

= Summer of '42 =

Summer of '42 is a 1971 American coming @-@ of @-@ age comedy @-@ drama film based on the memoirs of screenwriter Herman Raucher . It tells the story of how Raucher , in his early teens on his 1942 summer vacation on Nantucket Island (off the coast of Cape Cod) , embarks on a one @-@ sided romance with a young woman , Dorothy , whose husband had gone off to fight in World War II .

The film was directed by Robert Mulligan , and starred Gary Grimes as Hermie , Jerry Houser as his best friend Oscy , Oliver Conant as their nerdy young friend Benjie , Jennifer O 'Neill as Hermie 's mysterious love interest , and Katherine Allentuck and Christopher Norris as a pair of girls whom Hermie and Oscy attempt to seduce . Mulligan also has an uncredited role as the voice of the adult Hermie . Maureen Stapleton (Allentuck 's real @-@ life mother) also appears in a small , uncredited voice role (calling after Hermie as he leaves the house in an early scene , and after he enters his room in a later scene) .

Raucher 's novelization of his screenplay of the same name was released prior to the film 's release and became a runaway bestseller , to the point that audiences lost sight of the fact that the book was based on the film and not vice versa . Though a pop culture phenomenon in the first half of the 1970s , the novelization went out of print and slipped into obscurity throughout the next two decades until a Broadway adaptation in 2001 brought it back into the public light and prompted Barnes & Noble to acquire the publishing rights to the book .

= = Synopsis = =

The film opens with a series of still photographs appearing over melancholic music , representing the abstract memories of the unseen Herman Raucher , now a middle @-@ aged man . We then hear Raucher recalling the summer he spent on the island in 1942 . The film flashes back to a day that then 15 @-@ year @-@ old " Hermie " and his friends ? jock Oscy and introverted nerd Benjie ? spent playing on the beach . They spot a young soldier carrying his new bride into a house on the beach and are struck by her beauty , especially Hermie , who is unable to get her out of his mind .

They continue spending afternoons on the beach where , in the midst of scantily @-@ clad teenage girls , their thoughts invariably turn to sex . All of them are virgins : Oscy is obsessed with the act of sex , while Hermie finds himself developing romantic interest in the bride , whose husband he spots leaving the island on a water taxi one morning . Later that day , Hermie finds her trying to carry bags of groceries by herself , and helps get them back to her house . They strike up a friendship and he agrees to return to help her with chores .

Meanwhile , Oscy and Hermie , thanks to a sex manual discovered by Benjie , become convinced they know everything necessary to lose their virginity . Led by Oscy , they test this by going to the cinema and picking @-@ up a trio of high @-@ school girls . Oscy stakes out the most attractive one , Miriam , " giving " Hermie her less attractive friend , Aggie , and leaving Benjie with Gloria , a heavysset girl with braces . Frightened by the immediacy of sex , Benjie runs off , and is not seen by Hermie or Oscy again that night . Hermie and Oscy spend the entirety of the evening 's film attempting to " put the moves " on Miriam and Aggie . Oscy pursues Miriam , eventually making out with her during the movie , and later learns her ways are well @-@ known on the island . Hermie finds himself succeeding with Aggie , who allows him to grope what he thinks is her breast ; Oscy later points out Hermie was fondling her arm .

The next morning , Hermie helps the bride move boxes into her attic and she thanks him by giving him a kiss on the forehead . Later , in preparation for a marshmallow roast on the beach with Aggie and Miriam , Hermie goes to the local drugstore . In a painfully humorous sequence , he builds up the nerve to ask the druggist (Lou Frizzell) for condoms .

That night , Hermie roasts marshmallows with Aggie while Oscy succeeds in having sex with Miriam between the dunes . He is so successful he sneaks over to Hermie and Aggie to ask for more condoms . Confused as to what 's happening , Aggie follows Oscy back , where she sees him having sex with Miriam and runs home , upset .

The next day , Hermie comes across the bride sitting outside her house , writing to her husband . Hermie offers to keep her company that night and she says she looks forward to seeing him , revealing her name is Dorothy . An elated Hermie goes home and puts on a suit , dress shirt and heads back to Dorothy 's house , running into Oscy on the way ; Oscy relates that Miriam 's appendix burst and she 's been rushed to the mainland . Hermie , convinced he is at the brink of adulthood because of his relationship with Dorothy , brushes Oscy off .

