

WGA News

BLACKLISTED WRITERS RECEIVE CREDIT FOR SCREENPLAYS

WGA Announces Correction of Screen Credits for 23 Films

The Board of Directors of the Writers Guild of America, west has unanimously voted to officially correct the writing credits of 23 films written or co-written by writers who were "blacklisted" starting in 1947 and into the 1960s.

The following group of films involve correcting writing credits where there was evidence to indicate 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 1960's and '70's.

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.

The films are as follows:

Pseudonyms

Cairo - Screenplay by Joan Scott. Based on the Novel by W.R. Burnett. 1963, MGM. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Joanne Court. Based on the Novel by W.R. Burnett." Court was a pseudonym for Scott.

Captain Sinbad - Written by Ian McLellan Hunter and Guy Endore. 1963, MGM. Original credit reads "Written by Samuel B. West and Harry Relis." West was a pseudonym for Ian McLellan Hunter.

Chain Lightning - Screenplay by Liam O'Brian and Vincent Evans; Story by Lester Cole. 1950, Warner Bros. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Liam O'Brian and Vincent Evans; Story by J. Redmond Prior." Prior was a pseudonym for Cole.

Escapade - Screenplay by Donald Ogden Stewart; Based on Roger MacDougall's play. Produced in England in 1955. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Gilbert Holland; Based on Roger MacDougall's play." Various sources, including Stewart's memoirs, indicate that Holland was Stewart's father and Holland was not a screenwriter.

Go Man Go - Written by Alfred Palca. 1953, Sirod Productions and distributed by United Artists. Original credit reads "Written by Arnold Becker." Arnold Becker FRONTED for Palca and has confirmed the same in writing.

Gorgo - Screenplay and Screen Story by Robert L. Richards and Daniel James. 1960, The King Bros. and MGM. Original credit reads "Screenplay and Screen Story by John Loring and Daniel Hyatt." Robert L. Richards' pseudonym was John Loring. Hyatt was a pseudonym for James.

The Horror Express - Screenplay by Arnaud d'Usseau and Julian Zimet. 1972, Benmar/Granada. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Arnaud d'Usseau and Julian Halevy." Halevy is a pseudonym for Julian Zimet.

Joe Palooka in Triple Cross - Screenplay and Screen Story by Henry Blankfort; Based on a Character Created by Ham Fisher. 1951, Monogram Pictures. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Jan Jeffries; Screen Story by Harold Bancroft; Based on a Character Created by Ham Fisher." Jeffries was a pseudonym for Blankfort. Bancroft was also a pseudonym used by Blankfort.

The Law vs. Billy the Kid - Screenplay and Screen Story by Bernard Gordon. Based on a Play by Janet & Phillip Stevenson. 1954, Columbia. Original credit reads "Screenplay and Screen Story by John T. Williams." Williams sent a letter confirming he FRONTED for Gordon.

The Naked Dawn - Written by Julian Zimet. 1955, Universal. Original credit reads "Written by Nina & Herman Schneider." Herman Schneider is Zimet's brother-in-law. He and his wife agreed to let Zimet use their names for this film.

Operation Eichmann - Written by Lester Cole. 1961, Allied Artists. Original credit reads "Written by Lewis Copley." Copley was a pseudonym for Cole.

Passage West - Screenplay by Lewis R. Foster; Story by Alvah Bessie. 1951, Paramount. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Lewis R. Foster; Story by Nedrick Young." Young's widow has confirmed that Young FRONTED for Bessie before Young was also blacklisted.

Shark River - Screenplay by Louis Lantz and Lewis Meltzer; Story by John Rawlins. 1954, United Artists. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Joseph Carpenter and Lewis Meltzer; Story by John Rawlins." Carpenter was a pseudonym for Lantz.

The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw - Screenplay by Howard Dimsdale; Based on the Short Story by Jacob Hay. 1958, 20th Century Fox. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Arthur Dales; Based on the Short Story by Jacob Hay." Dales was a pseudonym for Dimsdale.

The Sleeping Tiger - Screenplay by Harold Buchman and Carl Foreman; Based on the Novel by Maurice Moiseiwitsch. 1955, Insignia Films/Astor Pictures. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Derek Frye; Based on the Novel by Maurice Moiseiwitsch." Frye was a pseudonym for Foreman. In this case, correspondence shows that it was a pseudonym used for the work of Foreman and Buchman.

