

CLASSIC HOLLYWOOD
SUSAN KING

Unshakable Bond

Albert 'Cubby' Broccoli lived large as producer of the 007 film series. USC plans a tribute just as grand.

Albert "Cubby" Broccoli was a self-made man who not only believed in the American dream but lived it as producer of the James Bond films, the longest-running film franchise in cinema history.

"This was a man who was a failed jewelry salesman," says Tom Mankiewicz, a writer on 1971's "Diamonds are Forever" who also worked on two Roger Moore Bond films, including 1973's "Live and Let Die."

"He was an agent. He worked briefly for Howard Hughes as a go-fer. He had such varied experiences in life in so many different departments that you were talking to a real guy who was wonderfully content. He really enjoyed himself."

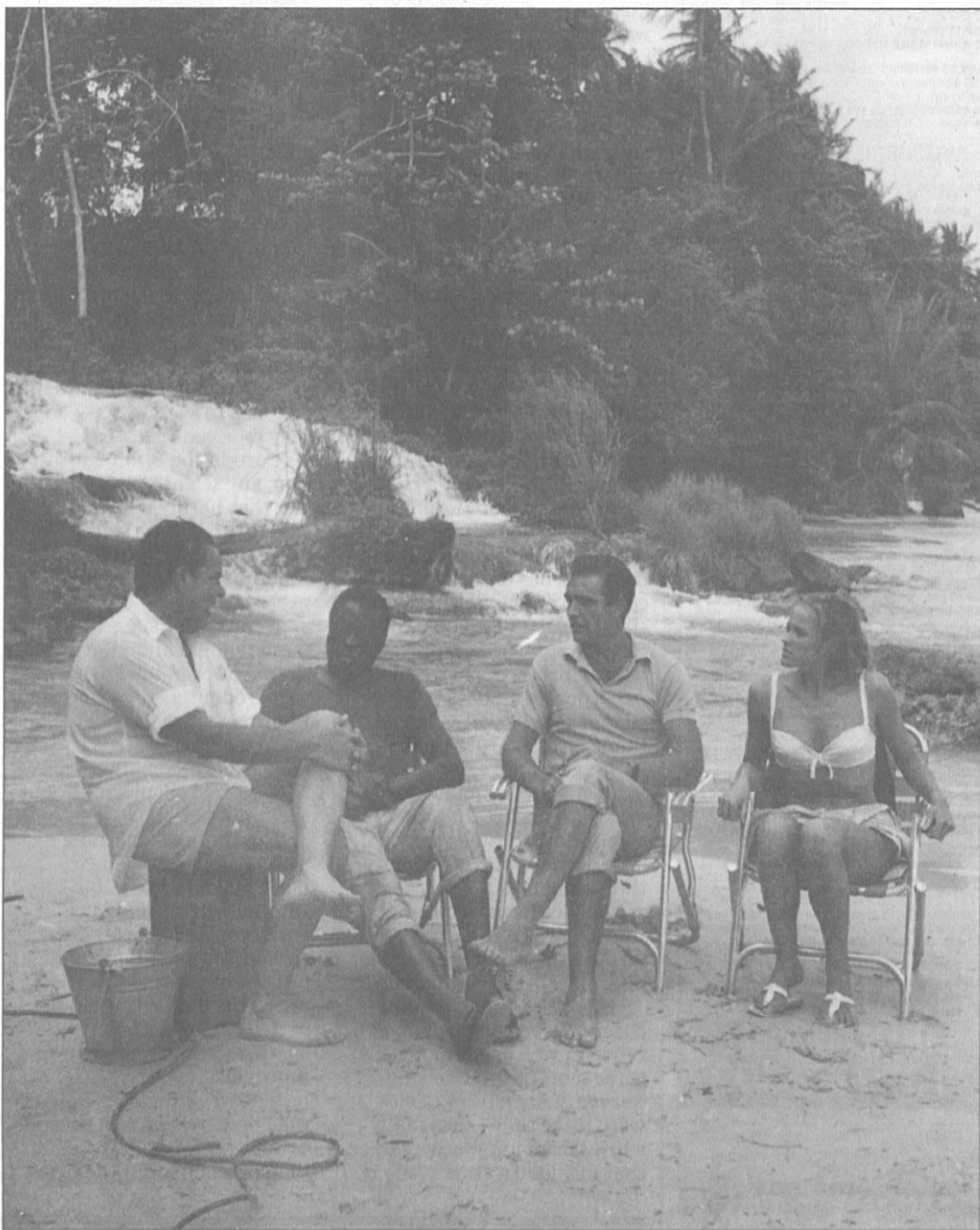
The life of Broccoli, who died in 1996, is being celebrated this weekend by the USC School of Cinematic Arts. The three-day centennial at the Norris Cinema Theater, which kicks off Friday and continues through Sunday, features screenings, discussions and an exhibit of props, costumes, posters and scripts exploring the impact of Broccoli and the 47-year-old series, which is now overseen by his daughter Barbara Broccoli and stepson Michael G. Wilson. (The exhibition continues through February at the Hugh M. Hefner Exhibition Space in the George Lucas Building on campus.)

