

**NOTE: This eBook and its contents is freely available for personal educational, entertainment, enjoyment, reference and research purposes. You are free to use this eBook in any manner for non-commercial purposes.**

**Non-Commercial Use means distribution on a “free to use” basis where there is no direct payment by the consumer for access to the relevant content and where no advertising and/or sponsorship opportunities are exploited in connection with the distribution of such content to the consumer.**

**Any acknowledgement would be greatly appreciated when referencing or distributing material from this eBook.**

## **Dedications**

**Dedicated in loving memory of my wonderful parents:-**

**Konstantinos (Dino) Christopoulos who took me to see my very first science fiction film in the early 1960s, *The Man With The X-Ray Eyes* (1963)**

**Rosemary Christopoulos who sat with me after school as I watched on TV episodes the first two doctors of the Doctor Who series and insisted on asking me interminable questions about who was who and what was going on! Thanks mum and dad!**

**The SCI-FI FILM FIESTA eBook series is intended as a salute to the pioneering work of science fiction film makers. May future generations have the privilege of enjoying your work and never stop wondering....What if?**

**Dedicated also to you, the reader who appreciates these classic gems from the golden age of sci-fi film-making. It is you who help to keep such films alive for future generations to enjoy.**

## **The Complete Sci-Fi Film Fiesta series:**

**Volume 1: “Here Be Monsters”**

**Volume 2: “Into Space”**

**Volume 3: “Other Worlds”**

**Volume 4: “Journeys Within”**

**Volume 5: “Alien Contact”**

**Volume 6: “Alien Invasion”**

**Volume 7: “The End Is Nigh!”**

**Volume 8: “Big Bugs & Crazy Critters”**

**Volume 9: “Accidents & Experiments”**

**Volume 10: “Supersized & Miniaturized”**

Volume 11: "A Tribute To...."  
**CONTENTS**

**Introduction**

**\*\*\*Part 1: A Tribute To....**

**Ray Harryhausen**

**George Pal**

**Roger Corman**

**Richard Carlson**

**Jack Arnold**

**Richard Denning**

**Faith Domergue**

**Hugh Marlowe**

**Whit Bissell**

**Morris Ankrum**

**Ishirō Honda**

**Russell Johnson**

**John Zaremba**

**Peter Graves**

**Beverly Garland**

**Paul Birch**

**Peggie Castle**

**Paul Blaisdell**

**Val Guest**

**Willis O'Brien**

**John Agar**

**Bert I. Gordon**

**Eugène Lourié**

**Warren Stevens**

**Yumi Shirakawa**

**Robert Wise**

**\*\*\*Part 2: A Tribute to.....Classic Sci-Fi Ladies**

**1950 - 1954**

**1954 – 1956**

**1956 – 1957**

**1957 – 1958**

**1959**

**\*\*\*Part 3: A Tribute To.....Science Fiction Authors**  
**(*& The Inspiration They Provided*)**

John W. Campbell Jnr  
Paul W. Fairman  
W. J. Stuart  
Harry Bates  
Raymond F. Jones  
Philip Wylie and Edwin Balmer  
John Wyndham  
Jack Finney  
William F. Temple  
H.G. Wells  
John Mantley  
Curt Siodmak

**\*\*\*Afterword**

**\*\*\*Resources**

**SCI-FI FILM FIESTA  
Volume 11:  
“A Tribute To...”**

**©Chris Christopoulos 2023**



## Introduction

The 1950s was a time when we saw on film our planet being threatened by alien menaces. Such fears, however, did not stop us from venturing out into space and facing the perils of the final frontier on the 'silver screen.'

Threats to our survival came not only from outer space but also from that other little known frontier, the seas and oceans of the world, as well as from deep within the earth.

Of course, there were also threats to our own survival that were largely of our own making.

All of this mayhem was brought to us by the actors, directors, producers, special effects artists, writers and other involved in the pioneering work of science fiction movie making. It is to these people that this 11<sup>th</sup> volume "A Tribute To...." of the *Sci-Fi Film Fiesta* series is dedicated to.

