

Berry Kroeger

Born: October 16, 1912 San Antonio, Texas, USA

Died: January 4, 1991 in Los Angeles, Calif. (Kidney failure)

Spouse: Mary Agnes

Berry Kroeger (October 16, 1912 - January 4, 1991) was an American film, television, and stage actor.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, Kroeger got his acting start on radio as an announcer and actor, playing for a time **The Falcon** and The Shadow. He was discovered by filmmaker William Wellman while performing on Broadway and began appearing in films in 1948.

Kroeger specialized in playing slimy bad guys in films like *Act of Violence* (1948) and *Gun Crazy* (1949). He also appeared in a small role as a village elder in *Young Frankenstein* (1974). He appeared in dozens of television programs, guest starring on shows such as *Get Smart* (as a character spoofing actor Sydney Greenstreet) and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*

On Broadway, Kroeger portrayed the High Lama in the ill-fated 1956 musical adaptation of *Lost Horizon* entitled *Shangri-La*. On January 4, 1991, Kroeger died of kidney failure.

From Turner Classic Movies

- Acted on Broadway with Ingrid Bergman in "Joan of Lorraine" in the 1940s
- 1948: Played first major film role in "The Iron Curtain"
- Signed contract with 20th Century-Fox in the late 1940s
- 1977: Played last major film role in "The Demon Seed"

Veteran character actor, often in villainous roles, who started his career in radio on such programs as "First Nighter", "Lux Radio Theater" and "The Mercury Theater". Spotted by director William Wellman while acting on Broadway in "Joan of Lorraine", Kroeger soon thereafter played a supporting role in Wellman's film "The Iron Curtain" (1948). Over the next three decades he performed in several dozen films as well as on stage and TV. Kroeger's flair for decadent leering and evil scowls often led to his being cast in schlock fare like "Chamber of Horrors" (1966) and "The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant" (1971). He is probably best remembered for his role as the sleazy Packett in Joseph H. Lewis' cult crime classic, "Gun Crazy" (1949).

From All Movie Guide:

Berry Kroeger (pronounced "Kroger", not "Kreeger") got his start in network radio, where his velvety voice was heard announcing several major dramatic anthologies; he also played a variety of leading radio roles, including the heroic soldier-of-fortune The Falcon. While appearing on Broadway in Saint Joan, Kroeger was discovered by filmmaker William Wellman, who cast the actor in The Iron Curtain. This 1948 Cold-War film represented the first of many unsympathetic movie assignments for Kroeger, ranging from the smarmy Packett in director Joseph L. Lewis' Gun Crazy (1949) to the mad-scientist mentor of Bruce Dern in The Incredible Two Headed Transplant (1971). Kroeger's marked resemblance to Sydney Greenstreet served him well when he essayed a Greenstreet take-off in "Maxwell Smart, Private Eye," an Emmy-winning episode of TV's Get Smart. Most of Barry Kroeger's film characters can be summed up in a single word: slime. ~ Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide

From TopTenReviews:

Career work in movies

- 1940's

- 1950's 5
- 1960's 9
- 1970's 7