

= Inchon (film) =

Inchon (also called Inchon !) is a 1981 South Korean ? American epic war film about the Battle of Inchon , considered to be the turning point of the Korean War . The film was directed by Terence Young and financed by Unification Church founder Sun Myung Moon . It stars Laurence Olivier as General Douglas MacArthur , who led the United States surprise amphibious landing at Incheon , South Korea in 1950 . Also featured are Jacqueline Bisset , Ben Gazzara , Toshiro Mifune , and Richard Roundtree . It was filmed in California , Italy , Ireland , Japan and South Korea .

Inchon 's plot includes both military action and human drama . Characters face danger and are involved in various personal and dramatic situations . The film concludes with the American victory over North Korean forces in the Battle of Inchon , which is considered to have saved South Korea . The film cost \$ 46 million to produce and encountered many problems during production , including a typhoon and the death of a cast member . Both the Unification Church and the United States military provided personnel as extras during the filming .

The film was released theatrically in the United States and Canada in September 1982 and then quickly withdrawn because of its poor performance at the box office . It has never been released on home video , although it has sometimes been broadcast on television . It was the largest financial loss in film of 1982 , earning less than \$ 2 million . Reviewers at the time gave it consistently bad reviews and later commentators including Newsweek , TV Guide and Canadian Press have classed Inchon among the worst films of all time .

= = Plot = =

The film depicts the Battle of Inchon during the Korean War , which took place September 15 ? 19 , 1950 and is considered the turning point of the war . The protagonist of the film is General Douglas MacArthur (Laurence Olivier) , who led the United States surprise amphibious landing at Incheon in 1950 . A subplot in the film involves an American couple who encounter difficulties in their relationship because of the ongoing war .

Inchon begins with North Korean soldiers moving past the 38th parallel north into South Korea in June 1950 . People flee into the country 's capital , Seoul . One of the displaced people is Barbara Hallsworth (Jacqueline Bisset) , a U.S. Army major 's wife who lives in a village on the 38th Parallel . She is chauffeured to Seoul in a limousine , picking up five South Korean children along the way . After her chauffeur is killed , she drives them to a safe location called the Inn of the Sixth Happiness . Along the way , she shoots a North Korean soldier .

Meanwhile , her husband , Frank Hallsworth (Ben Gazzara) , is attempting to break off an affair with a young South Korean woman (Karen Kahn) . Her father (Toshiro Mifune) is aware of his daughter 's affair with Hallsworth and does not disapprove . Hallsworth receives word of the invasion by the North Koreans , and he travels north in an attempt to locate his wife with the assistance of army sergeant August Henderson (Richard Roundtree) . Henderson encounters Hallsworth 's wife and fixes her vehicle 's battery , and then reunites her with her husband .

Journalists David Feld Park (David Janssen) and Longfellow (Rex Reed) are attending a press conference held by MacArthur in Tokyo . MacArthur , however , does not show . He agrees with his wife (Dorothy James) that he is the only person who can rescue South Korea from the invasion by the North Koreans .

Hallsworth and his former lover succeed in turning on a lighthouse to signal 261 U.S. ships , and the South Korean woman 's father activates mines in the channel . She dies during the ensuing battle . The U.S. troops drive out the North Korean forces and the cheering people wave South Korean and American flags . The film proper ends with MacArthur reciting the Lord 's Prayer ; after this scene , a newsreel of MacArthur is shown .

= = Production = =

= = = Financing = = =

Inchon was financed by Sun Myung Moon and Japanese newspaper publisher Mitsu Haru Ishii . Moon was involved with the film 's production from the very beginning . Ishii , a member of the Unification Church in Japan and a friend of Moon , served as the film 's producer ; and Moon , although credited as " Special Advisor on Korean Matters " , contributed \$ 30 million to Ishii 's film production company One Way Productions . Moon initially did not want the public to know that he was behind the financing of the film and its production . Ishii said he was instructed by God to make the film . Additional funding was provided by Robert Standard , the associate producer and a member of the Unification Church of the United States .

