family members despite many deaths (including her husband) until 1941.
- Allegedly didn't enjoy working with Gene Kelly while filming *Singin' in the Rain (1952)*, because he found him to be a bit of a tyrant on set.

**Personal quotes**

- In a brief statement, the family said that among O'Connor’s last words was the following quip: "I'd like to thank the Academy for my lifetime achievement award that I will eventually get."
- "It's not easy working with a genius - but Gene was very patient with me." - On his *Singin' in the Rain (1952)* co-star, Gene Kelly, in 1988.

**Salary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singin' in the Rain (1952)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis (1950)</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actor - filmography**

2. Father Frost (1996) Baba Yaga
5. Time to Remember, A (1987) Father Walsh
10. "Donald O'Connor Show, The" (1968) TV Host (1968)
11. That Funny Feeling (1965) Harvey Granson
13. Cry for Happy (1961) Murray Prince
17. There's No Business Like Show Business (1954) Tim
18. Francis joins the WACS (1954) Peter Stirling
20. Francis Covers the Big Town (1953) Peter Stirling
21. Call Me Madam (1953) Kenneth
22. I Love Melvin (1953) Melvin Hoover
23. Francis Goes to West Point (1952) Peter Stirling
24. Singin’ in the Rain (1952) Cosmo Brown
25. Francis Goes to the Races (1951) Peter Stirling
26. Double Crossbones (1951) Dave Crandall
27. Milkman, The (1950) Roger Bradley
28. Curtain Call at Cactus Creek (1950) Edward Timmons
29. Francis (1950) Peter Stirling
32. Are You with It? (1948) Milton Haskins
33. Something in the Wind (1947) Charlie Read
34. Patrick the Great (1945) Pat Donahue Jr.
35. Bowery to Broadway (1944) Specialty Number
36. Merry Monahans, The (1944) Jimmy Monahan
37. This Is the Life (1944) Jimmy Plum
38. Chip Off the Old Block (1944) Donald Corrigan
39. Top Man (1943) Don Warren
40. Mister Big (1943) Donald J. O'Connor, Esq.
41. It Comes Up Love (1943) Ricky Ives
42. When Johnny Comes Marching Home (1942) Frankie Flanagan
43. Get Hep to Love (1942) Jimmy Arnold
44. Give Out, Sisters (1942) Don
45. Private Buckaroo (1942) Donny
46. What's Cookin'? (1942?) Tommy
47. On Your Toes (1939) Phil Jr., as a Boy
48. Death of a Champion (1939) Small Fry
49. Night Work (1939) Butch Smiley, the Orphan
50. Beau Geste (1939) Beau at age 12
51. Million Dollar Legs (1939) Sticky Boone
52. Unmarried (1939) Ted Streever (age 12)
53. Boy Trouble (1939) Butch
54. Tom Sawyer, Detective (1938) Huckleberry Finn
55. Sons of the Legion (1938) Butch Baker
56. Sing You Sinners (1938) Mike Beebe
57. Men with Wings (1938) Pat Falconer at Age 10
58. It Can't Last Forever (1937) Kid Dancer
59. Melody for Two (1937) Specialty

Chapter 8: Don the Stuntman

0:07:49

Here is a good example of early silent movie technique in terms of how they were made. **Look at the camera, that is an old Bell-n-Howell, which is what they used to use**
Film Study lecture on Singin’ In The Rain (1952)
Compiled by Dr. Jay Seller

when they were making movies in the 1920’s although by the time the period for this film (1927) the camera were electrically operated. Notice that there is an electric light being used in the same shot, well, we also had electric cameras, but it is neat to see these. They had to crank the camera at 24 frames a second for exposure.

Chapter 9 Don Meets Lina 0:09:45
The stories that they developed for this film, all come from true stories about the stars in the 1920’s during this exact time period of transition from silent films to talking pictures, another reason why it is so interesting to take a look at this film. They were careful to use props from the right period and costumes that would really show off the glamour of the 1920’s female fashions.

0:09:48
This lounging chair was used to keep the dresses from getting wrinkled; this is before we had permanent press and wrinkle free clothing.

Comden and Green combined all of these great stories and the energy of the time period into this fabulous production, making this a real tribute to a time gone by. The character of Lina Lamont is the culmination of several stars. She represents an individual who looks beautiful, but has several basic flaws in their personalities. Judy Holiday was supposed to play this part, it was written for her, she was known for playing the dumb blonde role.

0:11:05
This shot of the Chinese Theatre is MGM’s Art Department at its best! They couldn’t use the Chinese Theatre, so they reconstructed it on a sound stage for these interior shots.

Chapter 10 The Royal Rascal 0:11:11
The scenes from this silent movie on screen are lifted from the film The Three Musketeers (1948), with the exception of the scenes with Jean Hagen, those had to be re-shot with her in the movie.

0:11:36
Notice the door shot, as the woman (Lana Turner) comes through the door, the first glimpse you get she is dressed in a black dress, and then we do a quick cut, and place Jean Hagen in the shot. (Can back the DVD up to review this shot.) The audience is also not the right time period as far as the clothing they are wearing, notice that some of the women have cloche hats on, which are from the 1950’s. But at this time period, studios didn’t worry as much about historical accuracies as we do today when we make a film.
Jean Hagen, A prolonged illness necessitated her early retirement in the mid-60s, entering a convalescent home for the rest of her life. A desire to act one more time happened for her in 1977 when she appeared briefly as a landlady in the TV-movie "Alexander: The Other Side of Dawn" (TV) 77. She died shortly after of throat cancer. Jean seemed a shoo-in to win Best Supporting Actress for her hilarious performance as Lina Lamont in Singin' in the Rain (1952), but was beaten out for the award by Gloria Grahame for The Bad and the Beautiful (1952). This was one of Hollywood’s major injustices. Though nominated twice for Emmy awards as Danny Thomas' first TV wife on his popular comedy series, Jean became disenchanted with the rather colorless mom role and left the series after four seasons. Marjorie Lord replaced her as Danny's perky second wife. If she'd never played anyone other than squeaky-voiced Linda Lamont, the hopelessly vain silent-screen star of Singin' in the Rain (1952, for which she was Oscar-nominated), this attractive, talented blond actress would still rate a place in Hollywood history.

A former drama major who worked as a theater usherette before getting acting jobs on radio and stage, she debuted on screen in Adam's Rib (1949, playing the femme fatale who disrupts Judy Holliday's marriage), and scored her first real triumph as the female lead in The Asphalt Jungle (1950). Unfortunately, neither MGM nor any of the other studios for which Hagen worked seemed able to provide her with roles and vehicles that might have made her a real star. She played Danny Thomas' wife in the "Make Room for Daddy" TV series (1953-57). OTHER FILMS INCLUDE: 1950: Ambush 1951: Night Into Morning 1952: Carbine Williams 1953: Latin Lovers, Half a Hero 1955: The Big Knife 1959: The Shaggy Dog 1960: Sunrise at Campobello (as Missy Le Hand); 1962: Panic in the Year Zero 1964: Dead Ringer

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Trivia

• Best remembered as Lina Lamont, the silent-film star in 'Singin' in the Rain' (1952) who could not manage the transition to talkies. (Not without Debbie Reynolds's help, that is.)
• In "Singin' in the Rain," Debbie Reynolds lip synched to Jean's singing and spoken voice for "The Dancing Cavalier." In other words, Jean voiced-over the character who was supposed to be voicing over *her* character.
• Jean seemed a shoo-in to win Best Supporting Actress for her hilarious performance as Lina Lamont in Singin' in the Rain (1952), but was beaten out for the award by Gloria Grahame for The Bad and the Beautiful (1952). This was one of Hollywood’s major injustices.