USC film professor Rick Jewell, teaching a course in James Bond as a pop phenomenon, will be introducing the screenings and hosting two panel discussions — one on Bond today and the other a look at Broccoli.

The films being screened include 1962's "Dr. No" and 1964's "Goldfinger" with Sean Connery; 1969's "On Her Majesty's Secret Service" with George Lazenby; "Live and Let Die" and 1977's "The Spy Who Loved Me" with Moore; 1987's "The Living Daylights" with Timothy Dalton; 1995's "GoldenEye" and 1997's "Tomorrow Never Dies" with Pierce Brosnan and 2006's "Casino Royale" with Daniel Craig.

Barbara Broccoli says it was her father's passion that made him such a great producer. "He loved making entertainment," she says. "He had a real kind of showman quality. When he came to Hollywood, he worked very hard. He worked his way up. He really appreciated the opportunity the film industry gave him. He was a great mentor to both of us. And that kind of passion was infectious for us."

"He was a great family man," adds Wilson. "He loved having people around him. He was an outgoing, generous person."



Danjaq LLC, United Artists

ON THE BEACH: Albert "Cubby" Broccoli, left, on the set of 1962's "Dr. No" with John Kitzmiller (Quarrel), Sean Connery (James Bond) and Ursula Andress (Honey Ryder).



THEODORE WOOD

LEGACY: Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli now oversee the franchise.

Jewell says that Broccoli was "lucky" in terms of how he got the Bond franchise. "Producer Harry Saltzman was the one who eventually locked up the rights to all of Ian Fleming's stories except for 'Casino Royale,'" he says.

"Then Saltzman couldn't get the money to produce the first Bond film, so he linked up with Cubby, who had a relationship with United Artists."

They were an ill-paired producing team. "Cubby was the one behind the money, but then as time went on... Cubby was the one who really made everything click," Jewell says.

"Harry would spew out like five ideas, and two of them were absolutely wonderful and three of them were horrible,"

recalls Mankiewicz.

"He said in 'Live and Let Die,' Bond is asleep in bed and he thinks Solitaire is in bed next to him, but he opens his eyes and a crocodile is in bed with him. I said, 'Harry? Why doesn't the crocodile eat him?' He said, 'I don't know. You are the writer.' That was Harry."

Broccoli, says Mankiewicz, really enjoyed the money Bond gave him. "He owned race horses, and he loved to gamble," he says. "Harry wanted to be Howard Hughes, and he bought Technicolor... and everything Harry bought turned to dust."

Saltzman's involvement with Bond ended after 1974's "Man with the Golden Gun."

One person who was interested in taking over Saltzman's interest was David Frost of "Frost/Nixon" fame. "Cubby didn't want him," Jewell says. "Eventually he talked United Artists into buying Harry's half of the company, and then basically he was in complete control from that point on. Now it's a family franchise that has been handed down."

Jewell says he has a difficult time communicating to his students just how special the Bond films were when they first appeared in the 1960s — their popularity also spawned

TV's "The Man From U.N.C.L.E." and movie series featuring James Coburn as Derek Flint and Dean Martin as Matt Helm.

Though Fleming's books were written in a Cold War context, he notes, Broccoli and Saltzman got the idea to depoliticize the scripts "and to develop the films in a way so that they would be timeless by adding this whole notion of SPECTRE, this worldwide criminal power-seeking organization that wanted to control everything. From that point on it was fairly easy to make the stories, then speak to the changes in the cultural climate."

Wilson says that his stepfather always stated "Bond was bigger than the actor who played him."

Barbara Broccoli adds that "For him [her father] it was always about putting all the money on the screen, and I think audiences have responded to that over the years. They know if they pay their money and give up their two hours, they are going to be taken on an adventure."

For more information on the weekend series, go to www.cinema.usc.edu.

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