

= Stanley Donen =

Stanley Donen (/ ˈdɒnən / DAWN @-@ ?n ; born April 13 , 1924) is an American film director and choreographer whose most celebrated works are *Singin ' in the Rain* and *On the Town* , both of which he co @-@ directed with actor and dancer Gene Kelly . His other noteworthy films include *Royal Wedding* , *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* , *Funny Face* , *Indiscreet* , *Damn Yankees !* , *Charade* , and *Two for the Road* . He received an Honorary Academy Award in 1998 for his body of work and a Career Golden Lion from the Venice Film Festival in 2004 . He was hailed by film critic David Quinlan as " the King of the Hollywood musicals " . Donen married five times and had three children . His current long term partner is film director and comedian Elaine May .

He began his career in the chorus line on Broadway for director George Abbott , where he befriended Kelly . In 1943 he went to Hollywood and worked as a choreographer before he and Kelly made *On the Town* in 1949 . He then worked as a contract director for MGM under producer Arthur Freed producing hit films amid critical acclaim , both as a solo director and with Kelly . In 1952 Donen and Kelly co @-@ directed the musical *Singin ' in the Rain* , regarded as one of the greatest films ever made . Donen 's relationship with Kelly deteriorated in 1955 during their final collaboration on *It 's Always Fair Weather* . He then broke his contract with MGM to become an independent producer in 1957 . As musicals began to lose public appeal , Donen switched to comedies . He continued to make hit films until the late 1960s , after which his career slowed down . He briefly returned to the stage as a director in the 1990s and again in 2002 .

Donen is credited with transitioning Hollywood musical films from realistic backstage dramas to a more integrated art form in which the songs were a natural continuation of the story . Before Donen and Kelly made their films , musicals (such as the extravagant and stylized work of Busby Berkeley) were often set in a Broadway stage environment where the musical numbers were part of a stage show . Donen and Kelly 's films created a more cinematic form and included dances that could only be achieved in the film medium . Donen stated that what he was doing was a " direct continuation from the Astaire ? Rogers musicals ... which in turn came from René Clair and from Lubitsch ... What we did was not geared towards realism but towards the unreal . " Film critic Jean @-@ Pierre Coursodon has said that Donen 's contribution to the evolution of the Hollywood musical " outshines anybody else 's , including Vincent Minnelli 's . " He is the last surviving notable director of Hollywood 's Golden Age .

= = Early life and stage career = =

Stanley Donen was born in Columbia , South Carolina to Mordecai Moses Donen , a dress @-@ shop manager , and Helen (Cohen) , the daughter of a jewelry salesman . His younger sister Carla Donen Davis was born in August 1937 . Although born to Jewish parents , he became an atheist in his youth . Donen described his childhood as lonely and unhappy as one of the few Jews in Columbia , and he was occasionally bullied by anti @-@ semitic classmates at school . To help cope with his isolation , he spent much of his youth in local movie theaters and was especially fond of Westerns , comedies and thrillers . The film that had the strongest impact on him was the 1933 Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musical *Flying Down to Rio* . Donen said that he " must have seen the picture thirty or forty times . I was transported into some sort of fantasy world where everything seemed to be happy , comfortable , easy and supported . A sense of well @-@ being filled me . " He shot and screened home movies with an 8 mm camera and projector that his father bought for him .

Inspired by Astaire , Donen took dance lessons in Columbia and performed at the local Town Theater . His family often traveled to New York City during summer vacations where he saw Broadway musicals and took further dance lessons . One of his early instructors in New York was Ned Wayburn , who had taught eleven @-@ year @-@ old Astaire in 1910 . After graduating from high school at sixteen , Donen attended the University of South Carolina for one summer semester , studying psychology . Encouraged by his mother , he moved to New York City to pursue dancing on stage in the fall of 1940 . After two auditions he was cast as a chorus dancer in the original Broadway production of Rodgers and Hart 's *Pal Joey* , directed by the legendary George Abbott .

The title role of Pal Joey was played by the young up @-@ and @-@ comer Gene Kelly , who became a Broadway star in the role .

Abbott asked Donen to appear in the chorus of his next Broadway show Best Foot Forward . He quickly became the show 's assistant stage manager , and Kelly asked him to be his assistant choreographer . Eventually Donen was fired from Best Foot Forward , but in 1942 was the stage manager and assistant choreographer for Abbott 's next show Beat the Band . In 1946 , Donen briefly returned to Broadway to help choreograph dance numbers for Call Me Mister .