**Part 1: *A Tribute To....*** focuses on some of the prominent directors, producers, actors and special effects people involved in science fiction films of the 1950s. Brief biographical information is provided on each one, along with their contribution to the pioneering work of sci-fi film-making in the 1950s.

**Part 2: *A Tribute To Classic Sci-Fi Ladies*** provides a brief introduction to each of the female co-stars and supporting actors in the films featured in the *Sci-Fi Film Fiesta* eBook series.

In some respects, the 1950s was at the beginning of a transition process for women that is still very much on-going. On the one hand women were more often than not viewed through a more limited and traditional lens where they were seen as being compliant stay-at-home moms who needn't worry their pretty heads with "men's business." On the other hand, it was becoming increasingly obvious to some people that women needed to be taken more seriously and were more than fully capable of taking on any role in life they wanted. It is a process that it still continuing right into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and has some way yet to go.

The portrayal of women in sci-fi movies of the time often highlighted this growing tension and unease between society's traditional expectations concerning the role of women and the kinds of changes that were beginning to take place or were looming on the horizon. Sure, there were a few female characters in sci-fi films who took on the role of space mission commanders, scientists, business leaders and even US presidents. Unfortunately, the end result of such depictions on film often amounted to a rather uncomfortable and ham-fisted approach to dealing with issues concerning gender relationships, interactions and the role of women in society.

Despite how far women could and did go in film portrayals of women in some sci-fi and other genres, it seemed as if society at the time was determined to hold up a restrain-

ing hand and proclaim, "Sorry, no further!" And so with the other hand, women would be guided to the safe haven and refuge of marriage and domesticity as society, the media, education and the all the other institutions intended for them all along.

With social movements of all kinds, we often like to think that changes begin with specific eras, events and dates while ignoring the fact that change is often part of an ongoing process that takes time to unfold and often has its genesis further back in time than we like to think. All it takes to start the ball rolling is for one door to a closed mind to open just a crack, one person to say "NO!" or one person to think, speak, act and take on a role in life that had been previously unexpected and unimaginable.

**Part 3: *A Tribute To Science Fiction Authors*** references some of the works of fiction that inspired and were adapted into various classic 1950s sci-fi films.

Yes, the 1950s – a much maligned decade that many people look back on and wave an admonishing finger at for its perceive conservatism and paranoia. Best not judge lest ye be judged considering how our own modern early 21<sup>st</sup> century era might be judged by future generations for its neurotic, obsessive compulsive, self-obsessed, PC riddled, wokadelic and childish concerns and priorities.....Perhaps when all is said and done, not that much really changes in terms of human nature and very little in life is really new or original. So let's go back in time and pay tribute to.....



## **Part One: "A Tribute To...."**

### **Ray Harryhausen**



By Spacer999 - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=112316647>

At the back of his parents' milk bar in Melbourne Australia, a young boy in the early 1960s watched TV with bulging eyes and open mouth. He was watching the film, "Jason and the Argonauts" at the point where the giant bronze statue, Talos was just coming to life to punish Jason and his crew mates for violating the treasure storehouse at the foot of Talos' statue.

It was the genius of the American master of visual effects, Ray Harryhausen and his brand of stop-motion model animation known as "Dynamation" that produced such an effect as described above in audiences of films that featured his ground-breaking special effects. By the way, that young boy was me.

Raymond Frederick "Ray" Harryhausen was born on June 29, 1920 and it seemed as if a path was being laid out for him that would lead him to the creation of his own unique imaginative world via the medium of film. A part of this world was being shared with that young boy in Melbourne years afterward, who would in turn remember as an adult that magic moment on TV some 60 years later.

