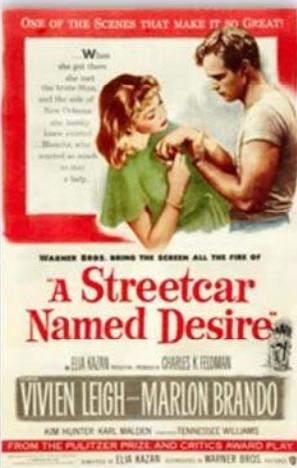
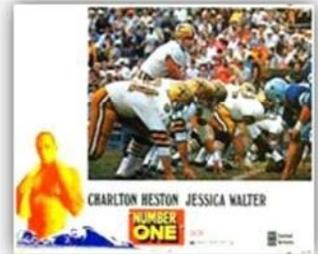
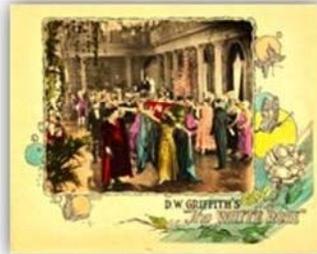


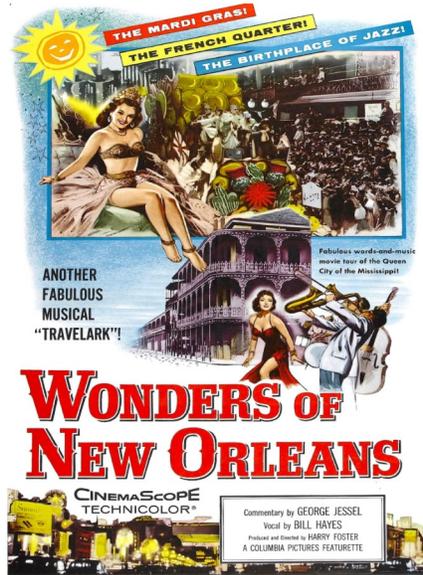
# LOUISIANA FILM HISTORY

A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW  
BEGINNING 1896

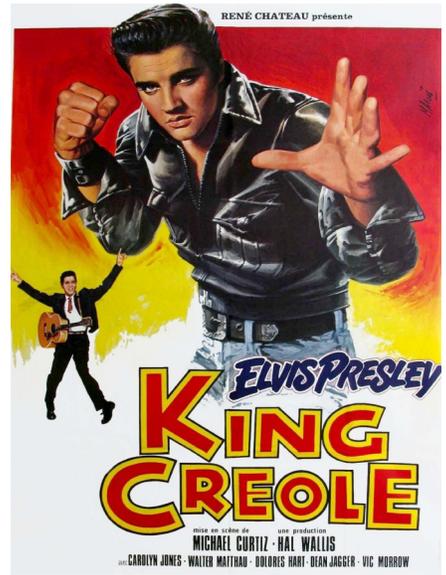




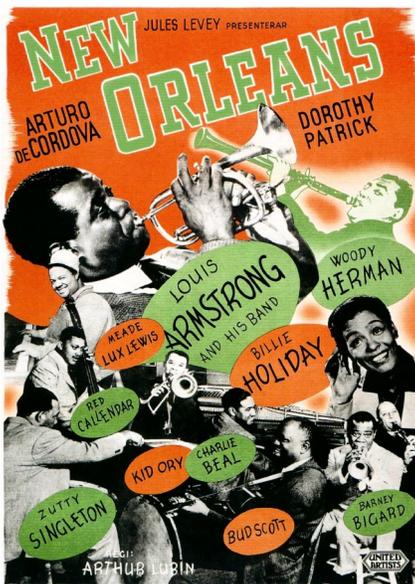
Tarzan of Apes 1918 US One Sheet



Wonders of New Orleans 1957 US One Sheet



King Creole 1958 French Grande



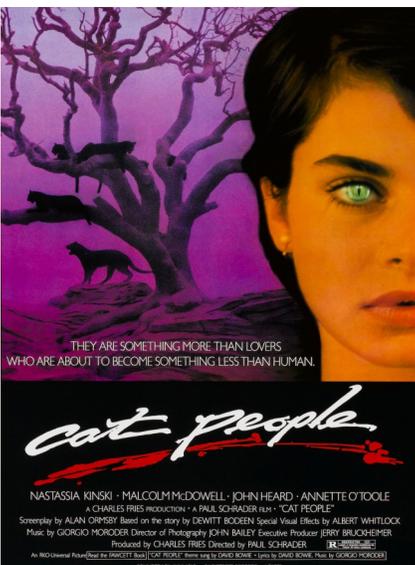
New Orleans 1947 Swedish One Sheet



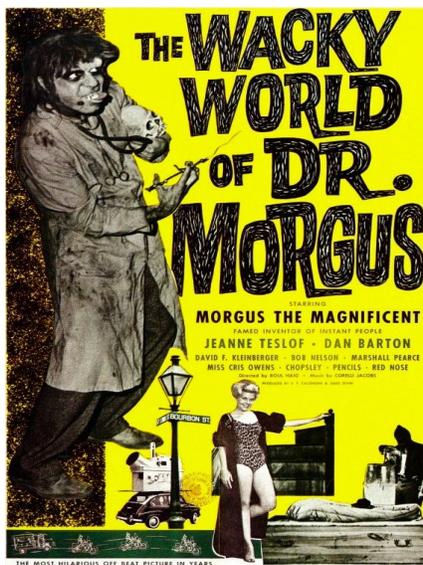
New Orleans Uncensored 1954 US One Sheet



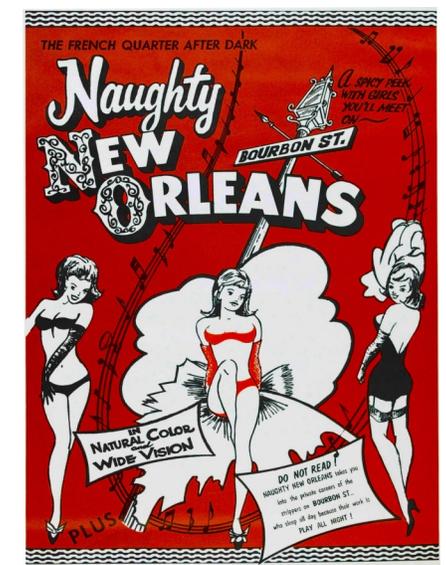
Gator Bait 1974 US One Sheet



Cat People 1982 US One Sheet



Wacky World of Dr. Morgus US 1962 One Sheet



Naughty New Orleans 1955 US One Sheet

# LOUISIANA FILM HISTORY

A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW  
BEGINNING 1896

By  
Ed and Susan Poole



Louisiana Film History  
A Comprehensive Overview Beginning 1896

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Front book cover design by Ed & Susan Poole. Artwork: (left to right) TOP: *Louisiana Territory* 1953 Lobby Card; *White Rose* 1923 Lobby Card; *Horse Soldiers* 1959 Half Sheet; *Number One* 1969 Lobby Card; MIDDLE: *A Streetcar Named Desire* 1951 One Sheet; photograph of Vitascope Hall, 623 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA; *Louisiana* 1947 One Sheet; BOTTOM: *The Buccaneer* 1938 Half Sheet; *The Witchmaker* 1969 Half Sheet; *God Gave Me 20 Cents* 1926 Half Sheet; and *The Eagle of the Sea*, 1926 Half Sheet.

Back cover: *Louisiana Hussy* 1959 One Sheet; and *Legend of the Bayou* 1983 One Sheet.

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## About the Authors

Ed and Susan Poole began acquiring movie posters in the mid 1970s while they were dating. This love of film art led to collecting, which led to buying collections, selling duplicates, becoming dealers, then wholesalers, retail store owners, book authors, teachers, and finally advanced film accessory researchers (literally the only ones known).