= = Film career = =

= = = 1943 ? 1949 : Hollywood choreographer = = =

In 1943 Arthur Freed , the successful producer of musical films at Metro Goldwyn Mayer , bought the film rights to Best Foot Forward and made a film version starring Lucille Ball and William Gaxton . Donen moved to Hollywood to audition for the film and signed a one @-@ year contract with MGM . In Best Foot Forward , Donen appeared as a chorus dancer and was made assistant choreographer by Charles Walters . At MGM Donen renewed his friendship with Kelly , who was quickly becoming a popular supporting actor in musicals . When Kelly was loaned to Columbia Pictures for a film with Rita Hayworth , he was offered the chance to choreograph his own dance numbers and asked Donen to assist . Kelly stated , " Stanley needed a job . I needed someone to count for the cameraman , someone who knew the steps and could explain what I was going to do so the shot was set up correctly . " Donen accepted and choreographed three dance sequences with Kelly in 1944 's Cover Girl . Donen came up with the idea for the " Alter Ego " dance sequence where Kelly 's reflection jumps out of a shop window and dances with him . Director Charles Vidor insisted that the idea would never work , so Donen and Kelly directed the scene themselves and Donen spent over a year editing it . The film made Kelly a movie star and is considered by many film critics to be an important and innovative musical . Donen signed a one @-@ year contract with Columbia and choreographed several films there , but returned to MGM the following year when Kelly wanted assistance on his next film .

In 1944 Donen and Kelly choreographed the musical Anchors Aweigh , released by MGM in 1945 and starring Kelly and Frank Sinatra . The most famous scene in this film is when Kelly dances with the cartoon mouse Jerry . The animation was supervised by William Hanna and Joseph Barbera and is credited to cartoonist Fred Quimby , but the idea for the scene was Donen 's . Originally Donen and Kelly wanted to use either Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck for the sequence and met with Walt Disney to discuss the project . At the time Disney was working on a similar idea in The Three Caballeros and was unwilling to allow one of his characters to appear in an MGM film . They spent two months shooting Kelly 's dancing and Donen spent a year perfecting the scene frame by frame . According to Barbera " the net result at the preview of Anchors Away that I went to , blew the audience away . "

While Kelly completed his service in the U.S. Naval Air Service as a photographer from 1944 to 1946 , Donen worked uncredited as a choreographer on musical films . Of this period Donen said , " I practiced my craft , working with music , track and photography . I often directed the sequences . I always tried to have an original idea about how to do musical sequences . " Donen has stated that he was excused from military service as 4 @-@ F because of high blood pressure . When Kelly returned to civilian life , he and Donen directed and choreographed Kelly 's dance scenes in Living in a Big Way . They then began work on an original story about two baseball players in the early 20th century who spend their off @-@ season as vaudevillian song and dance men . This film would eventually become Take Me Out to the Ball Game in 1949 . Kelly and Donen had hoped to co @-@ direct the film , but Freed hired Busby Berkeley instead and they only directed Kelly 's dance numbers . The film starred Kelly , Frank Sinatra and Jules Munshin .

= = = 1949 : On the Town = = =

After the success of *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, Freed gave Donen and Kelly the chance to direct *On the Town*, released in 1949. The film was an adaptation of the Betty Comden and Adolph Green Broadway musical about sailors on leave in New York City and was the first musical to be filmed on location. Donen and Kelly had wanted to shoot the entire film in New York, but Freed would only allow them to spend one week away from the studio.

That week produced the film's famous opening number *New York, New York*. Away from both studio interference and sound stage constrictions, Donen and cinematographer Harold Rosson shot a scene on the streets of New York City that pioneered many cinematic techniques that would not be used again until they were popularized by the French New Wave ten years later. These techniques included spatial jump cuts, 360° pans, hidden cameras, abrupt changes of screen direction and non-professional actors. Donen's biographer Joseph A. Casper stated that the scene avoids being gratuitous or amateurish, while still "developing plot, describing the setting while conveying its galvanizing atmosphere and manic mood, introducing and delineating character." Casper also said that "Today the film is regarded as a turning point: the first bona fide musical that moved dance, as well as the musical genre, out of the theater and captured it with and for film rather than on film; the first to make the city an important character; and the first to abandon the chorus."

On the Town starred Kelly, Sinatra, Munshin, Ann Miller, Betty Garrett and Vera Ellen. Kelly, Sinatra and Munshin play three sailors on a 24-hour shore leave in New York whose romantic ambitions get them more than they bargained for. The film was a success both financially and critically. It won the Academy Award for Best Music, Scoring of a Musical Picture and screenwriters Comden and Green won the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Written American Musical. Like Orson Welles, Donen made his directorial debut at 25. Donen stated that Kelly was "responsible for most of the dance movements. I was behind the camera in the dramatic and musical sequences." Kelly believed that he and Donen "were a good team. I thought we complemented each other very well."

=== 1949 ? 1952 : MGM contract director ===

After the success of *On the Town* Donen signed a seven-year contract with MGM as a director. His next two films were for producer Freed, but without Kelly. After being replaced as director on *Pagan Love Song* over personal differences with star Esther Williams, Donen was given the chance to direct his boyhood idol Fred Astaire.