Ishii said he was a member of the Unification Church " just like a Catholic is a member of the Catholic Church and I believe Rev. Moon is very sincere about doing the Lord 's work " . Ishii was president of the World Daily News , which is published by Moon 's media conglomerate News World Communications which also published other newspapers , including The Washington Times in the United States .

Before deciding on making a war film , Moon and Ishii considered making biopics of Jesus or Elvis Presley . In 1978 , psychic Jeanne Dixon was consulted to communicate with the spirit of General MacArthur , and Dixon said that MacArthur 's spirit endorsed the production of the film . Dixon also helped choose Terence Young , known for the James Bond films Dr. No , Thunderball , and From Russia with Love , to direct the film .

Inchon cost \$ 46 million to produce . Attempts to solicit funding from Japanese banks fell through , and so the entire project was funded by Moon and the Unification Church .

In his book Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America , author and scholar of religion J. Gordon Melton cites Inchon as an example when noting , " Moon has attempted to project his ideas into all areas of American society . " Moon later said in a talk to church members : " Why did we put so much effort into the movie Inchon ? No matter what the result the motivation was for people to understand about MacArthur . I wanted to show how MacArthur loved God and loved people . MacArthur came to Japan after World War II and put the nation back together . He really respected and loved the people . He also loved God very much and fought with great strength against tyranny and communism . That is what I want the people to understand . "

= = = Writing = = =

Ishii was inspired to write a film with an international cast after watching a South Korean dramatization of the war . He wanted the film to be an " entertaining action film " , but also said he was " very interested in depicting MacArthur as a human being and I want the world to know how miserable the war was for the Korean people . "

Moore commented on the writing process : " The theme I had to deal with in Inchon was too big for a movie that was less than two hours . When Toho was originally involved , they wanted a love story between an American boy and a Korean girl . My technique is to research and then fictionalize , a technique I used successfully in French Connection . But I had to fictionalize the real landing at Inchon , making it seem that a lighthouse was a pivotal factor when in fact it wasn 't . I couldn 't do that , which is why other writers were brought in . "

Ishii instructed Moore to include an emphasis on General MacArthur 's spiritualism and faith in divine guidance . He told Moore to include three separate love stories in the film , " one between two Americans , one between two Koreans , and one between an American and a Korean " . Moore explained that " the love stories were supposed to tell the story of the tragedy of Korea , the tragedy of the Korean War " . Ishii stated to Moore that he did not wish for the movie to turn into an " anti @-@ Communist tract " . Prior to the completion of the film 's screenplay , the film 's producers encountered difficulties obtaining an affiliation with a movie studio . Ishii said that North Korea placed pressure on Toho Studios through labor unions in Japan , requesting that the studio pull out of its affiliation with Inchon . The labor unions criticized the film 's production , saying that it was influenced by Moon and his Unification Church , in addition to the Korean CIA and was part of an

effort to support the president of South Korea . Because of this criticism , Toho Studios canceled its participation in the Incheon project .

== = Casting = = =

Laurence Olivier was paid \$ 1 million to play General Douglas MacArthur in the film . He was contracted for six weeks of filming , and received a payment of \$ 250 @, @ 000 upon signing the contract and the remainder was given in four subsequent installments . His salary came out to \$ 50 @, @ 000 per day . In addition to this fee , Olivier also received \$ 2 @, @ 500 per week for his expenses . Olivier was interviewed during the film 's production and explained why he agreed to be part of its cast : " People ask me why I 'm playing in this picture . The answer is simple . Money , dear boy . I 'm like a vintage wine . You have to drink me quickly before I turn sour . I 'm almost used up now and I can feel the end coming . That 's why I 'm taking money now . I 've got nothing to leave my family but the money I can make from films . Nothing is beneath me if it pays well . I 've earned the right to damn well grab whatever I can in the time I 've got left . "