Actress - filmography
1. Alexander: The Other Side of Dawn (1977) (TV)
2. Dead Ringer (1964) Dede Marshall
4. Sunrise at Campobello (1960) Missy Le Hand
5. Shaggy Dog, The (1959) Freeda Daniels
6. Spring Reunion (1957) Barna Forrest
8. "Make Room for Daddy" (1953) TV Margaret Williams
9. Half a Hero (1953) Martha Dobson
10. Latin Lovers (1953) Anne Kellwood
11. Arena (1953) Meg Hutchins
12. Shadow in the Sky (1952) Stella Murphy
13. Carbine Williams (1952) Maggie Williams
14. Singin' in the Rain (1952) Lina Lamont
15. No Questions Asked (1951) Joan Brenson
16. Night Into Morning (1951) Girl Next Door
17. Life of Her Own, A (1950) Maggie Collins
20. Ambush (1949) Martha Conovan
21. Adam's Rib (1949) Beryl Caighn

Notice the line that follows the curtain closing that is a matte line, as they could not project onto a screen in this fake interior of a theatre. It is like an eraser removing the image as the curtain closes, which had to be performed on ever frame of the film pass.

Chapter 11 Don Makes a Curtain Speech 0:12:25
This is realistic of how a silent movie would have been shown; complete with a full orchestra accompanying the movie. Silent film was never really silent. The orchestra members would scream breaks glass panes, slam doors and add numerous whistles and bells to the films they were accompanying. In Denver we still have several famous silent movie houses in existence today, the Ogden Theatre, the Paramount Theatre and the Blue Bird theatre. Some of these have been changed over to concert venues now, but all were built for showing silent films, with an orchestra. It was really an art form all of its own, music drama films, they just did not work without that music.

Two of those stars whose star fell when talking pictures arrived were Norma Talmadge and John Gilbert. Norma had a harsh Brooklyn accent that did not match her pretty face and Gilbert German accent made him incomprehensible on screen.

Norma Talmadge was born on May 26, 1895 in Jersey City, New Jersey. The daughter of an unemployed alcoholic and his wife, Norma did not have the idyllic childhood that most of us yearn for. Mr. Talmadge up and left the family on Christmas Day and left his wife and three daughters to fend for themselves. Her mother, Peggy, took in laundry to help make ends meet. By the time she was 14, Norma took up modeling. She was successful enough that she attracted the attention of studio chiefs in New York City (where Vitagraph movie studios were located at the time). Norma landed a small role in 1909’s THE HOUSEHOLD PEST. By 1911, she was improving as an actress, so much so that she landed a good part in A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

By 1913 she was Vitagraph’s most promising young actress. In August of 1915, Norma and her mother left for California and the promise of success in the fledgling industry there. Her film in Hollywood was CAPTIVATING MARY CARSTAIRS. The film was a flop and the studio shut down. During this time her sister, Constance, was working for the legendary director, D.W. Griffith. Constance managed to get Norma a contract with Griffith’s film company. During this eight month period Norma made seven feature films and a few shorts. After the contract ran out, the family returned to the East Coast. In 1916, she met and married Joseph Schenck. With his backing they formed their own production company which turned out a number of films, the first of which was PANTHEA.

PANTHEA was a tremendous hit as likewise was Norma. By 1920, the production company was moved to Hollywood where the big hits of the day were being produced. Her company, itself, produced hits such as THE WONDERFUL THING (1921), THE ETERNAL FLAME (1922), and THE SONG OF LOVE in 1923. By 1928, Norma’s popularity had begun to wane. Her role in THE WOMAN DISPUTED (1928) was a flop at the box-office. Her final film was in 1930 in DU BARRY, WOMAN OF PASSION. By then, “talkies” were all the rage and Norma’s voice did not lend itself to the sound era and she was out of work. She divorced Schenck and married George Jessel. Jessel had his own radio show and Norma was added to the cast to help the sagging ratings. Norma thought this might be the chance to revive her film career. The show continued its decline and was ultimately canceled, with it the hope’s of her shattered career. She was finished for good. She divorced Jessel in 1939 and married Dr. Carvel James in 1946. She remained with him until she died of a stroke on Christmas Eve, 1957 in Las Vegas, Nevada. She was 62 and had been in a phenomenal 250+ motion pictures.

John Gilbert was born into a show business family where his father was a comic with the Pringle Stock Company. By 1915, John was an extra with Thomas Ince and a lead player by 1917. In those days, John would be assistant director, an actor, or a screen writer. He would also try his hand at directing. By 1919, he was being noticed in films and was getting better roles. In 1921, he signed a three year contract with Fox. His popularity continued to soar and he was turning from villain to leading man. In 1924, he signed with MGM which put him into His Hour. In 1925, he appeared in the very successful The Big Parade and he was, by now, as popular as Valentino. Lillian Gish, who had a new contract with MGM would pick Gilbert to co-star with her in La Boheme (1926). With the death of Valentino, his only competition, John was on top of the world. Then came Greta Garbo who would
star with him in Love (1927), Flesh and the Devil (1927) and A Woman of Affairs (1928). The screen chemistry between these two was incredible and led to a torrid off screen affair. The studio publicity department would work overtime to publicize the romance between the two. But when it came time to marry, John was left at the altar. His performances after that were devoid of the sparkle that he once had and he began to drink heavily. Added to that, the whole industry was moving towards sound and while his voice was not as bad as some had thought, it would not match the image that he portrayed on the screen. Even his characters had changed in such films as Redemption (1930) and Way for a Sailor (1930). He was no longer the person that bad things happened to, but he now was the cause of bad things which happen. MGM would do little to help John adjust to the new sound medium as Mayer and Gilbert had a fierce and nasty confrontation over Garbo. John was still under contract to MGM for a very large salary, but the money meant little to him. His contract ran out in 1933 after he appeared in ‘Fast Workers’ as a riveter. Greta would try to restore some of his image when she insisted that he play opposite her in Queen Christina (1933), but, by then it was too late. He would appear in only one more film and would die of a heart attack in January 1936.

Chapter 12 The Wrath of Lina Lamont 0:13:02
And here is the big secret, Lina’s voice! Watch her eyes, really one of the great comic performances of the 1950’s, she was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress, but was robbed of the award.

0:14:47
“I gotta get out of here.” A perfect example of how the writers really had trouble in tying all of these musical numbers together in this film, you get some awkward endings to some of the scenes.

Chapter 13 Don Lockwood’s Adoring Fans 0:14:52
Biography for Debbie Reynolds
Birth name: Mary Frances Reynolds, Nickname: Princess Leia’s Mom, Height: 5’ 2”
Spouse
Richard Hamlett (1941-1945) (divorced)
Harry Karl (1946 - 1949) (divorced)
Eddie Fisher (18 September 1955 - 1959) (divorced) 2 children
Trivia
• Mother of actress Carrie Fisher.
• Won the 1948 Miss Burbank contest and was offered a screen test by Warner Brothers the day after her win. She initially entered the contest because everyone who entered received a silk scarf, blouse and free lunch.
• Considers herself a “movie-oholic” and has an extensive collection of memorabilia, with over 4,000 costumes from the silent screen period to the 1970s. She has been known to gather posters from her collection of 3,000 and drive to homes of actor pals for autographs. In the 90s, she turned her collection into a Las Vegas movie museum, but had to shut it down in 1997 because of financial problems. Recently she has looked into the possibility of opening up a hall of fame museum in Hollywood near Grauman’s Chinese Theatre.
• Measurements: 33-23-34 (As Miss Burbank of 1948)