The path Ray was to take was marked with the following signposts;

- His lifelong passion for dinosaurs and anything to do with fantasy.
- His parents' encouragement of him to pursue whatever he wanted to.
- Opportunity offered to him at Grammar school to learn how to make model miniature set pieces of Californian Missions. This in turn led him to begin
- making three dimensional figures and sets. From that he would eventually make his own versions of prehistoric creatures.
- Inspiration derived from the LA County Museum where Ray gazed in wonder at the murals of prehistoric creatures created by Charles R. Knight. Ray also saw the film, "The Lost World" in 1925, at five years of age. His eyes feasted on a world populated with what seemed to be living dinosaurs such as an allosaurus fighting with and pushing a brontosaurus off the edge of a plateau. And then of course there was "King Kong in 1933."
- His natural thirst for knowledge in which Ray wanted to know about the creatures he saw on the screen and how they seemed to have been brought to life. What was this thing called "stop-motion animation?"
- Trial and error: Ray Experimented in the production of animated shorts.
- Mentors such as Willis O'Brien who was the animator of King Kong. O'Brien assessed Ray's models and inspired him to aim for a more fluid animation and to construct creatures that were more anatomically correct.
- Education being a life-long process to build upon and increase one's skills. Ray took classes in graphic arts and sculpture and enrolled in art and anatomy night classes at the Los Angeles City College (LACC). He also attended night classes at the University of Southern California where he studied art direction, editing and photography.

From such influences we can better understand how Ray Harryhausen was able to reach a point where he was able to almost magically inject life into his characters and give them character and personality.

## Ray Harryhausen's Career

Harryhausen's first commercial job was on George Pal's Puppets shorts.

During World War Two, Ray designed and photographed a short film called "How to Bridge a Gorge" in 1941 to show how stop-motion animation could be used in propaganda films. He also worked on US propaganda films such as the "Why We Fight" series for the US War Office

In 1947 Harryhausen worked as an assistant animator on his first major film, "Mighty Joe Young" in 1949 which happily for him used the same people who had made King Kong. In this film, Ray animated most of the scenes.

Ray Harryhausen was later to form a partnership with producer Charles H. Schneer. Their first project was "It Came from Beneath the Sea" in 1955, followed by "Earth vs. the Flying Saucers" in 1956.

The films listed below that Ray Harryhausen worked on consist only of those that feature in this book.

### 1953: THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS

This was the first film that used the technique later known as Dynamation. This involved using a split screen technique to insert models into the live-action. It was a method of seamlessly integrating the live-action with the models. The film was Harryhausen's first solo feature film effort, and a major international box-office hit for Warner Brothers Pictures.

It is worth noting that Ray was able to develop and execute most of the miniature set work himself, thereby saving money and more importantly maintaining his full technical and creative control in order to achieve the desired special effects in his films.

### 1955: IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA

In the film the model of the octopus had only six tentacles due to budget constraints. To overcome this marine physical handicap, the model was always partially in the water at any one time. Don't believe me? Check it out!

### 1956: EARTH vs. THE FLYING SAUCERS



The design of the saucers had an animated section added into the top and underside. Flutes were also incorporated into the design so that audiences could see that the saucer was moving. Ray simply used old recording wire on which to suspend the saucers to give the illusion of flying. The Capitol and the Supreme Court buildings which were miniature sets cost a mere (by today's blockbuster standards) \$1500 each. The Washington Monument came in at a bargain price of \$500. Ray's dad made the saucers from aluminum which was then anodized to give them a matt finish so they wouldn't reflect light.

Harryhausen always involved himself in the pre-production film's story concept & script development as well as art-direction, design, story-boarding and other aspects of his films.

### 1957: 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH



In this film, an American spaceship returns from Venus and crashes into the ocean near Italy, releasing an alien egg which washes up on shore. This egg hatches a creature that rapidly grows to enormous size and terrifies the entire populace of Rome.

I dare you to try and not feel empathy for Harryhausen's Venusian "Ymir" model. This would be due largely to Ray's ability to make his model convey emotional states through their expressions, stance and movements, combined with other features used in the film to illicit emotional response.

Ray insisted that the film should be shot in black and white using Kodak 35mm film stock that eliminated the problem of grain when the rear projection image is re-photographed. "20 Million Miles to Earth" was the last picture that Ray made in black and white. It would have been Ray's tribute to Willis O'Brien and King Kong, mentioned above.

Not featured in this eBook series are;

### 1958: THE 7th VOYAGE OF SINBAD

This was Ray's first feature in colour and it was he who came up with the idea for the title, "The 7th Voyage of Sinbad" due to the mystical significance of the number 7. It was for this film that the name "Dynamation." was coined for Ray's dimensional animation.