Royal Wedding starred Astaire and Jane Powell as a brother-sister American dancing team performing in England during the occasion of the royal wedding of Elizabeth and Philip in 1947. Judy Garland was originally cast in the lead role, but was fired for absenteeism due to illness and June Allyson was to replace Garland, but then Allyson found out she was pregnant, so she was replaced by Powell. In the film, Powell's love affair with a wealthy Englishman (Peter Lawford) threatens to ruin the brother-sister act, while Astaire finds his own romance with (Sarah Churchill). The film is loosely based on Astaire's real life career with his sister and early dancing partner Adele Astaire, who retired after marrying an English lord in 1932. The film contains one of Astaire's most famous dance sequences: the "You're All the World to Me" number in which Astaire defies gravity by dancing first on the walls and then on the ceiling. The shot was achieved by building the set inside a rotating reinforced steel cylindrical chamber with the camera attached to the cylinder. Both Astaire and the film's lyricist Alan Jay Lerner claimed that they thought of the idea. The film included music by Lerner and Burton Lane and was released in 1951.

Later in 1951 Donen made *Love Is Better Than Ever*. The film stars Larry Parks, whose Oscar-nominated performance in *The Jolson Story* had made him a star five years earlier. Parks plays a streetwise show business agent who finds himself compelled to marry an innocent young dance teacher played by Elizabeth Taylor. Donen and Kelly appear in cameo roles. The film remained unreleased for over a year after Parks admitted to the House Un-American Activities

Committee that he had been a member of the Communist Party and named other members . The film was unsuccessful at the box office .

= = = 1952 : Singin ' in the Rain = = =

In 1952 Kelly was at the height of his fame after the release of *An American in Paris* . He then re @-@ teamed with Donen to make *Singin ' in the Rain* , which would become one of the most highly praised films of all time . The film was produced by Freed , written by Comden and Green , photographed by Harold Rosson and starred Kelly , Debbie Reynolds , Donald O 'Connor and Jean Hagen .

Freed wanted to make a musical using old songs that he and composer Nacio Herb Brown had written in the late 1920s and early 1930s . He hired Comden and Green to write a script , with Donen and Kelly involved from the early development stages . Comden and Green decided to write a story inspired by the time period in which the songs were written , and satirized Hollywood 's transition from silent films to " talkies " in the late 1920s . Comden , Green and Donen interviewed everyone at MGM who was in Hollywood during that period , poking fun at both the first movie musicals and the technical difficulties with early sound films . This included characters loosely based on Freed and Berkeley and a scene that references silent film star John Gilbert . Donen and Kelly also made use of MGM 's large collection of sets , props , costumes and outdated equipment from the 1920s .

In the film , Don Lockwood (Kelly) and Lina Lamont (Hagen) are two silent film stars in Hollywood whose careers are threatened by the invention of " talkies " . With help from his best friend Cosmo Brown (O 'Connor) and love interest Kathy Selden (Reynolds) , Lockwood saves his career by turning his latest film into a musical . Filming was harmonious , but Donen found Kelly 's " Broadway Melody " ballet sequence overlong . The *Singin ' in the Rain* musical number took several months to choreograph , and Donen and Kelly found it necessary to dig holes in the cement to create puddles in the street .

The film was a hit when it was released in April 1952 , earning over \$ 7 @.@ 6 million . Kelly 's *An American in Paris* had been a surprise Best Picture winner at the Oscars in March 1952 , and MGM decided to re @-@ release it . *Singin ' in the Rain* got pulled from many theaters to showcase the older film , preventing it from making further profits . *Singin ' in the Rain* was nominated for two Academy Awards : Best Supporting Actress for Hagen and Best Original Score . Donald O 'Connor won the Golden Globe Award for Best Actor in a Musical or Comedy and Comden and Green once again won the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Written American Musical . Initially the film received only moderate reviews from critics such as Bosley Crowther and did not begin to receive widespread acclaim until the late 1960s . One of its earliest supporters was critic Pauline Kael , who said that it " is perhaps the most enjoyable of all movie musicals ? just about the best Hollywood musical of all time . " It was re @-@ released in 1975 to critical and popular success .

= = = 1952 ? 1955 : *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and break with MGM = = =

Now established as a successful film director , Donen continued his solo career at MGM with *Fearless Fagan* in 1952 . Based on a true story , the film stars Carleton Carpenter as a GI who brings his tame lion with him when he joins the army . In 1953 Donen made the musical *Give a Girl a Break* . The film stars Debbie Reynolds , Marge Champion and Helen Wood as three aspiring dancers competing for the lead in a new Broadway musical . Bob Fosse , Gower Champion and Kurt Kaszner also appear , with music by Lane and Ira Gershwin . The most famous scene is the " Give a Girl a Break " dance between Reynolds and Fosse , which was choreographed backwards and then played in reverse to create the illusion that the two are surrounded by hundreds of balloons that instantly appear at the touch of their fingers . Shooting the film became a bitter experience for Donen due to a major on @-@ set fight over the film 's choreography between Fosse and Gower Champion . The fight split the cast and crew with Reynolds and Marge taking Gower 's side and Donen taking Fosse 's side . The film was not well reviewed upon release , but its reputation has

grown over the years .