Olivier researched the role by traveling to Norfolk , Virginia to visit the MacArthur Museum , and speaking with Alexander Haig , who had served as aide @-@ de @-@ camp to MacArthur . Haig told Olivier that MacArthur 's voice sounded like W. C. Fields , and Olivier tried to imitate this . He enjoyed working with accents , and obtained recordings of MacArthur 's voice . He was interested in various inconsistencies in these recordings , and especially in the difference in vowel sounds made by MacArthur . During filming , the makeup process for Olivier took two and a half hours , but after it was complete , he thought he neither looked like himself nor like General MacArthur .

The 72 @-@ year @-@ old Olivier , who had been in poor health for years , suffered during filming in Seoul because of the summer heat . Director Terence Young recalled that between takes Olivier lay on a cot , virtually immobile with pain and exhaustion , but that when needed " he dropped fifty years and stepped forward without complaint " .

Richard Roundtree , known for the title role in the film Shaft , portrayed the character of Staff Sgt. Henderson in the film . David Janssen , known for his role in the TV series The Fugitive , accepted a part as a journalist to work with Laurence Olivier . Actress Karen Kahn portrayed the young Korean lover of Major Frank Hallsworth in the film . In a subsequent interview with The Press Democrat , Kahn said of the film : " It was supposed to be this Gone with the Wind . And it was the worst movie . It 's in some of those worst @-@ films @-@ of @-@ all @-@ time books . After that movie I quit . I just couldn 't take L.A. I was really thin @-@ skinned . So I just got out . "

== = Music = = =

Jerry Goldsmith wrote the score for the film . The music was recorded at Rome 's Forum Studio in July 1980 , and was fraught with difficulties ? the studio was not large enough for his orchestra , and room noise made by the players and their equipment affected the tracks .

In spite of the problems , Goldsmith was pleased with his score , describing it as a chance to " create interesting music out of a bad situation " . The original 1982 soundtrack LP comprised 38 minutes of music , edited and assembled by Goldsmith and engineer Leonard Engel into an ideal listening experience rather than a chronological one . The album was issued on Regency Records ; Intrada Records prepared a remixed edition of the complete score in 1988 . In 2006 Intrada revisited the score and issued a two @-@ disc set , with the original LP making its compact disc debut on disc 1 and the entire score presented in film order on disc 2 .

== = Filming = = =

Shooting took place in Hollywood , Rome , Ireland , Tokyo and Seoul . The involvement of Moon was " adamantly denied " . Moon recommended editing and reshooting changes to the film 's script , which " caused the production to return to South Korea three times , Rome twice and Los Angeles twice . "

The film included several technical errors . Cut @-@ out cardboard pieces were used to depict military aircraft during battle scenes in the film , and one film critic said viewers were almost able to identify the threads attached to the cardboard cut @-@ outs . Footage of a digital watch was spliced into the film , though this technology would not be invented for twenty @-@ five years after the film 's time period . There were other problems . Jacqueline Bisset developed laryngitis during the film 's production . A set @-@ piece for the film included a re @-@ created version of a lighthouse at Incheon , but this was obliterated by a typhoon . The death of David Janssen during production called for extensive reshoots .

The production hired Samuel Jaskilka , a retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General who took part in the Battle of Inchon as a company commander , as technical advisor to the film . A portion of the movie was filmed aboard the USS Cleveland , an Austin @-@ class amphibious transport dock during an amphibious operation off the coast of South Korea in 1978 . The United States Department of Defense allowed 1 @,@ 500 soldiers from the United States Army and United States Marine Corps to participate as extras in the film , at a cost of \$ 77 @,@ 000 .