Biography from Leonard Maltin’s Movie Encyclopedia: Spunky, sassy, and charming, Debbie Reynolds’ discovery was a Cinderella story come true. As a child her family moved to Burbank, California, and when she was crowned Miss Burbank in 1948, Warner Bros. took notice and signed the teenager to a film contract. She made her film debut in June Bride (1948), and following The Daughter of Rosie O’Grady Reynolds moved to MGM, where she made her mark as the pert songstress of Three Little Words (playing Helen Kane, who dubbed her vocalizing of “I Wanna Be Loved by You”). She nearly stole Two Weeks With Love (1950) out from under star Jane Powell with her peppy production number, “Abba Dabba Honeymoon” with Carleton Carpenter.
With 1952 came *Singin’ in the Rain* her best opportunity to date. As the chorus girl who lends her voice to a silent-film star in the early days of talkies, Reynolds held her own with costars (and more accomplished trouperers) Gene Kelly and Donald O’Connor, keeping pace with them in a spirited presentation of “Good Morning.” It was a star-making turn for Reynolds, who subsequently played in lighthearted musicals and comedies such as *I Love Melvin*, *The Affairs of Dobie Gillis* (both 1953), *Athenz* (1954), and *The Tender Trap* (1955), as well as Paddy Chayefsky’s *The Catered Affair* (1956). Then she married handsome singing star Eddie Fisher, and their “perfect” coupling was celebrated in the movie *Bundle of Joy* (1956). (The union abruptly ended in divorce when Fisher left Reynolds to marry Elizabeth Taylor in 1959.)

The rural romance Tammy and the Bachelor (1957) not only gave Reynolds an ideal romantic vehicle of her own, but also produced a Top 10 hit for her with the title song “Tammy.” *This Happy Feeling* (1958), *It Started With a Kiss*, *The Mating Game*, *The Gazebo*, *Say One for Me* (all 1959), *The Rat Race* (1960), *The Pleasure of His Company*, *The Second Time Around* (both 1961), *How the West Was Won* (1962), *Mary, Mary and My Six Loves* (1963) were by and large popular choices for the perky actress, but her choicest role was that of *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* (1964), the musical biography of a rambunctious, larger-than-life figure, for which she was Oscarnominated. The triumph of *Molly Brown* had little lasting impact on her screen career, though. The movie musical was all but dead in Hollywood, and finding suitable starring vehicles was difficult.

The much-maligned *The Singing Nun* (1966) was only slightly better than its bad reviews would indicate, and the intelligent comedy *Divorce American Style* (1967), while it had its moments (casting her against type, like costar Dick Van Dyke), did little to bolster the star’s sagging box-office appeal. Other 1960s vehicles like *Goodbye Charlie* (1964) and *How Sweet It Is!* (1968) are better forgotten.

What’s more, her TV sitcom *The Debbie Reynolds Show* lasted just one season (1969). What’s the Matter With Helen? (1971), Reynolds did well as a character in the Baby Jane/Norma Desmond groove. In 1973 she was the principal voice in the animated Charlotte’s Web (1973) and was the youngest “host” of *That’s Entertainment!* (1974). She is also one of the onscreen “hosts” of *That’s Entertainment! II* (1994). When her screen career slowed down, Reynolds became a popular stage and nightclub entertainer (emphasizing her gift for mimicry), and has been a Las Vegas mainstay for decades. She received a Tony nomination for her 1973 revival of “Irene” on Broadway, and has toured with “The Unsinkable Molly Brown.” On TV she’s starred in *Sadie and Son*, a movie/pilot for a proposed series that cast her as a Jewish momma cop! But sadly, a proposed TV vehicle that would pair her with daughter Carrie Fisher has yet to materialize. (In 1993 she did take a small but notable part as Tommy Lee Jones’ mother in Oliver Stone’s *Heaven and Earth*.) Years ago, Reynolds began acquiring movie costumes and memorabilia, hoping they would become part of a Hollywood museum; finally, in 1993, she acquired a hotel in Las Vegas to house the collection.

Now this sequence is the third opening that Comden and Green wrote, it is where the movie star meets a young lady, and then loses her. That is an actual trolley car that used to travel the streets of Los Angeles; this stunt is done by David Shunk, a very famous stunt man who worked at Republic Pictures.

The young lady is Debbie Reynolds, at 18 years old, in one of her first major roles. She had been elected “Miss Burbank of 1948” at the age of 15, on the strength of that award, she received a movie contract. She made her first impact in 1948 film *Three Little Words*, starring with Fred Astaire, where she played the Boo Boo Bee boop singer Helen Kane. But it was the 1950’s film, *Two Weeks in Love at the age of 17*, starring her and Carleton Carpenter, she had sung “Abadaba Honeymoon,” which really made audiences and critics and the studio executives sit up and take notice of her.

Anachronisms: As Kathy takes Don to Sunset and Camden, 1950s-era cars can be seen passing in the background.
Many of the costumes and sets were parodies of former Gene Kelly movies:

- Don’s musketeer movie at the beginning is taken directly from Gene Kelly’s version of *Three Musketeers, The* (1948).
- When Don takes the girl onto the stage and turns on the lights is identical to Gene Kelly’s *Summer Stock* (1950).
- Cyd Charisse’s brief number is similar to the dance Gene Kelly did with Vera Ellen in *Words and Music* (1948).

**Chapter 14 Don and Kathy** 0:16:37

Continuity: When Don first meets Kathy and scares her, she shouts “Officer!” and points with her right arm. When we next see them pulling up by the road she is pointing with her left hand.

0:16:56

Arthur Freed wanted her in the film, and it went along with the MGM policy of using a new individual and matching them with an established star, in order to groom them for future roles. This policy is still used today by studios, only it is used as a cost saving maneuver, with individuals such as Julia Roberts being matched with Richard Gere. Male counter parts still receive the higher salary, thus bringing in a new, younger female counter star is customary.

Filmed July 20, 1951, Russ Sonders is Gene Kelly’s stunt man.

**Chapter 15 “Here we are, Sunset and Camden.”** 0:18:00

Reynolds in her own words was completely inexperienced in singing and dancing, but as Kelly later remarked, “she was as strong as an Ox, and as determined to make it good.” This was a big chance for her and she knew it. She didn’t even object to being locked in a room five days a week, eight hours a day with Gene Kelly’s two dance assistants, who put her through a really grueling series of rehearsals. At the end of which she mentioned at one time, she went home and had to spend three days in bed as she had burst the blood vessels in her feet.

0:18:25

Debbie Reynolds spent three months in dance rehearsals for this movie.

She has this very perky quality, and has the ability to hold her own with the likes of Gene Kelly. The car she is driving, here is some trivia way beyond your years, comes
from the old Andy Hardy movies, it was Andy Hardies jalopy. And there is the trademark Debbie Reynolds ruckus laughter, which works beautifully as the tail end to that scene.

0:19:28

*Pay scale for this film, Gene Kelly made $2,500 a week and Debbie Reynolds $300 a week, Donald O’Connor was paid $50,000 for the movie. Debbie Reynolds parents were Nazarene, and movies were considered sinful, but they gave in to her pressuring them to let her be in the movies.*

**Chapter 16 R. F.’s Party** 0:19:30

The character of R.F. Simpson, is based on Arthur Freed. What they wanted to do here is present what a typical movie fans image of a Hollywood party would be like. The red hair is Rita Moreno, who later won an Academy Award for *West Side Story*.

0:20:11

*And the lady talking to, or rather flirting with Donald O’Connor is his wife in real life, Gwen Carter.*

0:20:45

**The costumes for the movie are all done by Walter Plunkett.** He was able to locate patterns and wardrobes of the stars that worked at the studio in the 1920’s, and wore these outfits in their private lives and in their films. Woman’s wardrobes of the 1920’s was probably among the most flamboyant and ridicules fashions worn than any other era of American history, except for maybe the bra burnings of the 1960’s. Some of the costumes from this movie were later used in the movie *Deep in my Heart* (1954).

