

PRODUCTION CODE BASICS

CHAPTER 6

SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Under certain circumstances, particularly with some major films, specially contracted photographers were used. For example, some actors and actresses would prefer their own photographers to take special promotional shots. These photographers were allowed on the set for major scenes or at the end of the day's shooting where the star would recreate a certain scene or pose for publicity purposes.

Sometimes a specific publication that was going to do a major feature on an upcoming film would send down its own special photographer. In these instances, it was a common practice that the photographer would own the rights to the shots they took. Instead of any payment from the studio, the special photographers would mark their stills and charge royalties for any outside use.

This practice caused some major lawsuits and confusion over the years. Some of the photographers OWNED the photographs they took during the filming of a major film title. These photographers later allowed their photographs to go into public domain, while the studio renewed the copyrights on all the photographs that the unit photographer took.

Special photographers would normally have their stamp on the photo.

Ed and Susan Poole

PRODUCTION CODE BASICS

Below are two samples of individual photographer tags that were placed on their prints.



Most of the time, very little information was placed on the back of the photographer prints. If there was, the type and amount of information would vary.

From time to time, a studio would request the use of one or more of the special photographer's images. These images would be marked and incorporated into the key set or other press materials, with the permission of the special photographer and with the photographer's name on the back.

Let's take a look at the still on the next page which is from the 1927 Fox film *Sunrise*. This photograph was taken by the unit photographer.

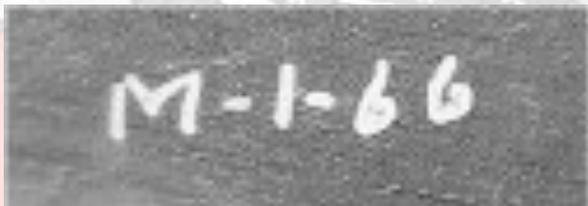
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PRODUCTION

This Key Set still (indicated by the two holes on the left) features the title and basic credit information. It has the production code of "M-1" with a dash and still number 66.



WILLIAM FOX presents **SUNRISE** F.W. MURNAU'S production



Learn How To Identify Unknown Movie Stills

Now let's look at another still from the same film on the next page. This photograph was taken by a special photographer and used by the studio.

Ed and Susan Poole

PRODUCTION



WILLIAM FOX presents **SUNRISE** F.W. MURNAU'S production



Learn How To

Own Movie Stills

PRODUCTION

The still on the preceding page has all the same title and credit information of the still on page 67, but this one has the Special Photographer's (Max Munn Autrey) signature.

The production number has also been changed from "M-1" to "M-1A." The addition of the "A" represents the photographer Autrey.

Let's look at a different way that the photographs taken by the Special Photographer were used by the studios to garner some extra publicity about an upcoming film.

The still on the next page was utilized by the FASHION department. It features Gloria Swanson in the 1934 film *Music in the Air*. (It has the two hole punches at the top which means it was part of the Key Book Set).

Notice that the still number in the bottom right is "10." This was a special publicity photo shot after production shooting for the day was finished which was used for a special promotion. Consequently, there is no production code number.

The fashion department used this photograph to promote Miss Swanson's gown, which was designed by Rene Hubert, The image was published in a fashion magazine article about the upcoming film.

It has a write up on the back with a stamp giving the image credit to photographer Otto Dyar. See image of back on page 71.

PRODUCTION



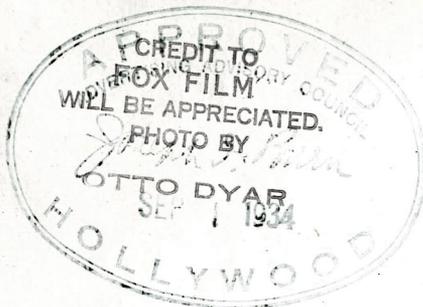
GLORIA SWANSON



Learn How To Identify Unbroken Motion Picture Stills

Ed and Susan Funn

MP



Gracious in line is this Rene Hubert inspired creation worn by Gloria Swanson in "Music In The Air," Fox Film production, in which she co-stars with John Boles. On an ivory silk crepe foundation tiny ivory satin bugle beads were sewn by hand until they covered every inch of the fabric. A molded silhouette, with a normal waistline, marked by a simple belt of the beaded crepe, the decolletage is high in front and is V-shaped in the back to the waist. The long sleeves, form-fitting on the forearm expand to cape-like fullness on the upper arm. A long train adds charm to the skirt. A novelty decorative effect is introduced by means of the emerald green crystal beads in semi-necklace effect with diamond clasps. A bracelet on the left wrist repeats the jewel-themes. Slippers are white silk crepe.

The close-fitting cap, also designed and created by Rene Hubert, Fox Film stylist, repeats the dress materials and is further enhanced by the use of two elaborate clasps at either side.

And finally, let's look at a very popular way that they studio could use the Special Photographer to not only get some publicity about the film – BUT to also get some additional money at the same time –

Promotional Tie-ins.

A promotional tie-in would take a special shot of a star or scene and tie it in with a commercial product.

PRODUCTION



Hollywood Chooses
Flameless
LEKTROLITE

HUMPHREY BOGART
in Warner Bros.
Two Against The World

32

In the above still from the 1936 Warner Bros. film, *Two Against the World*, starring Humphrey Bogart, Bogie is promoting Lektrolite cigarette lighters.

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