The Little Angels Children 's Folk Ballet of Korea , founded by Moon in 1962 , were featured in the film , along with many Unification Church members . After shooting had finished in South Korea , Olivier returned to England . He was needed in South Korea to shoot the final scene , but as a concession to his poor health , was allowed to film in Rome instead . The film 's director Terence Young was not happy with the completed version of the film , and said " the producers have turned Inchon into a Korean propaganda movie . " Ishii said : " No problem . We have 20 nations who want this movie . "

= = Release = =

The world premiere of the film was held in Washington , D.C. on May 4 , 1981 at a special screening at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts , as a benefit for retired United States Navy personnel chaired by Senator Alfonse D 'Amato . This was the only time the film was screened in its 140 @-@ minute full version . Between 25 and 100 protesters came to demonstrate outside the Center .

Twelve Congressmen signed on as honorary members of the benefit committee . Although an additional forty @-@ eight Members of Congress accepted tickets to the premiere , Lawrence H. Suid wrote in *Guts & Glory* that " ... no more than fifteen or sixteen were willing to brave the pickets outside the Kennedy Center protesting the Unification Church and its involvement with the movie . "

On February 13 , 1982 , President Ronald Reagan , himself a former film actor and president of the Screen Actors Guild , screened the film in the White House . He noted in his diary : " Ran Inchon ? it is a brutal but gripping picture about the Korean War and for once we 're the good guys and the Communists are the villains . The producer was Japanese or Korean which probably explains the preceding sentence " .

Inchon was shown at the 35th Cannes film festival in May 1982 but failed to interest any buyers despite a \$ 250 @,@ 000 publicity campaign , which included hiring the publicity firm Rogers and Cowan to arrange a large party and give out promotional Inchon jackets .

In August 1982 , MGM / UA contracted the distribution rights to the film . One Way Productions came to an agreement with MGM that it would take care of the costs associated with advertising and distributing the film , if MGM agreed to distribute Inchon for a profit share of only 15 percent . The normal fee for the film distributor was thirty percent of profits . The film , cut to 105 minutes , was released in the United States on the weekend of September 17 , 1982 . It was swiftly pulled from theater distribution because of its poor performance at the box office , and was never shown in the United Kingdom .

After its release , Inchon was never again shown in theaters , and was never released on videocassette or DVD . It did however air on U.S. cable television outlet Goodlife Television Network (now called Youtoo America) , at the time owned by the Unification Church . Bootleg copies of the film circulated from individuals that had copied Inchon from these television broadcasts .

=== Promotion ===

The Unification Church wanted to distribute the film on their own , but Young told them this would result in a " total disaster " . The Church did however front the full \$ 11 million promotion budget . The press releases made many mystical claims , such as of a B @-@ 29 bomber pilot seeing the face of Jesus Christ during the war , or of MacArthur 's spirit causing his face to appear on a photograph of his office door . The press kit also claimed that MacArthur supported the film .

=== Reception ===

=== Box office ===

The film 's total North American gross was \$ 1 @.@ 9 million . It eventually took in \$ 5 @.@ 2 million at the box office . Incheon lost over \$ 44 million , and was the year 's largest financial failure in film . In 1989 , a survey released by the entertainment research firm Baseline identified Incheon as " the biggest box @-@ office fiasco of the 1980s " .

Incheon has been included on multiple lists of box office bombs . Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune placed Incheon as number six in a " list of Hollywood 's 10 worst mega @-@ flops " . Wilmington noted that Incheon displaced the 1980 film Heaven 's Gate as " the bomb of the decade " . The Washington Post described Incheon as " one of the biggest commercial disasters in film history " . In 1995 , the San Francisco Chronicle reported that The Guinness Book of World Records called Incheon " the biggest money @-@ loser in film history " . Incheon was one of the " 10 costliest movies " , adjusted for inflation , at \$ 173 million in 1997 dollars . In a 2006 list of " The top 10 biggest box office failures " , Kat Giantis of MSN Movies placed Incheon as tied with Battlefield Earth for number seven .