They wrote the first reference book on film accessories in 1997 (*Collecting Movie Posters*); opened the first reference site dedicated to film posters in 2001 ([LearnAboutMoviePosters.com](http://LearnAboutMoviePosters.com)); the first crossed-referenced research database in 2005 ([MoviePosterDataBase.com](http://MoviePosterDataBase.com)); and the first advance research site dedicated to dating and preservation in 2010 ([GlobalCinemaResearch.org](http://GlobalCinemaResearch.org)).

Their advance research into areas such as: production codes to identify unknown movie stills; tracking lithography plate numbers; studio logos; printers tags; and NSS production numbers for dating is utilized by major auction houses, dealers, museums and research facilities around the world such as: Library of Congress; Margaret Herrick (Academy) Library; and Heritage Auction. Their research has been used in 4 trials and by the FBI in a major fraud prosecution.

Early in their journey, they began collecting original Louisiana film posters, and over the past 30+ years have acquired the largest collection of Louisiana film accessories in the state.

During some research in 2010, the authors realized that no records were being kept on films made in Louisiana and all information was being lost. They firmly believe that this MUST NOT be allowed to happen. At that time they started a quest for the preservation of Louisiana's great film history. Going through personal records they documented over 1200 films made in or about Louisiana.

This book (the authors 13<sup>th</sup> reference book) is a continuation of that quest to establish and preserve Louisiana's great history for future generations and let everyone know the influence Louisiana has had on the film industry.

A new reference website has been established to help anyone interested in Louisiana Film History ([HollywoodOnTheBayou.com](http://HollywoodOnTheBayou.com)). For anyone needing additional or more advanced information, the authors can be contacted by email ([edp@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com](mailto:edp@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com)) or by call in line (504-298-5267).

## **Note From the Authors**

Louisiana has become 3<sup>rd</sup> in the country in film production, only behind California and New York. THAT'S FANTASTIC! Louisiana now has studios, production facilities, sound stages and plenty of equipment and experienced crews to handle multiple major films at a time. Adding in Louisiana charm, people, locations and specialties (not to count better food), it is no wonder that Louisiana would be the number one pick for filming.

Education is following behind with classes available in acting, film analysis, and theory with film studies on Spanish, German, Italian, French and even African and South American film history. BUT WHERE IS LOUISIANA FILM HISTORY?

When you are in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, you always look so see what 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place are doing differently. One area lacking is definitely research and preservation.

California (no. 1) has multitudes of research facilities from the Margaret Herrick (Academy) Library, Bison Archives, UCLA, U.S.C, Berkeley, just to name a few. Even Claremont McKenna College boasts film research.

New York (No. 2) also has a tremendous amount of film research from Columbia University, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) with over 10 MILLION movie stills to the New York Library of the Performing Arts.

Louisiana (No. 3) has - (imagine the sound effect of silence with crickets chirping). That's right – NOTHING! No research, no classes, no preservation. There is no central place for filmmakers, tourists or even students to go to do any research or find out what has been done here. HOW CAN THAT BE?

Most Louisianians have no clue how much influence Louisiana has had on the film industry since its beginning, and how much has been done here. After reading our book, we think you will be AMAZED at what has been done here. WE CAN NOT AFFORD TO LOSE OUR TREMENDOUS FILM HISTORY FROM NEGLECT.

We need markers on the major filming sites for tourists; AT LEAST a marker on the FIRST THEATER IN THE U.S. We are hoping that this information will be just a start that will go BEYOND just our friends and be spread to libraries, schools and eventually to visiting tourists, so EVERYONE can know the great films that has been done in Louisiana. – Ed and Susan

# CHAPTER 1

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## SETTING THE STAGE

Understanding how the “moving picture” industry first came to Louisiana requires at least some understanding of how the cinema itself came into being. While the history of the industry is filled with fascinating

stories, the focus of this book is on the history of the motion picture industry in Louisiana. Pioneering inventors and their inventions would ultimately lead to the cinema coming to Louisiana.

### EARLY INVENTORS AND INVENTIONS

Contrary to popular belief, the film industry was NOT developed in the United States by a single individual. It was the product of multitudes of inventors from many countries over several decades.