Donen solidified his solo career and scored another hit with the musical *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* . Based on a short story by Stephen Vincent Benét , the film had music by Saul Chaplin and Gene de Paul , with lyrics by Johnny Mercer and choreography by Michael Kidd . Jane Powell plays Milly , an 1850s frontierswoman who marries Adam (Howard Keel) only hours after meeting him . When she returns with Adam to his log cabin in the Oregon backwoods , Milly discovers that her husband 's six brothers are uncivilized and oafish . She makes it her mission to domesticate them and , upon Milly 's sarcastic suggestion , the brothers kidnap six women from a neighboring town to marry them . The film was shot in the new CinemaScope format and is remembered for its dance sequences , particularly the " barn raising scene " in which architecture and construction become acrobatic ballet steps . *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* was one of the highest grossing films of 1954 and appeared on many critics ' 10 Best Films lists . It was nominated for five Academy Awards , including Best Picture and Best Music (Scoring of a Musical Picture) , which it won . Its success was a surprise to MGM , which had invested more money in two of its other 1954 musicals : *Rose Marie* and *Brigadoon* , starring Kelly . *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* was more profitable than either of its rivals , as well as *On the Town* and *Singin ' in the Rain* , and its success was a major turning point for Donen 's career . The film was later criticized by novelist Francine Prose , who described it as anti @-@ woman , calling it " one of the most repulsive movies about men and women that has ever been made " and a musical about rape .

Later in 1954 Donen made *Deep in My Heart* , a biography of the Hungarian @-@ born American operetta composer Sigmund Romberg starring José Ferrer . The film included cameos by many MGM contract actors , including the only screen pairing of Gene Kelly and his brother Fred . Although it received mediocre reviews , Romberg 's cult status and popularity helped make the film a hit financially .

In 1955 Donen teamed up with Kelly for their third and final directorial collaboration . The musical *It 's Always Fair Weather* was produced by Freed , written by Comden and Green and had music by André Previn . It starred Kelly , Dan Dailey , Cyd Charisse , Michael Kidd , and Dolores Gray . Originally envisioned as a sequel to *On the Town* , Kelly , Dailey and Kidd play three ex @-@ GIs who reunite 10 years after World War II and discover that none of their lives have turned out quite how they had expected . Kelly had approached Donen with this project as their next collaboration and at first Donen was reluctant to accept due to his own success . Their friendship deteriorated during production and Donen noted , " the atmosphere from day one was very tense and nobody was speaking to anybody . " He has been quoted as saying it was a " one hundred percent nightmare " which was a " struggle from beginning to end " and MGM did not allow the co @-@ directors to shoot on location in New York . *It 's Always Fair Weather* was a moderately profitable film , but not as successful as the pairs previous two films . It was Donen 's last film with Kelly or Freed . After the film 's completion he fulfilled his MGM contract agreement by working with other studios . His last project for MGM was completing the final four days of shooting on *Kismet* in July 1955 for director Vincent Minnelli , who had other commitments .

= = = 1956 ? 1959 : director and independent producer = = =

Donen 's next film was at Paramount Pictures for producer Roger Edens . *Funny Face* contains four of the original George and Ira Gershwin songs from the otherwise unrelated 1927 Broadway musical of the same name that had starred Fred Astaire . Loosely based on the life of fashion photographer Richard Avedon , who was also the visual consultant and designed the opening title sequence for the film , it was written by Leonard Gershe and included additional music by Gershe and Edens . Donen and Edens began pre @-@ production at MGM , but had difficulty juggling Astaire and Audrey Hepburn 's Paramount contracts , the Warner Brothers ? owned rights to the Gershwin music that they wanted and their own MGM contracts . Eventually a deal was reached that both released Donen from his MGM contract and allowed him to make his next two films at Paramount and Warner Brothers respectively . Astaire plays an aging fashion photographer who discovers the intellectual bohemian Hepburn at a used bookstore in Greenwich Village and turns her into his new

model while falling in love with her in Paris . Donen , Avedon and cinematographer Ray June collaborated to give the film an abstract , smokey look that resembled the fashion photography of the period despite protests by Paramount , which had recently spent a fortune developing the crisp VistaVision . Funny Face was screened in competition at the 1957 Cannes Film Festival and received good reviews from critics like Crowther . Sight and Sound , in contrast , accused it of being anti @-@ intellectual .