### 1963: Jason and the Argonauts

So, how did Ray Harryhausen achieve that effect of open-mouthed wonder in a young boy of about 7 or 8 years of age sitting in front of a black and white TV set? With the statue, Talos coming to life, Ray based the movement of Talos' head turning to the camera on a Japanese film in which a woman's head turns to the camera. Talos' movements are very labored and slow in order to convey a sense of the height of the bronze statue. Quite a feat with a model which is only about sixteen inches high! And so, over 50 years later I still enjoy watching this and other films that feature the magic of the master, Ray Harryhausen.

Thank you for the magic, Ray.....

Raymond Frederick "Ray" Harryhausen  
(June 29, 1920 – May 7, 2013)



### George Pal



By photo by Alan Light, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1131639>

## **"The Next One"** **(February 1, 1908 – May 2, 1980)**

The Hungarian-born American animator, film producer and director, George Pal, is primarily associated with the science fiction film genre. Among the great productions of George Pal which will be featured in this ebook are;

- **Destination Moon (1950 - Oscar: Special Effects 1950)**
- **When Worlds Collide (1951 - Oscar: Special Effects 1951)**
- **The War of the Worlds (1953 - Oscar: Best Special Effects 1953)**
- **Conquest of Space (1955)**
- **The Time Machine (1960 - Oscar: Best Special Effects 1960)**

### **George Pal's Early Life and Career**

- **Born in Cegléd, Austria–Hungary.**
- **Pal's stage-entertainer parents later divorced, and he was raised by his grandparents**
- **1928: graduated from the Budapest Academy of Arts at age 20 with a degree in architecture and he possessed highly developed drawing skills.**
- **1928 to 1931: made films for Hunnia Films of Budapest, Hungary. At Hunna he quickly learned the craft of motion picture cartooning.**
- **1931: at age 23 married Elisabeth "Zsoka" Grandjean.**
- **Moved to Berlin, a centre for film innovation, and founded Trickfilm-Studio GmbH Pal und Wittke. Pal developed his own style of making inanimate objects move, using the developing art of stop-motion photography.**
- **Patented Pal-Doll (or Puppetoons in the USA).**
- **Working in Prague, Pal make ad shorts or animated advertising featuring cartoon "puppets" without strings such as cigarettes with faces, arms, and legs strutting and singing on theatre screens looking as if they had been drawn by a cartoonist.**
- **Pal left Germany as the Nazis were rising to power.**
- **1940: Pal emigrated from Europe at age 32 and began work for Paramount Pictures and obtained American citizenship.**
- **In the 1940s, he made the Puppetoons series as an animator. As stated in the Ray Harryhausen tribute post, Ray Harryhausen was employed on staff by George Pal during the Puppetoons period.**
- **1943: Pal was awarded an honorary Oscar for "the development of novel methods and techniques in the production of short subjects known as Puppetoons."**
- **1950s and 1960s: produced several science fiction and fantasy films four of which were collaborations with director Byron Haskin.**



You might ask why the addition to the title of the words “The next one?” When asked which of his films was his favorite Pal would reply, “the next one.” Each of his films was a part of a vision that in some way contributed to;

- Opening up and extending our vision of the universe.
- Ushering in the era of the golden age of film science fiction with “Destination Moon.”
- Showing us how not only governments, but also groups of like-minded individuals with the vision, will and resources can send spaceships to the surface of other worlds.
- Our wonder and entertainment as we watch in horror the destruction of Los Angeles by forces powerful beyond our comprehension.
- Encouraging a belief in heroes we can look up to and emulate who possess ideals and courage and who dedicate themselves to the pursuit of science and truth.
- Our understanding of our place in the universe and the forces that shape our destiny.
- Fostering a belief in how we as individuals and collectively can meet any challenge to humanity and hope and strive for a better future.
- The development of talented artists, writers and filmmakers, as well as pioneering scientists and astronauts who were inspired by the grand visions of George Pal....



