

WGA News

Writers Guild Announces 21 Credit Corrections For Films Written by Blacklisted Writers

LOS ANGELES - The Board of Directors of the Writers Guild of America has unanimously voted to correct the writing credits of 16 blacklisted writers. The corrections were approved during a July 27 Board meeting and will officially change the credits for 21 films released between 1950 and 1969.

The Guild's Blacklist Credits Committee recommended the changes after conducting an investigation using written material, correspondence and first-person statements. The committee includes: former guild Presidents George Kirgo and Del Reisman; the late Paul Jarrico, himself a blacklisted writer; members of the guild staff, researcher Jeff Blitz and the guild's Director of Credits Cathy Reed.

"It is with pride and sadness that we announce these credit changes," said Daniel Petrie, Jr., President, WGAw. "The Guild has undertaken this task to assure that all those writers who were denied credit for their work will receive their right of authorship.

"One of those writers receiving his rightful credits today, is the late Paul Jarrico. Paul was a member of the Blacklist Credits Committee and worked countless hours to assure that other writers would finally receive the recognition for their work. He refused to allow the committee to consider his own credit corrections until the committee had completed its work for other writers. Paul died tragically in a car accident last October, just hours after an historic evening when all the guilds joined together to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of the blacklist years. The Writers Guild announces the credits of Paul Jarrico with great respect for a man that stood up against the tyranny of those years in our country."

A. Pseudonyms and Fronts

The following films involve correcting writing credits where evidence indicates that a blacklisted writer received credit through the use of a "front" or a pseudonym. In keeping with the Committee's established guidelines, such changes are recommended when there is sufficient information to identify a writer with a pseudonym and confirm that the writer used the pseudonym because of the blacklist. Since there was no official end to the blacklist, some blacklisted writers continued to use a pseudonym in the 1960s and 70s.

On the films where someone acted as a front for another writer, the Committee relied on information from individuals with first hand knowledge and other documentation to support its recommendations.

1. "All Night Long," Rank, 1961 (Original credits were "Written by Nel King and Peter Achilles.")

Corrected credits to read: "Written by Nel King and Paul Jarrico."

2. "The Careless Years," United Artists, 1957 (Original credits: "Written by Edward Lewis.")

Corrected credits to read: "Written by John Howard Lawson & Mitch Lindemann."

3. "G.I. Jane," Lippert, 1951 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Jan Jeffries. Story by Murray Lerner.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Henry Blankfort. Story by Murray Lerner."

4. "The Highwayman," Allied Artists, 1951 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Jan Jeffries. Screen story by Jack DeWitt and Renault Duncan. Based on the poem by Alfred Noyes.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Henry Blankfort. Screen story by Jack DeWitt and Renault Duncan. Based on the poem by Alfred Noyes."

5. "Joe Palooka in the Squared Circle," Monogram, 1950 (Original Credits: "Screenplay by Jan Jeffrey. Screen story by B.F. Melzer. Based on a character by CB Ham Fisher.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Henry Blankfort. Screen story by B.F. Melzer. Based on a character by CB Ham Fisher."

6. The Indian Fighter, United Artists, 1955 (Original credits: Screenplay by Frank Davis and Ben Hecht. From an original story by Ben Kadish.)

Corrected credits to read: Screenplay by Frank Davis and Ben Hecht. From an original story by Robert L. Richards.

7. "The Intimate Stranger" (aka "Finger of Guilt" aka "With All My Heart"), Anglo-Amalgamated, 1956 (Original credits: "Written by Peter Howard.")

Corrected credits to read: "Written by Howard Koch."

8. "Kenner" (aka "Year of the Cricket"), UA, 1969 (Original credits: "Screenplay by John Loring and Harold Clemins. Story by Mary P. Murray.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Robert L. Richards and Harold Clemins. Story by Mary P. Murray."

9. "Revolt in the Big House," Allied Artists, 1952 (Original credits: "Written by Daniel Hyatt and Eugene Lourie.")

Corrected credits to read: "Written by Daniel James and Eugene Lourie."

10. "We Joined the Navy" (aka We Are in the Navy Now), Dial, 1962 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Arthur Dales. Based on the novel by John Winton.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Howard Dimsdale. Based on the novel by John Winton."

B. Omissions

The films listed below involve instances where writers did not receive any writing credit because of the blacklist.