While in pre @-@ production on Funny Face , Donen received a letter from his old boss George Abbott inviting him to make a film version of his stage hit The Pajama Game at Warner Brothers . As part of the deal to secure the Gershwin music he wanted for Funny Face , Donen was able to accept , and he and Abbott co @-@ directed the film version in 1957 . The Pajama Game stars Doris Day and John Raitt , with music by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross and choreography by Bob Fosse . Raitt plays a plant supervisor at a nightwear factory who is in constant disputes with the plant 's union organizer (Day) , until they end up falling in love . Donen described his working relationship with Abbott as relaxed , stating that " [Abbott would] play tennis , come watch on the set for an hour , then watch the rushes , then go home . " It was only a modest financial success , but Jean @-@ Luc Godard praised it in a review and declared " Donen is surely the master of the movie musical . The Pajama Game exists to prove it . "

Donen 's next film was Kiss Them for Me . He was personally asked by Cary Grant to direct and began developing it while still under contract at MGM . With a plot that strongly resembles On the Town , the film features Grant , Ray Walston and Larry Blyden as three navy officers on leave in San Francisco in 1944 . Unlike On the Town , Kiss Them for Me is a dark comedy that contrasts the officers ' selfless heroism with their self @-@ absorbed hedonism while on leave . The film was released in 1957 to mostly poor reviews .

After three films in 1957 Donen became an independent producer and director . He had reluctantly agreed to direct Kiss Them for Me on condition that 20th Century Fox buy out his remaining contract with MGM . Now free from contractual obligations , he formed Grandon Productions with Grant and signed a distribution deal through Warner Brothers . Donen would self @-@ produce nearly all of his films for the rest of his career , sometimes under the name " Stanley Donen Productions " . Donen and Grant inaugurated their company in 1958 with Indiscreet , based on a play by Norman Krasna and starring Grant and Ingrid Bergman . Because of Bergman 's schedule , the film was shot on location in London where , much like he had in his directorial debut , Donen utilized such landmarks as the Leicester Galleries , the Royal Opera House and the Garrick Club . Bergman plays a famous and reclusive actress who falls in love with the playboy @-@ diplomat Grant , who tells her that he is already married and that his wife refuses to divorce him . When Bergman discovers that he has been lying about having a wife , she concocts a charade with another man in order to win Grant 's full affection . The film 's most famous scene involves Donen 's clever circumvention of the strict Production Code . In the scene , Grant is in Paris while Bergman is still in London and the two exchange pillow talk over the phone . Donen used a split screen of the two stars with synchronized movements to make it appear as though they were in the same bed together . The film was a financial and critical success , and Donen was compared to such directors as Ernst Lubitsch and George Cukor .

Donen briefly returned to the musical genre in 1958 with Damn Yankees ! , based on George Abbott 's Broadway hit . He again co @-@ directed with Abbott in the same hands @-@ off collaboration as their first film . Like The Pajama Game the film includes music by Adler and Ross and choreography by Fosse . It starred Tab Hunter , Gwen Verdon , and Ray Walston . Damn Yankees ! is an adaptation of the Faust legend about a fan of the baseball team the Washington Senators who mentions that he would sell his soul to give the losing team a good hitter . Walston plays the Brooks Brothers @-@ attired Devil who grants the fan his wish and transforms him into the muscular young hitter Joe Hardy (Hunter) . Donen was able to shoot three real Senator @-@ Yankee games on location with as many as seven hidden cameras . The low @-@ budget film was a moderate financial success and received good reviews . It was also Donen 's last musical film for many years .

= = = 1960 ? 1969 : England = = =

After Indiscreet Donen made England his home until the early 1970s . Musicals ' waning popularity caused Donen to focus on comedy films . He observed that his " London base afforded me the advantage of being away from the Hollywood rat race . Just going your own way in spite of whatever anyone else is doing or in spite of what you 've done already was satisfying . I also had the advantage of the European influence : their way of looking at life , of making movies . " While in England in the early 1960s Donen was praised as an early influence on the then @-@ emerging British New Wave film movement .

In the late 1950s Donen signed a non @-@ exclusive , three film deal with Columbia Pictures . His first film under this contract was Once More , with Feeling ! in 1960 . Adapted by Harry Kurnitz from his own stage play , the film was shot in Paris and starred Yul Brynner and Kay Kendall . Brynner plays a tyrannical orchestra conductor whose mistress (Kendall) grows tired of his tantrums and plots to marry him in order to quickly divorce him for his money . Kendall was terminally ill with leukemia during the shoot and died before its release . The film was not successful financially or critically .

Donen quickly re @-@ teamed with Brynner and Kurnitz for the film Surprise Package , also released in 1960 . In this film Brynner plays an American gangster who is deported to the Greek island of Rhodes . Mitzi Gaynor plays the " surprise package " who is sent to the island to appease Brynner , and Noël Coward plays the King of Rhodes whom Brynner plots to dethrone . The film was not a financial success , and Donen stated that it was made because he " desperately needed money for personal reasons ... it was one of the few times I 've made a movie for money . " These were the only two films that Donen completed for his Columbia contract . The studio cancelled the deal after their poor box office results , and Donen was unable to produce the projects that he was pursuing at that time : playwright Robert Bolt 's A Man for All Seasons and A Patch of Blue , both of which became successful films by other directors .

Grandon Productions produced Donen 's next film : The Grass Is Greener , released through Universal Pictures in 1960 . Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr play the earl and countess of a large estate in England who are forced to permit guided tours of their mansion in order to help their financial problems . Robert Mitchum plays an American oil tycoon who falls in love with Kerr and Jean Simmons plays an eccentric American heiress who is Grant 's former girlfriend . The film was a financial disappointment in the US , but successful in England where the original stage version had been a West End hit .