**Chapter 17 A Demonstration of a Talking Picture** 0:20:55

*Here is the first demonstration of what would later revolutionize the movies, talking pictures.* This is all very accurate as to what the early demonstration films looked like. They were demonstrating the technical aspects with no regard for the quality of the people they were photographing. This actor on screen is Jules Tanner (starred in *Pigskin Parade* and *House of Frankenstein*), and he was a bit actor at MGM studios. They have filmed him this way on purpose, with a very bad set of teeth and a nose that appears bigger than Jimmy Durante’s. This is put together so that you can experience what the first talkies sounded like, with a very high noise level, this is almost unbearable to us now. It sounds like it has been recorded through a tin can.

**Chapter 18 All I Do Is Dream of You** Pre-recorded the music in June of 1951. 0:22:36

This particular song is from a 1934 drama called *Sadie McKay*, which was a Joan Crawford movie. Here is a rendition of the Charleston, along with the costumes. The Charleston was a very hard and awkward dance. It is amazing more people didn’t develop back problems in the early 1920’s from this dance.
Chapter 19 The Cake 0:24:00

Watch Debbie Reynolds facial expressions here, after she throws the cake. She starts to break-up, almost losing it, as she starts to laugh. Very funny bit, especially for the actors, as if she missed they would have to film it again. Poor Lina, everyone just rushes off and leaves her there with cake on her face.

Here is one of the scenes that the Hayes Office, also known as the Production Code Administration (1930-1960), objected to. They said all the women in this room would have to have their clothes on and they really objected to the line, “Is there anything I can do?” as the line hints to a sexual exchange between the two.

There was a sequence deleted here after the premier and the party. It was Kelly going home after being rejected, and he is back in his bedroom singing a beautiful rendition of All I do is Dream of You as he dances around his bedroom. They decided that it impeded the flow of the story.

Chapter 20 Monumental Pictures 0:25:30

Here is a great example of how silent pictures were made. Studios pumped out hundreds of films a year, and they recorded them at a break neck speed. They would film them on a stage, side by side, since they didn’t have to worry about the sound traveling from one stage to another. There would have been a glass divider between the films, not pictured here, to stop props from going onto the neighboring set. You don’t want snow landing in the jungle scene, or a football landing in the western scene. But the sets were very noisy, with the directors shouting the actions to the actors and telling them what type of response or mood he wanted to elicit from his actors.

Great pun here by Donald O’Connor, “She won’t even give you a tumbrel.” But no one gets it, as who knows what a tumbrel is? But that’s the wooden cart that they used to transport aristocrats to the guillotine in.

Chapter 21 Make ‘Em Laugh 0:27:00

Now notice Donald O’Connor’s clothing here. He looks a little bulkier here, look at his shoulders, knees and elbows. He is wearing pads to protect him for the musical number he is about to perform.

This song is one of the numbers that was written for the movie, but in reality it is a direct steal of a song written by Cole Porter, called Be A Clown and originally performed by Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney in the 1948 film The Pirate. Great story behind the stealing of this number, but the two gentlemen were friends and Irving Berlin let it slide.
Continuity: In “Make ‘Em Laugh”, when Cosmo sits down on the couch with the mannequin, his hat is pulled down over his forehead and the brim is flat. In the close-up, however, his hat is pushed back and the brim tilted up.

Donald O’Connor said that he put all of the vaudeville jokes and stunts that he could remember into this routine. One day while in the prop room looking for items to play with in this number he came across that dummy, and remember a time on the NYC subway, when a gay man hit on him while he was riding home to Brooklyn from a show he was in. He stated that this large burly man sat down next to him and proceeded to move his hand up his leg towards his crotch. Donald being a quick wit, turned to the man and stated, “Listen Mister, my boyfriend will beat the hell out of you, if you go any further.” He said that’s where he got the idea for playing with this dummy.

Comic battle scene behind the sofa, where you see the results of the battle, but not the delivery of the blows, i.e. similar to The Wizard of Oz where the Winkies attack the Scarecrow, Tin man, & the Lion.

When he began rehearsing this number he was smoking four packs of cigarettes a day. He said it was really difficult for him to be so physical. Rolling around getting carpet burns and his body really had to absorb all of the shocks. The back wall stunt was a stunt that he hadn’t done in years, and wasn’t truly sure that he could do it; the walls are slightly banked to allow for the stunt.

The FOX television show GLEE, recreated this routine with Matthew Morrison in their 2010 season.

Took three days to film the number, and after the number was finished, he was given a day off. When he returned to the set, Gene Kelly had to inform him that the film was fuzzy, and he would have to record the entire dance a second time. He took a three day break after re-filming the number.

Chapter 22 The Dueling Cavalier 0:30:54
Notice those cute little dressing rooms; the one that Lina Lamont exits from was the dressing room of Norma Shear. They were able to find these old dressing rooms on the lot, and they refurbished them to use in this film, remember they are thirty years old. A little bit of dated humor here, when she makes fun of the costume she is wearing, she is making fun of Norma Shear, who wore this famous costume in the film Marie Antoinette. Thus audiences of this 1952 film would have known who wore this costume and the reputation the costume held.
In the scene where Don Lockwood (Gene Kelly) comes out of his trailer to begin filming The Dueling Cavalier, he emerges from what was once the dressing room of 1930s MGM leading lady Norma Shearer. A few seconds later, Lina Lamont (Jean Hagen) comes out of another dressing room nearby, and she is wearing a wig (“Gee, this wig ways a ton. What dope would wear a thing like this?”) that Norma Shearer wore in Marie Antoinette (1938).

Donald O’Connor admitted that he did not enjoy working with Gene Kelly since Kelly was somewhat of a tyrant. O’Connor said that for the first several weeks he was terrified of making a mistake and being yelled at by Kelly.

Chapter 23 Lina and Don’s “Love Scene” 0:31:50
As they carry on talking back and forth with each other as they film a scene, this was common, since the films were silent; there was no need to worry about the noise or the dialogue that the actors shared, as long as they kept the correct reflective mood. (Share some silent movie stories here, about eating garlic, reading the phone book, etc…)

Roscoe Dexter, played by Douglas Fowley, is the individual playing the director, usually played heavies, villains, this is his only comic performance. It’s a nice little gem.

Chapter 24 “The Jazz Singer!” 0:33:11
In 1939 The Wizard of Oz changes things in musical movie history, it becomes known as the integrated musical. This is a musical where the 1.) Lyrics enhanced the storyline, and 2.) The camera moved with the musical numbers. Oddly enough, previous to this time period, the camera stayed still and the actors moved in front of the camera, and the songs had little to nothing to do with the story being told.

There are two ways to record music and singing in a movie, 1) Sing-to-playback, or lip-syncing, and 2) Sing-in-Situation. The second method is rarely used, due to the insistence of the audience wanting and expecting perfect sound quality when watching a musical. That is why we see movies such as CHICAGO, (2003), and Phantom of the Opera (2005) which was done entirely as sing-to-playback.

PowerPoint Presentation includes:
There are three stages to making a movie, and they are;
1. Pre-production – this is the time frame of writing the script, completing the hiring of the cast and finding the locations. Everything that is needed to be completed, prior to the actual shooting of the movie.
2. Production – this is the filming of the film, it may include the work of the first unit and the second unit. A first unit in filming is the group that works with the principal photography and the principal actors. The Second Unit in filming works with the
special effects needed to enhance a scene, and may work with the lead actors or stand-ins and stunt doubles.

3. Post-production – this is the stage for the editing of the film, publicity phase and marketing to the viewing audience. All dubbing of voice-overs, and looping is completed in this phase. Everything that happens between finished filming and opening in a theatre.

Three main shots of filming;
1. Close-up – this shot is a close view of the subject matter.
2. Medium Shot – shot that takes in the face and torso of the actor.
3. Long Shot – shot that takes in the full body of the actor.

