

BYE BYE BIRDIE

1962 FILM TRIVIA

Dick Van Dyke and Paul Lynde, both veterans of the 1960 Broadway hit, were displeased with the film version. Van Dyke especially felt it had become too much of a vehicle for Ann-Margret.

Dick Van Dyke's first feature film.

The title tune which opens and closes the film was written for the screen version, and was not from the Tony-winning Broadway musical.

Director George Sidney was so taken with the talent of Ann-Margret that when the film was edited he went to Columbia's executives and proposed the opening and closing bumpers that would showcase her. They refused to pay for any additional filming so Sidney rented the studio and crew at his own expense. He then asked the composers to come up with a title song. Ann-Margret's skirt-flipping/hair-tossing rendition of the song was filmed six months after principal photography was completed at a cost of \$60,000, which was repaid to Sidney after the movie, and Ann-Margret, became a sensation.

The sheet music of Birdie's next hit song, "Mumbo Jumbo Goody Gumbo," which Albert picks up from the piano in his first scene, is the same music as the title tune, "Bye Bye Birdie."

The song that made Dick Van Dyke's career, "Put on a Happy Face", was unsuccessful in early showings of the musical and almost cut from the production.

Albert's music company is called "ALMAELOU." This is an amalgam of his name, his mother's name, and his late father's name.

Hanna-Barbera cartoon merchandise is prominently displayed throughout the film: 1) - In "The Telephone Hour" musical number, the character "Alice" has a Yogi Bear record prominently displayed among her records. 2) - In Kim's bedroom, she has dolls of Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble on top of her radio, on a chair is a plush toy of Huckleberry Hound, and on yet another chair is a plush toy of Yogi Bear. 3) - Randolph is wearing Huckleberry Hound pajamas during the "Kids" musical number.

In the movie, Dick Van Dyke's character wants to be a chemist. In the stage play he wants to be a simple English teacher, and Rosie has a song to that effect. None of the Russian Ballet shows up in either the stage version or the 1995 movie remake.

The motorcycles used in the film are Nortons supplied by Bo Derek's father.

Despite portraying the mother of Dick Van Dyke's character in the film, Maureen Stapleton is just six months older than Van Dyke.

Kim Darby's film debut.

Melody Patterson's film debut.

The original Broadway production of "Bye Bye Birdie" opened at the Martin Beck Theater on April 14, 1960, ran for 607 performances and won the 1961 Tony Award for the Best Musical. Dick Van Dyke

recreated his 1961 Tony Award winning performance for Best Featured Actor in a Musical in this filmed production.

Conrad Birdie was a parody of Elvis Presley and the play was based upon the furor that arose from Presley being drafted in 1958. The character's name, however, was the result of composers Strouse and Adams finding the name of real-life singer Conway Twitty far more humorous and safer to parody than Elvis. Interestingly, Conway Twitty was in the US Army first, before engaging in a singing career. Ironically, producers originally wanted Presley for the role of Conrad Birdie. Presley was interested, but his manager Col. Tom Parker refused to let Presley play a role spoofing himself.

Rita Moreno was the initial choice for the role of Rosie, but turned down the part.

Columbia Pictures logo dissolves into animated footage of the lady with a torch character rocking out, one of several films of the Sixties (Zotz!, Cat Ballou, Strait-Jacket, and some years later, Thank God It's Friday) in which the logo was comically altered to fit theme of the movie.

Ed Sullivan, who played himself in this film, would later reprise the "One Last Kiss" segment "for real" on his weekly variety show. In 1967. Gary Lewis (American musician, son of comedian Jerry Lewis and member of the band "Gary Lewis & the Playboys") performed the song, on "The Ed Sullivan Show", shortly before Gary's actual induction into The US Army.

The three gymnasts we see at the beginning of the Ed Sullivan show are introduced as Frank, Dean, and Sammy McWilliams - a thinly veiled reference to Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr.

The throng of uncredited teenagers included future actresses and celebrities Melinda Marx (daughter of Groucho Marx), Kim Darby (starred in True Grit), Linda Henning (Betty Jo Bradley in 'Petticoat Junction (1963)'), 'Elaine Joyce' (actress, game show guest star and wife to Bobby Van and Neil Simon) and Melody Patterson (Wrangler Jane on F Troop).

When Harry McAfee (Paul Lynde) pulls into his driveway, it is actually the driveway of the house next door on the old Columbia lot where two years later he was playing Uncle Arthur on the Bewitched series.

The lineup for Ed Sullivan's May 8th show includes John Glenn, the Marine Band, Kim Novak, Richard Nixon, Jerry Lewis, the Moscow Ballet, and Conrad Birdie. The Ed Sullivan Show aired on Sunday nights, and May 8th would not fall on Sunday until 1966.

The "Telephone" segment was almost cut from the stage play because no one could figure out how to stage it. Finally choreographer Gower Champion suggested building a box-like shelf unit with oddly shaped sections where the actors could occupy while performing. As each actor sang their part the light in their section would be turned on then off as the next actor sang.