In 1963 Donen made one of his most praised films : Charade , starring Cary Grant , Audrey Hepburn , Walter Matthau , James Coburn , George Kennedy and Ned Glass . Donen has said that he had " always wanted to make a movie like one of my favorites , Hitchcock 's North by Northwest " and the film has been referred to as " the best Hitchcock movie that Hitchcock never made . " Charade was produced by Stanley Donen Productions , released through Universal and adapted by Peter Stone from his own novel . Reggie Lampert (Hepburn) discovers that her husband has been murdered and (at least) three sinister men are all searching for the \$ 250 @,@ 000 in gold that he had hidden somewhere . Peter Joshua (Grant) befriends Reggie and helps her fight off the three thugs while the two begin to fall in love , and in the end no one is quite who they seem to be . The film was released in December 1963 , only two weeks after the assassination of US President John F. Kennedy , and the word " assassinate " had to be redubbed twice . It was Donen 's most financially successful film and influenced a number of romantic comedy @-@ thrillers released in the years following it . Film critic Judith Crist called it a " stylish and amusing melodrama " , and Pauline Kael said it had " a freshness and spirit that makes [it] unlike the films of any other country " and was " probably the best American film of [1963] " . In 2002 it was remade as The Truth About Charlie , directed by Jonathan Demme .

In 1966 Donen made another Hitchcock @-@ inspired film : Arabesque , starring Gregory Peck and Sophia Loren . The film was written by Julian Mitchell and Stanley Price , with an uncredited rewrite by Peter Stone . Peck plays an American professor at Oxford University who is an expert in ancient hieroglyphics . He is approached by a Middle Eastern prime minister to investigate an organization

that is attempting to assassinate him and uses hieroglyphic codes to communicate . The investigation leads Peck to one mystery after another , often involving the prime minister 's mysterious mistress (Loren) . The film was Donen 's second consecutive hit .

In 1967 Donen made *Two for the Road* , starring Audrey Hepburn and Albert Finney with supporting roles by Eleanor Bron , William Daniels , and Jacqueline Bisset early in her career . The film was conceived by Donen and written by novelist Frederic Raphael , who was nominated for an Academy Award . It has been called one of Donen 's most personal films , " with glints of passion never disclosed before " , and " a veritable textbook on film editing . " The film 's complicated and non @-@ linear story is about the 12 @-@ year relationship between Hepburn and Finney over the course of four separate (but interwoven) road trips that they take together throughout the years in the south of France . It was moderately successful at the box office while the critical reception was extremely mixed . Crowther called the film " just another version of commercial American trash . " The film attained a cult following and was cited as an early example of non @-@ linear storytelling in film . It is also the film that Donen is most frequently asked about by film students .

While living in England Donen became a fan of the British variety show *Beyond the Fringe* and wanted to work with the show 's comedy duo Peter Cook and Dudley Moore . The resulting film was *Bedazzled* , an updated version of the Faust legend in 1967 . It was written by Cook with music by Moore , and also starred Eleanor Bron and Raquel Welch . Moore plays a lonely young man whose unrequited love of his co @-@ worker (Bron) drives him to attempt suicide . Just then the devil (Cook) appears and offers him seven wishes in exchange for his soul . The film 's fun @-@ loving association with the Swinging London of the 1960s divided critics , but Roger Ebert called its satire " barbed and contemporary ... dry and understated " , and overall , a " magnificently photographed , intelligent , very funny film . " On the other hand , Time magazine called it the feeblest of all known variations on the Faust theme . The film was a hit and was especially popular among American college students . Donen considered it a favorite among his own films and called it " a very personal film in that I said a great deal about what I think is important in life . " It was remade as *Bedazzled* by director Harold Ramis in 2000 .

In 1969 Donen directed *Staircase* , an adaptation of the autobiographical stage play by Charles Dyer with music by Moore . Rex Harrison and Richard Burton star as a middle @-@ aged gay couple who run a London barber shop and live together in a " bad marriage " . The film was shot in Paris for tax purposes and was not a financial success . It received poor reviews upon release , but was reevaluated by film critic Armond White in 2007 . He called the film " a rare Hollywood movie to depict gay experience with wisdom , humor and warmth " , and " a lost treasure " .

= = = 1970 ? 2003 : Later works = = =

After Donen 's marriage to Adelle Beatty ended , he moved back to Hollywood in 1970 . Producer Robert Evans asked Donen to direct an adaptation of the beloved children 's book *The Little Prince* . Lyricist Alan Jay Lerner and composer Frederick Loewe wrote the music and screenplay and filming was done on location in Tunisia . *The Little Prince* stars Steven Warner in the title role , with Richard Kiley , Bob Fosse , Gene Wilder and Donna McKechnie . It was Donen 's first musical film since *Damn Yankees* ! Although it contained very little dancing , Fosse choreographed his own dance scenes as the snake . Lerner stated that Donen " took it upon himself to change every tempo , delete musical phrases at will and distort the intention of every song until the entire score was unrecognizable " . It was released in 1974 and was a financial disaster .