There are variations of all of these shots, such as the extreme close-up and the extreme long shot.

Chapter 25 “Lamont and Lockwood – they talk!” 0:34:23

Chapter 26 Talking Pictures Montage 0:34:32

Here is a really great stylized montage. From the French word monter (literally, “to mount”), this is a sequence of shots, or a way of utilizing editing to create a certain effect (normally covers time and space in the least amount of time and space).

Russian film great Sergei Eisenstein was one of the first filmmakers to really explore the possibilities of montage in the early part of the last century. What they are attempting to show you in this montage, is what really happened to Hollywood with the invention of sound between 1928-1929. Studios just began making musicals, mainly because they could. The montage covers time and space with music, yet not all montages have to be accompanied by music.

Chapter 27 Beautiful Girl 0:35:26

Jimmy Thompson, the man who is singing was an MGM contract player and he was in and out of a number of MGM films.

Now this is an inaccurate depiction here on the recording process for this song, as mentioned earlier, the only way to do this was to Sing-to-playback, but here they attempt to give you the impression that they are singing-in-situation, not even possible in the 1950’s, much less 1927. The camera would have had to be enclosed in a sound proof box, which will be introduced to you later on in the film. Recording even dialogue required a sound proofing device be placed over the camera.

All of these costumes were located in Walter Plunkett’s research, and when they saw what these ladies wore in the 1920’s, they just had to share that with the audience,
thus the elongated dialogue written by Rodger Eden for this sequence. Rodger Eden is the same lyricist who wrote the famous “Dear Mr. Gable, You made me love you...” for Judy Garland. He was a real genius for writing or adding lyrics to musical numbers that already existed.

All of these costumes were originally designed for an actress named Lillian Tashman, considered to be the sheik in fashion sheik.

Chapter 28 Kathy Is “Found” 0:38:43
Back to the moving camera, you would never have a moving camera shot in the early musicals, remember this technique didn’t happen until much later. It is not that they didn’t want to move the camera; it simply was a technical problem that took numerous years to work out, while sound recording was being developed and refined. The cameras were all housed in a sound proof booth, which took about five guys and a truck to move, so this overhead shot that they show you is really out of date with the time period of the film. These overhead shots were developed by Bugsby Burckley and came to be a standard in 1930-1931, so about three years after the period depicted in this film.

Chapter 29 You Were meant for Me, Filmed June 30, 1951 0:41:50
These exterior shots are the only one that exist in the picture and were done on the back lot of MGM studios. Filmed June 30, 1951, second musical number for Debbie Reynolds, as the first was Good Morning. The light, the wind, really captures what people think movie making was like in the 20’s, before it became rigid and institutionalized. Originally this scene was to be done at five different locations. They decided to drop that cumbersome original idea to use an empty sound stage, simple use of a very basic element. Gene Kelly is a very masculine man and as a result many men were attracted to his dance ability. It was more of an athletic gesture than a feminine one. It is Gene Kelly who started the dance crazy of the 1950’s, and a resurgence of Ballroom dancing.

0:43:47
Watch the camera movement in this dance piece, it is attune to the dance starting from a high angle and moving down. Stanley Donen knew exactly where to place a camera to catch the movement of a dancer in a scene. Originally, Kathy was to sing “You Are My Lucky Star” to a billboard of Don Lockwood after he sang to her in the studio, by way of dramatizing that she was the president of the Don Lockwood Fan Club!

Chapter 30 Diction Coaching 0:46:19
Kathleen Freeman plays the role of Phoebe Dinsmore, a recognizable
face in hundreds of films from this time period. Especially Jerry Lewis films; he loved her and used her in almost every film he ever made. The sets in the background reveal the height of the Art deco period.

**Chapter 31 Moses Supposes** 0:47:02
This was filmed on June 18, 1951, first day of principal photography. **This is almost a direct steal from the film Good News (1947),** the French lesson scene, which was written by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. The *diction coach is played by Bobby Watson,* whose *one major claim to fame was a previous role he did, where he played Adolph Hitler in The Hitler Gang.* He is considered a character actor and a comedienne.

Gene Kelly was so involved in every aspect of steering this film’s final outcome, even to the facial expressions that Donald O’Connor is doing behind the back of Bobby Watson. The tap routine is reminiscent of ‘The Nicholas Brothers’ a black tap duo that were highly successful in films of the 1930’s. They were also known for their ‘pelvis cracks’ where they would drop to the floor in a spilt and then rise up, without the aid of their hands or arms, Kelly could also do this stunt. This film is one of the best exhibitions of tap dance ever recorded to film. Gene Kelly also was responsible for choreographing all of these numbers. Only two songs were written especially for the film: “Moses Supposes” was written by Roger Edens and Comden and Green, “Make ‘Em Laugh” was written by Arthur Freed and Nacio Herb Brown especially for Donald O’Connor. It is generally agreed that they stole the melody almost exactly from Cole Porter’s “Be a Clown” (1948) for the film *The Pirate.*

**Chapter 32 “Oh, Pierre!”** 0:51:21
This is how early sound recordings were made. Not like ‘The Beautiful Girl’ number you saw previously. See how the camera is accurately housed in the sound proof booths, and the *microphone is hidden on the set.* This used to drive actors *crazy,* as they would have to speak a line and then move to the location of the second microphone to speak the next line, very unnatural.

The microphones were not Omni directional like they are today, so the microphones would pick up all sound equally. That is a real microphone from the 1920’s being used in this
scene, they located in their prop room. These sound proof booths had long been in the trash heap by the time this film was made, but the engineering department found the plans for them, so that they were able to recreate them accurately for this film.

Chapter 33 “I can’t make love to a bush!” 0:53:20
Audio/visual unsynchronized: When Lena is having problems talking into the microphone hidden in the bush and Rosco and the sound man are in the booth, the sound man shakes his head and says “She’s gotta talk into the mike, I can’t pick it up.” His mouth clearly isn’t moving as he says this.

Chapter 34 Wired For Sound 0:53:39

Chapter 35 The Preview 0:55:10
The Technicolor Process was a process invented prior to the invention of colored film, so that the studios could present a feature presentation for color viewing. The Technicolor camera weighed in at 180 pounds, twice the normal weight of a camera at the same time period, it was a bulky camera that exposed three reels of black and white film at the same time. Then these three reels were developed in the primary colors, tinted with that color and when combined and projected the audience would experience what appeared to be colored film. The first film to be done in Technicolor Process was Becky Sharp (1936). This was an expensive process; as a result studios only released one or two features a year in Technicolor. For example, in 1939 MGM studios released two films in Technicolor, and they were The Wizard of Oz and Gone with the Wind. Cameras weighed 180 pounds, twice the weight of a normal camera at this time period.

PowerPoint Presentation includes: Studio System, 1930’s to the 1950’s. The Studio System existed until the mid 1950’s, this was where the studio held everyone under a contract and you could only work for the studio in which you were under contract. This gave the studio ultimate control over your career and destiny, if they liked you, they gave you work if they didn’t like you they could kill your career. It was also nice in the way that you had a job, nine to five daily, and you were supported by large departments all working on your film. Such as an Art Department, Make-up Department, Wardrobe Department, Sound Department, Lighting Department, Musical Department, etc, everyone was working to support the current release and the ones that would follow. Give an example of Horizon High School, being a Studio System.

This premiere situation happened a few times in the early days, where sound would get out of synchronization, only thing incorrect is the “100% All Talkie”, they would never say that in those days, maybe “a talking picture” or “all talking.” But certainly not the way it is phrased there on screen.
It is true those early microphones would pick up everything and almost anything that made a sound. Slight error with his staff, if you remember the scene where they were filming this, the staff made no noise when he threw it, but here they have added the noise. The costumes making noise, that is also completely true, we have plenty of early film examples where you have trouble hearing the actors, because of the noise the costumes made in the filming process.