11. "The Detective" (aka "Father Brown"), Columbia, 1954 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Thelma Schnee and Robert Hamer. Adapted by Thelma Schnee. Based on the Father Brown stories by G.K. Chesterton.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Thelma Schnee & Maurice Rapf and Robert Hamer. Adapted by Thelma Schnee. Based on the Father Brown stories by G.K. Chesterton."

12. Five Branded Women (aka Jovanka e le altre), Paramount/Italy, 1960 (Original credits read: Screenplay by Ivo Perilli. Based on a novel by Ugo Pirro.)

Corrected credits to read: Screenplay by Michael Wilson & Paul Jarrico and Ivo Perilli. Based on the novel by Ugo Pirro.

13. "The Giant Behemoth" (aka "Behemoth, the Sea Monster"), Diamond Pictures/Allied Artists, 1958 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Eugene Lourie. Story by Robert Abel & Allen Adler.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Eugene Lourie & Daniel James. Story by Robert Abel & Allen Adler."

14. "The Girl Most Likely," Universal, 1957 (Original credits: "Written by Devery Freeman.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Paul Jarrico and Devery Freeman. Story by Paul Jarrico."

15. "A Hatful of Rain," Talent Assoc. Ltd., 1957 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Michael Vincent Gazzo and Alfred Hayes. Based on a play by Gazzo.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Michael Vincent Gazzo and Alfred Hayes and Carl Foreman. Based on a play by Gazzo."

16. "The Las Vegas Story," RKO, 1951 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Harry Essex and Earl Felton. Story by Jay Dratler.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Paul Jarrico and Harry Essex and Earl Felton. Story by Jay Dratler."

17. "Malaga" (aka "Moment of Danger"), Warner Brothers, 1962 (Original credits: "Screenplay by David Osborn. Based on 'The Scent of Danger' a novel by Donald MacKenzie.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by David Osborn and Donald Ogden Stewart. Based on 'The Scent of Danger' a novel by Donald MacKenzie."

18. "A Matter of WHO," Herts-Lion Int'l Corp., 1962 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Milton Holmes. Adapted by Patricia Lee. Based on a nonfiction magazine story by Patricia Lee and Paul Dickinson.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Milton Holmes & Harold Buchman. Adapted by Patricia Lee. Based on a nonfiction magazine story by Patricia Lee and Paul Dickinson."

19. "The Miracle," Warner Brothers, 1959 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Frank Butler. Based on the play by Karl Vollmoeller as produced on the stage by Max Reinhardt.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Frank Butler & Jean Rouverol. Based on the play by Karl Vollmoeller as produced on the stage by Max Reinhardt."

20. "The Tunnel of Love," MGM, 1958 (Original credits: "Screenplay by Joseph Fields. From the stage play by Joseph Fields and Peter De Vries. Based on the novel by Peter De Vries. Presented on the stage by The Theatre Guild.")

Corrected credits to read: "Screenplay by Joseph Fields & Jerome Chodorov. From the stage play by Joseph Fields & Jerome Chodorov and Peter De Vries. Based on the novel by Peter De Vries. Presented on the stage by The Theatre Guild."

21. Under Ten Flags (aka Sotto diece bandiere), Paramount, 1960 (Original credits: "Based on original diaries by Bernhard Rogge. Screenplay by Vittorio Petrilli Duilio Coletti Ulrich Mohr. Additional Dialogue by William Douglas Home.")

Corrected credits to read: "Based on original diaries by Bernhard Rogge. Screenplay by Vittorio Petrilli Duilio Coletti Ulrich Mohr and Leonardo Bercovici. Additional Dialogue by William Douglas Home."

In the 1940s and 50s, individual writers, directors, actors, producers, agents and other filmmakers were called before the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC) to testify as to whether they were Communists and to "name" other suspected Communists. Men and women found themselves on the Hollywood Blacklist (an unofficial collection of hundreds of names) because they refused to discuss their political beliefs, refused to name others, were suspected as Communists or had been named by informers. Because of the unchecked zealotry of HUAC, the list also managed to include non-Communist liberals and even victims of mistaken identity. The Hollywood Blacklist destroyed the careers and lives of numerous Americans--not only artists but also those in government, in academia and unions. Although some of the many writers that were blacklisted were able to continue to work in some fashion utilizing "fronts" or pseudonyms, many writers were unable to find work within their profession. Even those who did find work on the black market still struggled to support themselves and their families. Many writers left the country to shield their families as much as possible from the effects of the blacklist.

The Writers Guild began correcting writing credits in 1986. To date the guild has officially corrected the writing credits on 76 films and will continue its work to correct credits of that era.