---

## **Roger Corman**



*By JaSunni at PicasaWeb - <http://picasaweb.google.com/5chiaroscuro/JaSunni1#5286566774945078306>, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6874177>*

**After all these years of movie viewing, one can almost watch a particular film of a particular genre and say, “Yep, that’s a Corman!” For me this is particularly true in the case of Roger Corman’s involvement and influence in the genre of science fiction film.**

### **Roger William Corman**

**Corman was born on 5 April 1926, Detroit, Michigan, USA. He later studied engineering at Stanford and after working only three days as an engineer at U.S. Electrical Motors he quit.**

**Corman took a job as a messenger for 20th-Century Fox where he rose to the position of story analyst. He then studied modern English literature at Oxford and roamed around Europe for a year before returning to the U.S. intending to become a screen-writer/producer.**

**Corman sold his first script in 1953, "The House in the Sea," which was released under the title “Highway Dragnet” in 1954.**

Aware of the discrepancy between his initial intention or vision behind his film and what actually turned out on the screen, Corman turned to becoming a producer with the film, "Monster from the Ocean Floor" in 1954.

Corman then struck a deal with a company called American Releasing which became the well-known American International Pictures (AIP). Corman was now part of one of the most successful independent studios.

Lacking any real formal training, Corman took to directing and over a 15 year period directed about 53 films, mostly for AIP.

Corman's movie-making "trademark" was his uncanny ability to put together quick, cheap productions sometimes even several movies in his capacity as director or producer or both in just a single year! For example, nine movies in just 1957, not to mention the original version of The Little Shop of Horrors which he shot in just two days and a night in 1960!

Both critical acclaim and commercial success came with a series of adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe stories, often starring (who else?) Vincent Price.

Corman's 1962 film, "The Intruder" concerning racial integration in the South won a prize at the Venice Film Festival, but it was not a commercial success. As a result, he shied away from making films containing overt or direct messages, in favour of films that were entertaining while leaving the social and political issues to filter through beneath the surface.

Corman left AIP after it began re-editing his films without his knowledge or consent and he retired from directing to focus on production and distribution through his own newly-formed company New World Pictures. This company went on to deal with low budget films through to distributing the films of the likes of Ingmar Bergman, Akira Kurosawa, Federico Fellini and François Truffaut.

After selling off New World in the 1980s, Corman was involved with various companies such as, Concorde Pictures, New Horizons, and Millenium Pictures.

Corman has published his biography "How I Made A Hundred Movies in Hollywood And Never Lost A Dime," and returned to directing with the film, Frankenstein Unbound in 1990.

In 2009, Roger Corman was honored with an Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement.

It seems that Roger Corman could be viewed from a variety of stand points, among them being;

- A prolific producer
- Energetic



- Frenzied pace-setter
- Successful
- "The King of the Cult Film"
- "The Pope of Pop Cinema"
- Mentor of greats such as Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Jack Nicholson, James Cameron, Robert De Niro, Peter Bogdanovich, Joe Dante and Sandra Bullock

Whatever the case may be, Roger Corman has never pretended to have been a great director or producer. It seems clear that his intent has been to create profitable and successful films that people will enjoy watching, hopefully more than once. I know I have! And here are some of those films by the maestro, Roger Corman most of which will be featured in this ebook series:

- The Day the World Ended 1956 (Director, Producer: Roger Corman's entree into the realm of science fiction.)
- It Conquered the World 1956 (Director, Producer)
- Attack of the Crab Monsters 1957 (Director, Producer)
- The Brain Eaters 1958 (Executive Producer)
- War of the Satellites 1958 (Director, Producer)
- Attack of the Giant Leeches 1959 (Executive Producer)
- The Man with X-Ray Eyes 1963 (Director, Producer). This was my first sci-fi / horror film that I saw as a young boy. My dad took me to see it on a whim at the cinema in the 1960s and it scared the heck out of me. I remember looking up at him and seeing him stuffing his face with pop corn and smoking cigarettes (which you could do back then) with gusto. He pretended he didn't think much of the film, but I knew better! Since then I was hooked on such movies! Thanks dad.