Sound ran separately on another disc, or wax record, sometimes another film, just for the sound track, so there were many instances of them getting out of synchronization.

The scene in which Don Lockwood improvises dialogue in a love scene by ridiculously repeating “I Love you” over and over is a parody of silent film star John Gilbert, who did the same thing in a scene prior to the demise of his brief career in talkies.

Chapter 36 “I liked it!” 0:59:14
Here is something else that happened a lot. They mention the time crunch, as the picture was already slated to be released in theatres on a given date. At this time period, most of the movie houses where owned by the studios, so they would book their own films prior to completion of the film. So films were advertised and booked prior to completion that is how the studios crunched out the films at this time period.

Chapter 37 Post-Preview Depression 0:59:30
Originally these scenes were supposed to take place in a restaurant where these three went after the disastrous sneak preview.

Chapter 38 Good Morning 1:01:30
See how cleverly they lead into the next song, today we might say this was a bit contrived. This number was written for Babes in Arms (1940) and sung by Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney. This is the number that caused such agony to Debbie Reynolds feet. At the end of one of the rehearsals, she took her shoes off and her feet were bleeding. She had burst the blood vessels in the bottom of her feet.

They routinely put in fourteen
hour days to make this movie. This routine is wonderfully laid out as they dance from one set to another. Reynolds voice was weak on the upper register notes, so she was dubbed by Betty Noyes.

Gene Kelly insulted Debbie Reynolds for not being able to dance. Fred Astaire, who was hanging around the studio, found her crying under a piano and helped her with her dancing. Although uncredited, Gene Kelly had two incredibly talented choreography assistants. These ladies were none other than Carol Haney The Pajama Game and Gwen Verdon Can-Can, New Girl In Town, Damn Yankees, Redhead, Sweet Charity and Chicago. In fact, Gene Kelly's taps during the Singin' in the Rain number were post dubbed by Gwen and Carol. The ladies had to stand ankle-deep in a drum full of water to match the soggy on-screen action.

The really terrible thing about tap numbers in films is that they first film the number, and then the dancers have to go into the sound studio and re-record their taps. Because the sound equipment doesn't pick up taps as well in the production as it does in the post-production phase. That is why you can see the bottom of their shoes and they are not wearing any taps. For this number, Gene Kelly wanted to make sure the taps all sounded perfect, so he recorded Reynolds taps for her in post-production.

Chapter 39 Cosmo’s Brilliant Idea 1:05:43
Donald O’Connor had a line here after they did that ‘no, no bit’, the line was “Great what are you doing later this evening.” But the Hayes Office, the production code administration wouldn’t allow it; they said “it smacked of sexual perversion.”

1:04:59
Continuity: After the “Good Morning” number when all three are sitting on the upturned sofa, Cosmo and Kathy’s sitting positions change.

1:05:52
The first time we dubbed a voice like this in a movie, was the film Black Mail by Alfred Hitchcock. If you watch the movie the voice seems to be coming from somewhere else. That’s because they hide the actress doing her voice in the set, under tables, behind doors, plants, sofas, etc... before they perfected dubbing.

Chapter 40 Singin’ In the Rain, Filmed July 17, 1951 1:07:01
Original drafts of the script had all three of the principal characters singing this number as they walked home from the disastrous movie preview.
Gene Kelly had a 103 degrees fever when he danced to the title song. The rain consisted of water plus milk so the rain would show up better on film but it caused Kelly's wool suit to shrink.

This is one of the most famous musical numbers in musical motion picture history. This song was written by Arthur Freed for the first MGM musical and MGM's second talking picture, Hollywood Revue of 1929. After that it was used several times in MGM musicals, it was considered the anthem of MGM musicals. The first talking picture by MGM studios was Broadway Melody 1928, the second, Hollywood Revue of 1929 which featured this song.

Gene Kelly said he always hated the way people just went in to a song, and he didn’t know how to start this one. Rodger Eden came up with this famous vamp beginning, which is the ‘do-da-da-da’ in this number. Kelly said once he heard that he knew it was a very off-handed good natured way to start the song. They stretched a black tarp over the set so they could get the feeling of it being at night. The Art Director came down to the set so Kelly could indicate where he wanted holes dug in the street for puddles, so he could jump in and out of them. The rain consisted of water plus milk, and caused Kelly's wool suit to shrink. Gene Kelly had a 103 degrees fever when he danced to the title song.

Stanley Donen worked carefully with Kelly to get the dance number to match or concede with the camera movements. This was filmed on MGM’s east side street; it was filmed in the late summer of 1951. It took a day and a half to film. They discovered something interesting, everyday at about 5 p.m. the water pressure in the pipes went down to nothing. No one could figure out why, until they realized that all the Culver City residents would get home at 5 p.m. and turn their lawn sprinklers on, it was a very hot summer.

1:10:35
This is a wonderful shot as he runs out into the street. The camera pulls back into a wide swinging arch. Such an expression of joy, not only on his face, but the way the camera pulls back. Something like this doesn’t work unless a silly behavior is observed by someone else, usually an authority figure, hence the cop.

1:11:12
Continuity: When the cop appears in the “Singin’ in the Rain” dance number, Don is holding his umbrella with both hands, but in the next camera angle he holds it with one hand. Anachronisms: The Police Officer Don meets after singing the title song is seen wearing an oval L.A.P.D. badge. That design wasn’t adopted by the L.A.P.D. until 1940 (the film being set in 1927).

Chapter 41 Conferring With R.F. 1:11:50
It is a great suit that Gene Kelly is wearing, but it is not a men’s suit from the 1920’s, it would have been popular in the late 1930’s. Walter Plunket could design clothes for men that were absolutely superb. The plot that Cosmo Brown comes up with here is actually the plot for the film Du Barry was a Lady (1943), written by Cole Porter and starring Lucille Ball and Red Skelton, another timely reference that slips by audiences today.

Chapter 42 Would You? 1:13:30
While the film makes a central point of the idea that Kathy’s voice is dubbed over Lina Lamont’s, what is not told is that ironically, in some of these songs, notably “Would You”, Debbie Reynolds, the actress who plays Kathy Selden, is actually dubbed over by Betty Noyes.

1:14:17
In these sequences where Reynolds is supposed to be dubbing Jean Hagen’s voice (Lena Lamont) Reynolds voice is being dubbed by Betty Noyes. Remember Reynolds wasn’t considered to be a good enough singer.

Here they give you some classic movie star imagery here. Kind a little joke here as Lena can’t even remember the words to the song in the chorus. This is nice as the image goes from color to black and white monochrome, sort of colorization in reverse.

Chapter 43 The Broadway Melody Ballet – Opening 1:15:10
Broadway Melody was the title of the first MGM talking picture ever released 1928 and one of the first songs that Nacio Herb Brown and Arthur Freed ever wrote together. They give the traditional costuming for a song-n-dance man, the straw hat, tuxedo and cane.

1:16:05
Nice pull back with the camera to reveal this impressionist look at Times Square, two football fields in length, with seventy dancers. As you see the chorus come running in this is from the film, Hallelujah (1929). Originally this last dance routine was to include Donald O’Connor, but it was a last minute add to the film, and...
Donald had a commitment to begin taping *The Colgate Comedy Hour* for television.

1:18:43  
*The floor was waxed for Gene’s slides. The story behind why they add this song* is as follows; at the same time they were filming this movie, the film *An American in Paris* was in theatres. That film featured Gene Kelly and had a ballet number that was very successful with the American public. The studio felt it would be suicide for this film to be released featuring Gene Kelly, and without including a ballet number. So there you have it, the reason to add a ballet number to this film.