He heads to her house , which is eerily quiet . Going in , he discovers a bottle of whiskey , several cigarette butts , and a telegram from the government . Dorothy 's husband is dead , his plane shot down over France . Dorothy comes out of her bedroom , crying , and Hermie tells her " I 'm sorry . " The sense of empathy triggers her to channel to Hermie some of her loneliness . She turns on the record player and invites Hermie to dance with her . They kiss and embrace , tears on both their faces . Without speaking , and to the sound only of the waves , they move to the bedroom , where she draws him into bed and gently makes love with him . Afterward , withdrawing again into her world of hurt , Dorothy retires to the porch , leaving Hermie alone in her bedroom . He approaches her on the porch , where she can only quietly say " Good night , Hermie . " He leaves , his last image of Dorothy being of her leaning against the railing , as she smokes a cigarette and stares into the night sky .

At dawn Hermie meets Oscy and the two share a moment of reconciliation , with Oscy informing Hermie that Miriam will recover . Oscy , in an uncharacteristic act of sensitivity , lets Hermie be by himself , departing with the words , " Sometimes life is one big pain in the ass . "

Trying to sort out what has happened , Hermie goes back to Dorothy 's house . Dorothy has fled the island in the night and an envelope is tacked to the front door with Hermie 's name on it . Inside is a note from Dorothy , saying she hopes he understands she must go back home as there is much to do . She assures Hermie she will never forget him , and he will find his way of remembering what happened that night . Her note closes with the hope that Hermie may be spared the senseless tragedies of life .

In the final scene , Hermie , suddenly approaching manhood , is seen looking at Dorothy 's old house and the ocean from a distance before he turns to join his friends . To bittersweet music , the adult Raucher sadly recounts that he has never seen Dorothy again or learned what became of her .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

Herman Raucher wrote the film script in the 1950s during his tenure as a television writer , but " couldn 't give it away . " In the 1960s , he met Robert Mulligan , best known for directing *To Kill a Mockingbird* . Raucher showed Mulligan the script , and Mulligan took it to Warner Bros. , where Mulligan argued the film could be shot for the relatively low price of \$ 1 million , and Warner approved it . They had so little faith in the film becoming a box @-@ office success , though , they shied from paying Raucher outright for the script , instead promising him ten percent of the gross .

When casting for the role of Dorothy , Warner Bros. declined to audition any actresses younger than the age of 30 ; Jennifer O 'Neill 's agent , who had developed a fondness for the script , convinced the studio to audition his client , who was only 22 at the time . O 'Neill auditioned for the role , albeit hesitantly , not wanting to perform any nude scenes . O 'Neill got the role and Mulligan agreed to find a way to make the film work without blatant nudity .

Though the film took place on Nantucket , by the 1970s the island was too far modernized to be convincingly transformed to resemble a 1940s resort , so production was taken to Mendocino , California , on the West Coast of the US . Shooting took place over eight weeks , during which O 'Neill was sequestered from the three boys cast as " The Terrible Trio , " in order to ensure that they did not become close and ruin the sense of awkwardness and distance that their characters felt towards Dorothy . Production ran smoothly , finishing on schedule .

After production , Warner Bros. , still wary about the film only being a minor success , asked Raucher to adapt his script into a book . Raucher wrote it in three weeks , and Warner Bros. released it prior to the film to build interest in the story . The book quickly became a national bestseller , so that when trailers premiered in theaters , the film was billed as being " based on the national bestseller , " despite the film having been completed first . Ultimately , the book became one of the best selling novels of the first half of the 1970s , requiring 23 reprints between 1971 and 1974 to keep up with customer demand .

= = Factual basis = =

The film (and subsequent novel) were memoirs written by Herman Raucher ; they detailed the events in his life over the course of the summer he spent on Nantucket Island in 1942 when he was fourteen years old . Originally , the film was meant to be a tribute to his friend Oscar " Oscy " Seltzer , an Army medic killed in the Korean War . Seltzer was shot dead on a battlefield in Korea whilst attending to a wounded man ; this happened on Raucher 's birthday , and consequently , Raucher has not celebrated a birthday since . During the course of writing the screenplay , Raucher came to the realization that despite growing up with Oscy and having bonded with him through their formative years , the two had never really had any meaningful conversations or gotten to know one another on a more personal level .