In the late 1800s, the United States was not the economic powerhouse that it is today. At THAT time, England was the economic center of the world and London was the largest city in the world. All international trade went through England. This allowed them to see new inventions earlier than about anyone else. And there were TONS of them – from MANY countries – all trying to invent a projector of moving pictures that would replace the magic lanterns.

The one thing all of these new inventions had in common was their large funny names, such as: the *Thaumatrope*; the *Phemakistoscope*; the *Praxinoscope*; the *Cinematograph*; the *Bioskop*; the *Kinetograph*; the *Kinetoscope*; the *Tachyscope*; and the *Kinematoscope*.

#### **Thomas Edison**

Thomas Edison invented the phonograph cylinder in 1877. The year before that, in 1876, a patent was applied for in England for a projector of moving pictures. The patent called for the use of glass slides (since celluloid had not been invented yet). Consequently, the projector would not have been able to produce a very good projection, but the concept was there.



Thomas Edison and his phonograph

### **Louis Augustin LePrince**



In 1886, a United States Patent was applied for and granted to Louis Augustin LePrince for a multi lens camera.

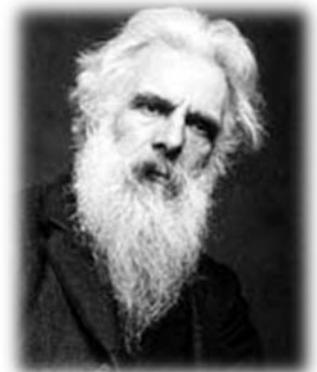
LePrince

went to England to continue his work. He applied for and received a British patent for a single lens projector in 1887 using paper film and then reapplied in 1889 using celluloid film. LePrince was in the process of

modifying his U.S. patent when he and his projector mysteriously disappeared on a French train on his way to Paris. He was never seen again.<sup>1</sup>

### **Eadweard Muybridge**

In 1888, Eadweard Muybridge, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, had been photographing the movement of animals with his *Zoopraxiscope*, a device that utilized multiple cameras. Muybridge visited Edison's research facility in West Orange, New Jersey, to propose that they work together. Of course, Edison refused. Almost immediately afterwards, Edison assigned his top engineer, William K. Dickson, to the job.



### **William K. Dickson**

On May 22, 1891, Mrs. Edison and her women's club (The National Federation of Women's Clubs with 147 representatives) were the first to be given a demonstration of Dickson's invention.

While other inventions were previously shown to small groups, this is considered the first presentation TO THE PUBLIC in the world.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Society of Motion Picture Engineers Journal* dated July, 1931.



During that time, Dickson (left): (1) developed the first peep-show style projection cabinet that Edison called the *Kinetoscope*; (2) established the size of celluloid

film (35mm); (3) filed copyright of the first film, *Ott's Sneeze*, in the United States (copyrighted in Dickson's name); (4) produced a multitude of films including boxing matches, sporting events and vaudeville acts; and (5) supervised the building of the first production studio, the Black Maria.

On April 14, 1894, a commercial version of the *Kinetoscope* was placed into the first "parlours" owned by the Holland Brothers, at 1155 Broadway, in New York City. It became an instant success (below).



### **Lumiere Brothers**

Meanwhile, the Lumiere Brothers (below) in France made the first world presentation to the public ON A SCREEN on March 22, 1895. This was the famous film of workers leaving the Lumiere factory for their dinner hour which was taken in September 1894.



By 1895, sales of Dickson's *Kinetoscope* began to decline, due in part to the introduction of the Lumiere Brothers' projector in the United States. While the Kinetoscope was a "peep show" style cabinet designed for one viewer, the Lumiere's projector could be seen by a large crowd.