**This will be the longest dance** piece in the movie, running almost fifteen minutes. The practice to have a big ballet number in a movie came about with the film *The Red Shoes* (1948), where the high point of the film is a ballet number. The first film to ever include a ballet number in it was *Oklahoma!* (1943). This number was very successful with the viewing public.

Chapter 44 Broadway Rhythm 1:18:00  
The composition was Donen’s work and the high point of his career. The camera movement, lighting and sound, Art Department, really out did themselves in the color design and the impressionistic use of the sets.

Chapter 45 The Hoofer Meets the Vixen 1:19:54  
**This is a Salvador Dali impressionist inspired landscape. Cyd Charisse,** considered one of the sexiest things on two legs. **Cyd learned to smoke for this part;** she was and is a non-smoker. Here is a parody of Scarface, the coin flipping gangster. Comden and Green knew their early talkies. **Her husband stated that he always knew when Cyd was dancing with Gene Kelley as she would come home with bruises.**

**It is really surprising that the Production Code Administration allowed this dance. It’s sexual, sinuous... and she performs a taboo here for a female actor, it was forbidden for a woman to show her inner thigh.** That was a ground rule, as serious as the rule that married couples could not share the same bed, and the crazy rule that if a man sat on a woman’s bed he must keep one foot on the floor. So this is a breakthrough for this film to show this shot. They probably got away with it for two reasons, one the film starred Gene Kelly, and everyone loved him, and two, it was considered a comedy.

Nice leap as the music builds; you hardly notice the editing cut.

**Gene Kelly wanted Carol Hanney, his dance instructor to perform this number** with him. The studio agreed, but as the momentum of the film began to roll forward the studio had second thoughts and changed their minds. Gene Kelly had to go to his dance teacher and explain the bad news that she would no longer get to perform this ballet...
with him, and to make matters worse, Carol Hanney taught the routine to her replacement Cyd Charisse. Cyd said that she was unaware of the conflict until years later, and was surprised at what a kind woman Carol was towards her.

Cyd Charisse had to be taught how to smoke for her vampy dance sequence, and apparently never touched a cigarette again.

The original negative of this film was destroyed in a fire.

Chapter 46 The Hoofer’s Rise To Fame 1:22:38
PowerPoint Includes: There are three types of theatre that they give you a glimpse of here in these shots;
1. Vaudeville Theatre – was the first and most affordable theatre in America. You could see a show for less than a nickel, family entertainment, stand-up acts, acrobats, musicians and magic tricks.
2. Burlesque Theatre – with the advent of movies, theatre owners felt they were going to lose their crowd, so when in doubt have the woman strip. Just remember the time period, woman showed very little skin, backs, thighs, upper arms and shoulders. There were no real topless acts, that didn’t manipulate their routine with some kind of prop, i.e. feathers, and fans.
3. Follies Theatre – this was the legitimizing of the strip tease act. You can still witness a Follies show in Las Vegas. Beautiful woman with large headdresses and usually topless, are adorned with a lot of jewels in significant regions of their bodies. If you were a gentleman, you certainly wouldn’t want to get caught going into a burlesque show, but a Follies was another thing. Can talk about the Amsterdam Theatre in NYC, and the life of Florence Zeigfield, who was married to Billy Burke, Glinda the Good witch from The Wizard of Oz.

Chapter 47 As the Gala Celebration 1:23:32
This ballet number was the last thing that was shot for the film. They rehearsed it for one month and it took two weeks to shoot. The whole ballet cost over one million dollars, but started out with an original budget of just $85,000. Pretty amazing, especially when you compare it to the ballet sequence in An American in Paris, released the previous year, and they spent only $542,000.

Miscellaneous: During the Cyd Charisse nightclub dance number when she’s wrapped around Gene Kelly, her body completely changes position between frames due to a clumsy edit. According to commentary on the special

Miscellaneous: During the Cyd Charisse nightclub dance number when she’s wrapped around Gene Kelly, her body completely changes position between frames due to a clumsy edit. According to commentary on the special
edition DVD, this cut of only a few frames duration dates back to the original release of the film and no one knows why it exists.

Chapter 48 Pas De Deux 1:24:29

**Great dissolve transition into this set. Here she is wearing a gossamer veil, which is a great prop assisted by wind machines below her and around her to keep the veil in the air. Even though this was a gossamer veil**, with the power of the wind machines it was also a little dangerous to use. The shot where the veil goes under the arms of Gene Kelly had to be revised, originally he was wearing a tank top, but he received rug burns under his arms from the veil. Cyd mentioned that it was like dancing with a sack of potatoes on her back.

**Cyd Charisse’s dance number with the 50-foot scarf was so complicated it took three aircraft motors to blow the scarf in just the right manner.**

Filming of the Cyd Charisse dance number had to be stopped for several hours after it was discovered that her pubic hair was visible through her costume. When they finally fixed the problem the director said, “It’s ok guy’s, we’ve finally got Cyd’s crotch licked”.

**The dance sequences with Cyd Charisse and Gene Kelly were carefully choreographed to disguise the fact that Charisse was actually taller than Kelly.**

**Biography for Cyd Charisse**

Date of birth: 8 March 1921, Amarillo, TX, Birth name Tula Ellice Finklea Height 5' 9"

**Trivia**

- Although one of the greatest female dancers in the history of the movie musical, Cyd Charisse's singing in films was almost always dubbed, most notably by Carole Richards in "Brigadoon" (1954) and a young Vicki Carr in "The Silencers" (1966).
- Measurements: 34 1/2B - 22 - 37 (in 1953), (Source: Celebrity Sleuth magazine)

**Biography from Leonard Maltin's Movie Encyclopedia:** The gorgeous gal with the legs that just go on forever, musical star Charisse owes much of her fame to those glamorous gams. A ballet prodigy from childhood, she was featured in the Ballet Russe at age 1.

She married her dance teacher, Nico Charisse, when she was just 18, and made her film debut with him in a handful of "Soundies"

musical shorts in 1941. She was billed as Lily Norwood for her feature debut in "Something to Shout About" (1943), and subsequently played a few bit roles under that name. Signed by MGM in 1946 and renamed Cyd Charisse, she was carefully spotted in that studio's prestigious musicals, where the producers saw to it that she made the maximum impact in the minimal amount of screen

time, in The Harvey Girls, Ziegfeld Follies, Three Wise Fools, Till the Clouds Roll By (all 1946), Fiesta, The Unfinished Dance (both 1947), Words and Music (1948), The Kissing Bandit (1949), and others-always in support. Her striking appearance opposite Gene

Kelly in the sensational "Broadway Ballet" of Singin' in the Rain (1952) was the turning point in her career.

The following year, she costarred with Fred Astaire in The Band Wagon (1953), and their dance numbers together were, for lack of a better word, heavenly. She also had memorable dance numbers in the otherwise unseen Sombrero (1953) and Deep in My Heart (1954). The mid 1950s saw MGM's musical cycle just about played out, but Charisse rode out the last wave in Brigadoon (1954), It's Always Fair Weather (1955), Invitation to the Dance (1957), and Silk Stockings (1957), the musical remake of Garbo's Ninotchka that reteamed her with Astaire. She'd become a passably good actress by now, but without dance numbers (and costumes) she was just another Hollywood beauty. Dramatic turns in Twilight of the Gods and Party Girl (both 1958) were followed by appearances in foreign-made productions like Five Golden Hours (1961), Two Weeks in Another Town (1962), Assassination in Rome (1963), MAROC 7 (1967), and Warlords of Atlantis (1978). She did get to costar in a British-made ballet feature, Black Tights (1960), and performed an elegant striptease in the campy spy thriller The Silencers (1966), but has since worked sporadically in Hollywood, mostly in TV, often accompanied by her second husband, singer-actor Tony Martin. Their joint autobiography, "The Two of Us," was pub

Chapter 49 The Broadway Melody Ballet – Finale 1:27:42
Now his alter ego returns to remind our young hoofer why he originally came to Broadway.