=== Reviews ===

Most newspaper reviewers gave Incheon negative reviews ; among them were The Boston Globe , The Philadelphia Inquirer , The Miami Herald , and The Washington Post . In The New York Times , critic Vincent Canby commented , " Incheon is a hysterical historical epic , somewhat less offensive than The Green Berets and far funnier ' Incheon ' looks like the most expensive B @-@ movie ever made . " A review in the influential entertainment @-@ trade magazine Variety commented , " Olivier is convincing in his role throughout most of the saga , the only member of the cast to achieve that status . Screenplay generally treats all others as one @-@ dimensional buffoons , giving them lines that are unintentionally laughable . One reason is that all plot digressions are simply window dressing to the film 's focus on the brutally invading North Koreans and the big @-@ scale counterattack by the good guys . No speaking roles are given to the Communists , for example . "

Moon founded The Washington Times in Washington D.C. as a part of his international media conglomerate News World Communications in the same year Incheon was released . According to The Times ' rival The Washington Post , a full @-@ length two and a half page version of a film review of Incheon written by critic Scott Sublett that was originally planned for the September 16 , 1982 issue of The Times was killed by the newspaper 's publisher and editor James R. Whelan . Whelan told Sublett that The Times had a conflict of interest with regard to reviewing Incheon , and would not print his review . Instead , The Times printed a one @-@ paragraph critical synopsis of the film , also written by Sublett , which said in full : " Puerile dialogue , perfunctory acting and haphazard construction doom from the start this visually impressive would @-@ be epic about love and dead Reds in wartime Korea . Olivier (in a performance that is the nadir of his career) joshes , minces and rolls his eyes absurdly as Doug MacArthur . The script , by Robin Moore , is pure twaddle ? a cross between South Pacific and The Green Berets . " Moore is the author of the novel The Green Berets , upon which the 1968 movie was based . On Monday the 21st The Times ran The New York Times review of the film . Reviewers Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert selected the film

as one of the worst of the year in a 1982 episode of their program Sneak Previews .

= = = Later commentary = = =

Multiple commentators have described Inchon as the worst film ever made , including The Washington Post , Newsweek , TV Guide , and the Canadian Press . Inchon was later profiled in multiple books on worst in film , including The Hollywood Hall of Shame by Harry and Michael Medved , and The Worst Movies of All Time by Michael Sauter . In 2000 , Kenneth Lloyd Billingsley , writing in the libertarian magazine Reason , said about a proposed film on Stalinism : " A film like this could easily have turned out as big a didactic dud as the Rev. Sun Myung Moon 's 1982 bomb , Inchon , with Laurence Olivier as Gen. Douglas MacArthur . " A 2009 review by Phil Hall for Film Threat was less negative , and he disagreed with the characterization of the film as the worst ever made , " I was genuinely surprised ? this is hardly among the very worst films of all time . That 's not to say it is a good film . It is a dull and forgettable movie , and I would never recommend it . However , its reputation for being among the bottom of the cinematic barrel is wholly undeserved . "

A review in Brassey 's Guide to War Films by Alun Evans was critical , calling the film " Arguably the worst war picture made in the last quarter of the 20th century " . Robert Niemi commented in his book History in the Media : Film and Television , " Plagued with a terrible script , horrendous production problems , and shoddy performances all around , the resulting film , Inchon ... was bad beyond belief . " Niemi wrote that Olivier 's performance " was a low point in an otherwise distinguished film career " . In his biography of the actor , Olivier , author Terry Coleman called the film " probably the worst he ever made and one of the best paid " . Author Lawrence H. Suid wrote in Guts and Glory : The Making of the American Military Image in Film that , " what combat the film portrayed lacked any believability or authenticity ... As a result , the movie met with almost unanimous critical disdain . " Moon 's 2009 autobiography , As a Peace @-@ Loving Global Citizen , does not mention Inchon , nor did he or the Unification Church ever produce another major commercial motion picture .

= = = Awards = = =