Instead , Raucher decided to focus on the first major adult experience of his life , that of falling in love for the first time . The woman (named Dorothy , like her screen counterpart) was a fellow vacationer on the island whom Raucher had befriended one day when he helped her carry groceries home ; he became a friend of her and her husband and helped her with chores after her husband was called to fight in World War II . Raucher went to bed with her one night when he came to visit her , arriving only minutes after she received notification of her husband 's death . The next morning , Raucher discovered that she had left the island , leaving behind a note for him (which is read at the end of the film and reproduced in the book) . He never saw her again ; his last " encounter " with her , recounted on an episode of The Mike Douglas Show , came after the film 's release in 1971 , when she was one of over a dozen women who wrote letters to Raucher claiming to be " his " Dorothy . Raucher recognized the " real " Dorothy 's handwriting , and she confirmed her identity by making references to certain events only she could have known about . She told Raucher that she had lived for years with the guilt that she had potentially traumatized him and ruined his life . She told Raucher that she was glad he turned out all right , and that they had best not re @-@ visit the past .

In a 2002 Scripps Treasure Coast Publishing interview , Raucher lamented never hearing from her again and expressed his hope that she was still alive . Raucher 's novelization of the screenplay , with the dedication , " To those I love , past and present , " serves more as the tribute to Seltzer that he had intended the film to be , with the focus of the book being more on the two boys ' relationship than Raucher 's relationship with Dorothy . Consequently , the book also mentions Seltzer 's death , which is absent from the film adaptation .

= = Reception and awards = =

The film became a blockbuster upon its release , grossing over \$ 32 million , making it the sixth highest @-@ grossing film of 1971 and one of the most successful films in history , with an expense @-@ to @-@ profit ratio of 1 : 32 ; beyond that , it is estimated video rentals and purchases in the United States since the 1980s have produced an additional \$ 20 @.@ 5 million . On this point , Raucher said in May 2002 that his ten percent of the gross , in addition to royalties from book sales , " has paid bills ever since . "

As well as being a commercial success , Summer of ' 42 also received rave critical reviews . It went on to be nominated for over a dozen awards , including Golden Globe Awards for " Best Motion Picture ? Drama " and " Best Director " , and five Academy Award nominations for Best Original Music Score , Best Cinematography , Best Editing , Best Writing @-@ Story and Best Screenplay .

Ultimately , the film won two awards : the 1972 44th Academy Awards Oscar for Original Dramatic Score , and the 1971 BAFTA Anthony Asquith Award for Film Music , both to Michel Legrand . It counted among its fans Stanley Kubrick , who had the film play on a television in a scene in The Shining .

= = Sequel = =

In 1973 , the film was followed by Class of ' 44 , a slice @-@ of @-@ life film made up of vignettes about Herman Raucher and Oscar Seltzer 's experiences in college . Class of ' 44 involves the boys facing army service in the last year of World War II . The only crew member from Summer of ' 42 to return to the project was Raucher himself , who wrote the script ; a new director and composer were brought in to replace Mulligan and Legrand . Of the principal four cast members of Summer of ' 42 , only Jerry Houser and Gary Grimes returned for prominent roles , with Oliver Conant making two brief appearances totaling less than two minutes of screen time . Jennifer O 'Neill did not appear in the film at all , nor was the character of Dorothy mentioned .

The film is noted for featuring a young , slim John Candy briefly appearing in his first film role . The film met with poor critical reviews ; the only three reviews available at Rotten Tomatoes are resoundingly negative , with Channel 4 calling it " a big disappointment , " and The New York Times stating " The only things worth attention in ' Class of ' 44 are the period details , " and " ' Class of ' 44 ' seems less like a movie than 95 minutes of animated wallpaper . "

= = Soundtrack = =

The film 's soundtrack consists almost entirely of compositions by Michel Legrand , many of which are variants upon " The Summer Knows " , the film 's theme . Lyrics are by Marilyn and Alan Bergman . Because the complete score runs just under 17 minutes , only the first and eighth tracks on the album are from Summer of ' 42 ; the rest of the music is taken from Legrand 's score for 1969 's The Picasso Summer .