Donen 's next film was *Lucky Lady* , starring Liza Minnelli , Gene Hackman and Burt Reynolds . Minnelli plays a Prohibition era bootlegger who smuggles alcohol from Mexico to California with the help of Hackman and Reynolds , who both compete for her affection . Donen has stated that he " really cared about [the film] and gave three years of my life to it ... I think its a very good movie . " It went over budget and was unsuccessful at the box office . Most critics were unenthusiastic ; however , Jay Cocks praised the film for having " the glistening surface and full @-@ throttle frivolity that characterized Hollywood films in the 1930s . "

Nostalgia for old Hollywood movies would be a theme of Donen 's next film : *Movie Movie* ,

produced by Lew Grade 's ITC Entertainment and scripted by Larry Gelbart . The film is actually two shorter films presented as an old fashioned double feature , complete with a fake movie trailer and an introduction by comedian George Burns . It starred George C. Scott , Trish Van Devere , Red Buttons , Michael Kidd and Eli Wallach and premiered in competition at the 29th Berlin International Film Festival in 1978 . The first of the two films is Dynamite Hands , a black and white tribute to boxing ? morality films . The second film is Baxter 's Beauties of 1933 , a tribute to the extravagant musicals of Busby Berkely . Like Donen 's previous two films , it was unsuccessful both financially and critically .

In 1980 Donen made the science fiction film Saturn 3 , starring Kirk Douglas , Farrah Fawcett and Harvey Keitel . Donen first read the script when its writer (and Movie Movie 's set designer) John Barry showed it to him , prompting Donen to pass it along to Lew Grade . Donen was initially hired to produce , but Grade asked him to complete the film when first @-@ time director Barry was unable to direct . According to Donen " only a tiny bit of what Barry shot ended up in the finished film . " It was a critical and financial disaster and initially Donen did not want to be credited as director . In the early 1980s Donen was attached to direct an adaptation of Stephen King 's The Dead Zone and worked with writer Jeffrey Boam on the script . Donen eventually dropped out of the project and David Cronenberg directed the film a few years later . Boam stated that Donen was initially attracted to making the film because he wanted to " connect with contemporary youthful audiences " and that the script that they worked on together was " very close to the script that David wound up making . "

Donen 's last theatrical film was the May ? December romance Blame It on Rio in 1984 . The film is a remake of the 1977 Claude Berri film Un moment d 'égarement and was written by Gelbart and Charlie Peters . It stars Michael Caine , Joseph Bologna , Michelle Johnson , Valerie Harper and Demi Moore and was shot on location in Rio de Janeiro . Caine and Bologna play wealthy executives on vacation with their families in Rio , where Caine has an affair with Bologna 's teenage daughter (Johnson) . It received poor reviews , but was a modest success financially .

In 1986 Donen produced the televised ceremony of the 58th Academy Awards , which included a musical performance of the song " Once a Star , Always a Star " with June Allyson , Leslie Caron , Marge Champion , Cyd Charisse , Kathryn Grayson , Howard Keel , Ann Miller , Jane Powell , Debbie Reynolds , and Esther Williams . Also in 1986 Donen directed a musical sequence for an episode of the popular TV series Moonlighting and directed the music video for Lionel Richie 's song " Dancing on the Ceiling " . In 1989 Donen was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts from the University of South Carolina . In his commencement address Donen stated that he thought he was unique in being the first tap dancer to be a doctor and then tap danced for the graduates . At around the same time Donen taught a seminar on film musicals at the Sundance Institute at the request of Robert Redford .

In 1993 Donen was preparing to produce and direct a movie musical adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson 's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde starring Michael Jackson . After allegations that Jackson had molested young boys at his Neverland ranch became a tabloid scandal , the project was abandoned . Later that year Donen directed a stage version of The Red Shoes at the George Gershwin Theater . He replaced the original director Susan Schulman just six weeks before the show opened . It closed after four days . In 1998 Donen was awarded an Honorary Academy Award " in appreciation of a body of work marked by grace , elegance , wit and visual innovation . " In his acceptance speech he danced with his Oscar statue while singing Irving Berlin 's " Cheek to Cheek " , a song first popularized by his boyhood idol Fred Astaire . Martin Scorsese presented the award and created a montage of Donen 's films for the show .

Donen 's final television film was the made @-@ for @-@ TV movie Love Letters , which aired on ABC in April 1999 . The film starred Steven Weber and Laura Linney and was based on the play by A.R. Gurney . Weber plays a successful US Senator who finds out that his long lost love (Linney) has recently died . The two had only corresponded through mail over the years , and Weber remembers Linney through his collection of old love letters . Donen had wanted to make a theatrical film version of the play , but was unable to secure financing from any major studio and instead took the project to ABC . In 2002 Donen directed Elaine May 's musical play Adult Entertainment starring Danny Aiello and Jeannie Berlin in Stamford , Connecticut .