Chapter 50 “I can’t quite visualize it.” 1:28:41
This is MGM’s musicals at its peak right here. R.F. Simpson delivers another one of those tongue in cheek lines here, “I can’t quite visualize it.” This picture is full of self-mockery, as Cosmo comments, “On film it will be even better.”

Many characters in this film industry spoof were based on real Hollywood personalities. The director, Roscoe Dexter, was modeled after Busby Berkeley and the studio boss, R.F. Simpson, bears many similarities to Arthur Freed.

Chapter 51 “Till the stars turn cold” 1:29:00
This is how they dub movies; the line goes across the screen until it hits the other line that is the actors cue to recite the dubbed line. The voice you are hearing is Jean Hagen’s real voice, she is dubbing herself. The reason they used her real voice here, “Jean Hagen had a very beautiful cultured voice, and Debbie Reynolds was too mid-western.” said Stanley Donen. How is that for dubbing? It is really wonderful how Lina refers to herself in the third person, as she enters the studio in a huff.

Chapter 52 Lina’s Revenge 1:31:27
Donen really knows his filming, look at this shot, the layout is very economical, and he shows us everything you need to see, without a lot of extra cuts.

Chapter 53 “I can sue.” 1:31:51
Chapter 54 The Dancing Cavalier – Opening Night 1:34:50
Hier we are back at the Grumman’s Chinese Theatre, and again these exterior shots were lifted from the film A Star is Born. There is a structural problem here, and that is they should have ended with the modern ballet sequence and not this one.

Revealing mistakes: The audience at the movie premiere at the beginning of the film is the same as the ones at the premiere of “The Dancing Cavalier” at the end of the film.

In those days some of the theatres did have pretty big backstage areas, as they often presented stage acts along with the prologue of the film. Such theatres still exist today; Radio City Music Hall in NYC, Fox Theatre in Atlanta, and the Paramount Theatre in Denver. Other surviving theatres in Denver with smaller stage areas would include; Bluebird Theatre on East Colfax, Ogden Theatre on Colfax downtown, and the Gothic Theatre in Denver. The Chinese Theatre had one of the largest backstage areas for performing groups, and it still exists today.

Again Donen’s placement of the camera, covers all the necessary action, you are able to see the foreground action and the background action. We have only one cut away to bring Debbie Reynolds into the shot, and then it stays with the original composition.

Great use of the extras in the audience, if you count there are never more than 25–35 extras in the shot. Yet, you get the impression that you have a theatre full of people watching this drama unfold. They probate did all of the long shots in one day, using about 200–300 people, and then the close up audience shots on another day. It is the same footage used in the beginning of the film, as it is here.

Little problem with the pit orchestra here, as it was a talking picture, so there would be no need for the orchestra to be present, not to mention that here the conductor requests which piece of music Lina will sing and then he has it in the right key. Ah, the magic of movies.

Chapter 55 Would You? – Finale 1:35:00

Chapter 56 Lena Lamont Pictures Incorporated 1:36:40
Awards received:
- Writers Guide of America in 1953, Best Written American Musical.
- 1989, entered in to the National Registry of Cinematic Classics.
- 1953, Golden Globe Best Motion Picture Actor, Donald O’Connor

Chapter 57 Lena’s Speech 1:37:54
Chapter 58 The Big Plan 1:38:24

Chapter 59 Singin’ In The Rain (In A Flat) 1:39:04
Audio/visual unsynchronized: At the end when Kathy will sing “Singin’ in the Rain” for Lena, Lena is asked “What key should the song be played in.” She says “A-flat”. The band leader says, “Singin’ in the Rain in A-flat”, and then proceeds to conduct the song in B-flat.

Chapter 60 You Are My Lucky Star – Finale 1:41:03
Debbie Reynolds thought this ending was so silly that she had trouble working up the tears here, so they did an old Hollywood trick, she had onion juice smeared in her make-up.

Total budget is 2.5 million.
They finished filming on January 10, 1952.
The film grossed $95,000 on opening day at Radio City Music Hall. The old phrase holds true, “They don’t make movies like they used to.”

Now this is Betty Noye’s voice being used here again, because Debbie Reynolds couldn’t get up that high. Originally the ending dissolved to another premiere, of course, starring Don Lockwood and Kathy Seldon. And Cosmos arrives in a car with his new wife, Lena Lamount. I think I like this ending better than that one, this is simply more romantic and less comical.

This last shot was filmed at the corner of Overland and Washington Blvd, in Culver City. There used to be a billboard, exactly like the one you are seeing here, which would advertise the most current film being released by the studio. Fade out in a clench. That is probably the best American Musical ever made!

Special Edition DVD Disc Two
• 50th Anniversary Documentary What a Glorious Feeling, hosted by Debbie Reynolds, 35 minutes, students may think it is boring.
• You Are My Lucky Star outtake (Not worth showing in class)
• Scoring Session Music Cues (Not worth showing in class)

Musicals Great Musicals: The Arthur Freed unit at MGM,
Chapters 2, 3, 7, & 15, are worth showing to the class. Running time is about 45 minutes.
Chapter 1: Producing the Best 0:00:01
Chapter 2: MGM, The Broadway Melody (1929) 0:05:13
Chapter 3: The Wizard of Oz (1939) 0:10:30
Chapter 4: Mickey and Judy 0:13:07
Chapter 5: Recruiting talent.
Chapter 6: *Meet Me in St. Louis*
Chapter 7: *Ziegfeld Follies (1946)* 0:25:00
Chapter 8: The class unit 0:28:45
Chapter 9: Executive suites
Chapter 10: *Annie Get Your Gun*
Chapter 11: *On The Town (1949)*
Chapter 12: Artistically special.
Chapter 13: *An American in Paris (1951)*
Chapter 14: Oscar and the appreciator
Chapter 15: *Singin’ in the Rain (1952)* 0:58:17
Chapter 16: *The Band Wagon (1953)* 1:06:44
Chapter 17: *It’s Always Fair Weather* 1:13:07
Chapter 18: Things change 1:16:31
Chapter 19: All here for *Gigi*
Chapter 20: End Credits

*Original Movie Excerpts of Singin’ In The Rain’s Arthur Freed/Nacio Herb Brown songs:* (great to show the class where all of these original songs came from 20 minutes.)
Chapter 1: *All I Do Is Dream of You*, from Sadie McKee (1934)
Chapter 2: *Beautiful Girl* from Going Hollywood (1933)
Chapter 3: *The Broadway Melody* from The Broadway Melody (1929)
Chapter 4: *Broadway Rhythm* from Broadway Melody of 1936 (1935)
Chapter 5: *Good Morning* from Babes in Arms (1939)
Chapter 6: *I’ve Got a Feelin’ You’re Foolin’* from Broadway Melody of 1936
Chapter 7: *Should I?* from Lord Byron of Broadway (1929)
Chapter 8: *Temptation* from Going Hollywood
Chapter 9: *Would You?* From San Francisco (1936)
Chapter 10: *You Are My Lucky Star* from Broadway Melody of 1936
Chapter 11: *You Were Meant for Me* from The Broadway Melody

*Gene Kelly, Anatomy of a Dancer,* Narrated by Stanley Tucci. If time allows or this film is interrupted by a sub day, this is a good documentary on the life of Gene Kelly. 85 minutes.

**References**
Osborne, Robert. TCM commentary, “Singing in the Rain.”
*CineBooks’ Motion Picture Guide* review of the movie included on the Microsoft Cinemania 1997 CD
New 50th Anniversary Documentary *What a Glorious Feeling*, hosted by Debbie Reynolds on the film’s DVD.