Omissions

An Affair To Remember - Screenplay by Delmer Daves and Donald Ogden Stewart and Leo McCarey ; Story by Leo McCarey and Mildred Cram. This film is a remake of the 1939 film, "Love Affair" and was produced in 1957 by 20th Century Fox. The writing credits on the '39 film read "Screenplay by Delmer Daves and Donald Ogden Stewart; Story by Leo McCarey and

Mildred Cram." The '57 film credited all the writers from the original with the exception of Stewart: "Screenplay by Delmer Daves and Leo McCarey ; Story by Leo McCarey and Mildred Cram (McCarey's name was added to screenplay credit and Stewart's was deleted.) When the Guild questioned the omission of Stewart's name from the '57 remake the Company said it was relying on a provision in Stewart's '38 agreement wherein he waived his right to credit. Based on the timing of the omission and other relevant factors it seems clear that Stewart would have received credit but for the blacklist.

Boots Malone - Written by Milton Holmes & Harold Buchman. 1952, Columbia. Original credit reads "Written by Milton Holmes." Correspondence from Buchman in 1982 states that he wrote this film, and others, with Holmes but was forced to take his name off because of the blacklist. Several sources have confirmed that Holmes & Buchman wrote this film together as well as other films.

Cry, The Beloved Country - Screenplay by Alan Paton and John Howard Lawson; Based on the Novel by Alan Paton. This film was produced in 1952, United Artists. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Alan Paton; Based on his Novel." There is overwhelming evidence to support credit for Lawson, including original correspondence with the film's producer, Zoltan Korda.

Ivanhoe - Screenplay by Marguerite Roberts and Noel Langley; Adaptation by Aeneas Mac Kenzie; Based on the Novel by Sir Walter Scott. 1952, MGM. Original credit reads "Screenplay by Noel Langley; Adaptation by Aeneas Mac Kenzie; Based on the Novel by Sir Walter Scott." Documentation indicates that Roberts' overall deal with the Company was terminated two months after testifying before HUAC and refusing to cooperate.

The Naked Earth - Written by Milton Holmes & Harold Buchman 1958, 20th Century Fox. Original credit reads "Written by Milton Holmes." Correspondence from Buchman in 1982 states that he wrote this film, and others, with Holmes but was forced to take his name off because of the blacklist. Several sources have confirmed that Holmes & Buchman wrote this film together, including the director, Vincent Sherman.

Short Cut to Hell - Screenplay by Ted Berkman & Raphael Blau. Based on "This Gun For Hire," 1942 Screenplay by Albert Maltz and W.R. Burnett; Based on the Novel by Graham Greene. 1957, Paramount. It is a remake of the 1942 film "This Gun for Hire." Guild records reflect the correct credit as indicated above.

Other Corrections

In March 1997, the credits on the following films were corrected to replace Bernard Gordon's pseudonym (Raymond T. Marcus) with his actual name. Since then we have discovered additional information to merit further corrections. The Committee has taken due care to ensure that new recommendations are completely accurate to avoid additional changes to corrected credits in the future.

The Case Against Brooklyn - Screenplay by Bernard Gordon & Julian Zimet; Screen Story by Daniel B. Ullman; Based on "I Broke the Brooklyn Graft Scandal" by Ed Reid. Originally we corrected the credit to read "Screenplay by Bernard Gordon; Screen Story by Daniel B. Ullman; Based on "I Broke the Brooklyn Graft Scandal" by Ed Reid." However, Gordon & Zimet have both confirmed that they wrote the screenplay together.

Chicago Confidential - Screenplay by Bernard Gordon; From a Story by Hugh King; Suggested by the book by Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer. The original correction did not reflect the source credit to Hugh King. Bernard Gordon confirms the credit as suggested above, as do Guild records.

The Writers Guild will correct its records accordingly and publicize the correct writing credits to the Academy and publishers of "filmographies" and/or other appropriate entities. In addition, all Guild corrected credits for blacklisted writers will be publicized in conjunction with the Blacklist Event co-sponsored by the Guild scheduled for October 27, 1997.

The Guild appreciates the cooperation of the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers and their support to change credits as new prints or video cassettes are struck.