### **Edison and Dickson Part Ways**

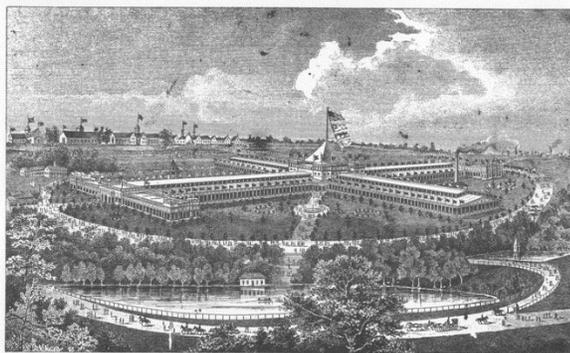
Here is where the major problems began in the United States. Dickson wanted to move on from the peepshow style, single user cabinet to the projector for larger groups as the Lumiere Brothers had done.

Edison thought that exhibiting “moving pictures” was a temporary fad, and that projecting them on a large screen would exhaust the novelty. Edison’s main objective was to use it as a vehicle to promote his phonograph cylinder. In his short-sightedness, Edison did not file for international patents on the *Kinetoscope* and related equipment. He also sold the rights for international distribution.

Heated arguments caused them to part ways, with Dickson joining several inventors to form the American Mutoscope Co. A few months later, a camera-projector was released. Later, the company name changed to American Mutoscope and Biograph Co., and then later to the Biograph Co., which is still in existence today.

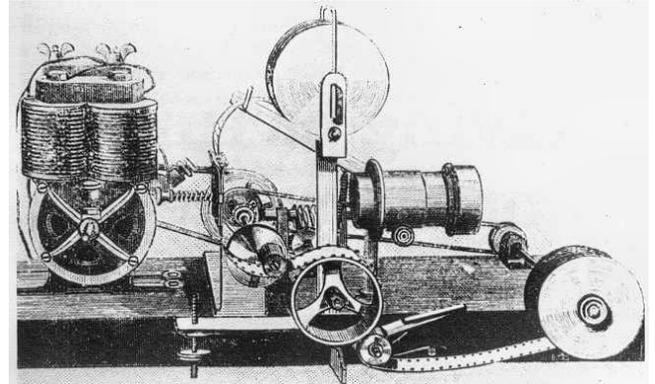
### **Thomas Armat and Francis Jenkins**

Two other inventors, Thomas Armat and Francis Jenkins, had built a very solid projector they called the *Phantoscope*. They set up a booth at the 1895 Atlanta Cotton Expo which ran from September through December 1895). (See postcard below)

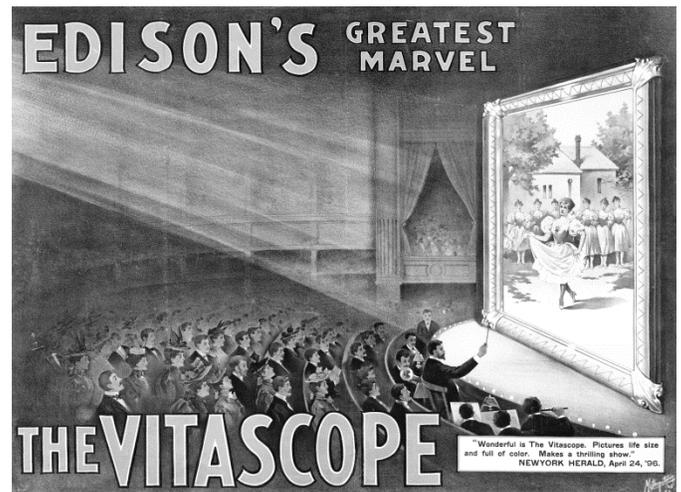


INTERNATIONAL COTTON EXPOSITION, OGLETHORPE PARK, ATLANTA, GA.

And while their *Phantoscope* projector (below) was well received, at the end of the Expo, they had not made enough money to go into production. So, after a disagreement on how to proceed, Armat and Jenkins decided to part company.



Edison, working through his licensing agent Raff & Gammon, agreed to purchase and manufacture the *Phantoscope* projector on the condition that he could rename it and call it his own invention.



Vitascope Promotional Poster - 1896

Edison renamed the projector the *Vitascope*, and by the spring of 1896, Edison was ready to start licensing territories through Raff & Gammon.