## Richard Carlson



***“Writer, producer, director, film editor - a brilliant guy,”  
(Riders to the Stars editor, Herbert L. Strock)***

- **Born:** Richard Dutoit Carlson on April 29, 1912, Albert Lea, Minnesota, U.S.
- **Died:** November 25, 1977 (aged 65), Encino, Los Angeles, California, U.S.
- **Cause of death:** Cerebral haemorrhage
- **Occupation:** Actor, television and film director, screenwriter covering 1937–75
- **Spouse:** Mona Carlson (1939 until his death in 1977)
- **Children:** Richard Henry Carlson, Christopher Hugh Carlson
- **Parents:** Mabel Du Toit & Henry Carlson

Richard Carlson was born in Albert Lea, Minnesota, the son of an attorney. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with a Master of Arts degree in English. After a brief stint as a drama teacher he settled on the performing arts where he invested his money in buying his own theatre in Minneapolis, featuring himself as the star. By the age of 23, he performed on Broadway opposite Ethel Barrymore, Jimmy Durante and Ethel Merman.

His first film role was in the 1938 David O. Selznick comedy “The Young in Heart.” He worked as a freelance actor, appearing in many different film studio works, beginning in 1939 when he moved to California. Prior to the war, Carlson appeared mostly in comedies and dramas some being quite ordinary second features or commercial failures. However, in “The Little Foxes” (1941) he had a standout performance as newspaperman, David Hewitt.

Carlson’s career was interrupted by his serving in World War II. After returning he found it difficult to obtain new roles. In 1948 he was cast in two low-budget film noir films, “Behind Locked Doors” and “The Amazing Mr. X.” Greater success came Carlson’s way when in 1950 he co-starred with Deborah Kerr and Stewart Granger in the highly successful MGM Technicolor remake of “King Solomon’s Mines.”

Of particular relevance to the subject of this eBook series is the then newly emergent science fiction and horror B films of the 1950s which gave Carlson an avenue for the rebuilding of his career. Richard Carlson went on to star in several cult sci-fi features such as Jack Arnold’s, “It Came from Outer Space” (1953), “The Magnetic Monster” (1953) and “Creature from the Black Lagoon” (1954).





Carlson both directed and starred in the 1954 science fiction film “Riders to the Stars.” Of particular note was his performance as astronomer John Putnam in “It Came from Outer Space.” It stands as one of the greatest performances of science fiction film, delivered as it was with intelligence and passion.

Apart from his various film and television writing and directing projects, Carlson starred in the Cold War drama television series “I Led Three Lives” from 1953 to 1956. It was based on a book of the same title by Herbert A. Philbrick. This was at a time when America was in the grip of McCarthyism. In the series Carlson played the role of Herbert A. Philbrick who infiltrated the Communist Party on behalf of the FBI.

In the 1958-1959 television season Carlson played the part of Colonel Ranald Mackenzie in the western series, “Mackenzie’s Raiders.”

For the remainder of his acting career, Carlson made guest appearances in western and detective series such as, “The Virginian” (1962), “Perry Mason” (1957), “The F.B.I.” (1965) and “Cannon” (1971); directed westerns such as “Kid Rodelo” (1965) and also wrote TV scripts as well as magazine articles on various non-fiction subjects.

After his retirement in 1975, Richard lived the last two years of his life in Sherman Oaks, California.

Carlson died of a cerebral haemorrhage on November 25, 1977 in Encino, California. He was buried in Los Angeles National Cemetery, in West Los Angeles. Richard Carlson has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for his contribution to the television industry.

## FILMOGRAPHY

Change of Habit (1969)	Whispering Smith Hits London (1951)
The Valley of Gwangi (1969)	Valentino (1951)
The Power (1968)	King Solomon's Mines (1950)
The Doomsday Flight (1966)	Behind Locked Doors (1948)
Kid Rodelo (1965)	The Amazing Mr. X (1948)
Della (1964)	So Well Remembered (1947) with John Mills
Tormented (1960)	The Man from Down Under (1943)
The Unchained Goddess (1958)	Presenting Lily Mars (1943)
Hemo the Magnificent (1957)	A Stranger in Town (1943)
The Strange Case of the Cosmic Rays (1957)	Young Ideas (1943)
The Helen Morgan Story (1957)	Fly-By-Night (1942)
Three for Jamie Dawn (1956)	Highways by Night (1942)

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