In addition to Legrand 's scoring , the film also features the song " Hold Tight " by The Andrews Sisters and the theme from Now , Voyager . On the Billboard 200 , it debuted on 9 / 11 / 1971 and peaked at # 52 on 11 / 20 / 1971 .

In 2014 Intrada Records released Summer of ' 42 and The Picasso Summer on a limited @-@ edition two @-@ disc set , with the entire score for the former and the original album presentation of the latter (dubbed " The Picasso Suite ") on disc 1 , and the complete score for The Picasso Summer on disc 2 .

Warner Bros. Publications released a sheet music folio , Summer of ' 42 & Other Hits of the Forties , which contains the movie theme and 34 other unrelated songs .

= = Cultural impact = =

= = = Music = = =

Legrand 's theme song for the film , " The Summer Knows " , has since become a pop standard , being recorded by such artists as Peter Nero (who had a charting hit with his 1971 version) , Biddu , Tony Bennett , Frank Sinatra , Sarah Vaughan , Andy Williams , Jonny Fair , Scott Walker , Jackie Evancho , Oscar Peterson , Bill Evans , Toots Thielemans , and Barbra Streisand .

The 1973 song " Summer (The First Time) " by Bobby Goldsboro has almost exactly the same subject and apparent setting , although there is no direct credited link . Bryan Adams has , however , credited the film as being a partial inspiration for his 1985 hit " Summer of ' 69 " .

= = = Film and television = = =

In Stanley Kubrick 's 1980 film version of Stephen King 's The Shining , Wendy (Shelley Duvall) is shown watching Summer of ' 42 on television (a brief clip of the scene featuring Hermie helping Dorothy bring her groceries in the house is playing on the television in the background during the scene) .

An episode of the 1970s sitcom Happy Days was loosely based upon Summer of ' 42 , with Richie Cunningham befriending a Korean War widow . The film 's title formed the basis of an episode of The Simpsons : the seventh season Summer of 4 Ft . 2 .

= = = Remakes = = =

In the years since the film 's release , Warner Bros. has attempted to buy back Raucher 's ten percent of the film as well as his rights to the story so it could be remade ; Raucher has consistently declined . The 1988 film Stealing Home has numerous similarities to both Summer of ' 42 and Class of ' 44 , with several incidents (most notably a subplot dealing with the premature death of the protagonist 's father and the protagonist 's response to it) appearing to have been directly lifted from Raucher 's own life ; Jennifer O 'Neill stated in 2002 she believes " Home " was an attempted remake of " Summer " .

There are also similarities between Summer of ' 42 and 2000 's Malèna , another coming @-@ of @-@ age film set in the context of World War II , and starring Monica Bellucci and Giuseppe Sulfaro .

= = = Off @-@ Broadway musical = = =

In 2001 , Raucher consented to the film being made into an off Broadway musical play . He was on hand opening night , giving the cast a pep @-@ talk which he concluded , " We 've now done it every possible way ? except go out and piss it in the snow ! " The play met with positive critical and fan response , and was endorsed by Raucher himself , but the play was forced to close down in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks . Nevertheless , the play was enough to spark interest in the film and book with a new generation , prompting Warner to re @-@ issue the book (which had since gone out of print , along with all of Raucher 's other works) for sale with Barnes & Noble 's online bookstore , and to restore the film and release it on DVD . The musical has since been performed across the country , at venues such as Kalliope Stage in Cleveland Heights , Ohio in 2004 (directed by Paul Gurgol) and Mill Mountain Theatre in Roanoke , Virginia , (directed by Jere Hodgins and choreographed by Bernard Monroe) , and was subsequently recorded as a concert by the York Theatre Company in 2006 .

= = = Alternate sequel = = =

In 2002 , O 'Neill claimed to have obtained the rights to make a sequel to Summer of ' 42 , based on a short story she wrote , which took place in an alternate reality where Herman Raucher had a son and divorced his wife , went back to Nantucket in 1962 with a still @-@ living Oscar Seltzer , and encountered Dorothy again and married her . As of 2015 , this project ? which O 'Neill had hoped to produce with Lifetime television ? has not been realized , and it is unknown whether O 'Neill is still attempting to get it produced , or if Raucher consented to its production .