= = Legacy = =

During his career Donen 's biggest rival was Vincente Minnelli , who he is often compared to . Like Donen , Minnelli was a contract director at MGM known for the musicals he made in the Freed Unit . According to Donen biographer Stephen Silverman , critics tend to " express a distinct preference for Donen 's bold , no @-@ nonsense style of direction over Minnelli 's Impressionist visual palette and Expressionist character motivations " , while most film directors are said to prefer Minnelli 's work . Michael Kidd , who worked with both directors early in his career , describes Minnelli as being much less open to collaborative suggestions than Donen . The two directors ' camera work differs in that Minnelli often used forward and backwards tracking shots while Donen preferred horizontal tracking shots and crane shots , with film critics considering Donen 's approach to be better suited for dance sequences .

However David Thomson dismisses most of his later comedy films , but praises him for leading " the musical in a triumphant and personal direction : out of doors ... Not even Minnelli can rival the fresh @-@ air excitement of such sequences . And few can equal his integration of song , dance and story . " Andrew Sarris dismisses Donen as being without a personal style of his own and as being dependent upon his collaborators on his better films . Debbie Reynolds downplayed his contributions to *Singin ' in the Rain* , stating that " Stanley just operated the camera , because Stanley didn 't dance . "

Among Donen 's admirers are film directors Pedro Almodóvar , Lindsay Anderson , Charlie Chaplin , Damien Chazelle , Jules Dassin , William Friedkin , Jean @-@ Luc Godard , Stanley Kubrick , Karel Reisz , Martin Scorsese , François Truffaut , and Edgar Wright . Donen 's skill as a director has been praised by such actors as Cyd Charisse and Audrey Hepburn . Donen 's work influenced later directors of film musicals Bill Condon , Rob Marshall and Baz Luhrmann The 2011 film *The Artist* pays tribute to *Singin ' in the Rain* (among other films) , and Donen praised the film after attending its Los Angeles premiere .

Singin ' in the Rain is Donen 's most revered film and it was included in the first group of films to be inducted into the National Film Registry at the Library of Congress in 1989 and has been included on *Sight and Sound* 's prestigious list of " Top Ten Films " twice , in 1982 and in 2002 . Chaplin and Truffaut were among its earliest fans , and Billy Wilder called the film " one of the five greatest pictures ever made . "

= = Cine @-@ dance = =

Donen made a host of critically acclaimed and popular films . His most important contribution to the art of film was helping to transition movie musicals from the realistic backstage settings of filmed theater to a more cinematic form that integrates film with dance . Eventually film scholars named this concept " cine @-@ dance " (a dance that can only be created in the medium of film) , and its origins are in the Donen / Kelly films . Film scholar Casey Charness described " cine @-@ dance " as " a melding of the distinctive strengths of dancing and filmmaking that had never been done before " and adds that Donen and Kelly " seem to have elevated Hollywood dance from simplistic display of either dancing or photographic ability into a perception that incorporates both what the dancer can do and what the camera can see ... [They] developed a balance between camera and dancer that ... encouraged both photographer and choreographer to contribute significantly to the creation and final effectiveness of dance . "

When " talkies " began to gain momentum in the film industry , the Hollywood studios recruited the best talent from Broadway to make musical films . These films included *Broadway Melody* , which was promoted as the first " all singing , all talking , all dancing " film and had music by Arthur Freed and Nacio Herb Brown , and *Berkley 's 42nd Street* , his first major success . These films established the backstage musical , a subgenre in which the plot revolves around a stage show and the people involved in putting on the show . These first musicals set the standard for the genre , placing their musical numbers either within the context of a stage performance or tacked on and

gratuitous , without furthering the story or developing the characters . Donen stated that he disliked them and that his own films were " a reaction against those backstage musicals . " Donen credits producer Freed as the driving force behind the transition , adding that Freed " had some sort of instinct to change the musical from a backstage world into something else . He didn 't quite know what to change it into , just that it had to change . " Kelly stated that Donen was the only person he knew that understood how musicals could progress and better suit the film medium .

= = = Techniques = = =

Donen and Kelly 's films set new standards for special effects , animation , editing and cinematography . Their first collaboration Cover Girl firmly established their intentions , particularly in the " Alter Ego " dance sequence . It employed a special effect that could not be achieved with a live take , while advancing the story and revealing the character 's inner conflict . Donen and Kelly tested the limits of film 's potential with the Jerry the Mouse dance in Anchors Aweigh , one of the time 's most sophisticated combinations of live action and animation .

By the time they made Take Me Out to the Ball Game they had perfected what Martin Rubin called an " indication of changing trends in musical films " which differed from the Berkeley spectacles towards " relatively small @-@ scale affairs that place the major emphasis on comedy , transitions to the narrative , the cleverness of the lyrics and the personalities and performance skills of the stars , rather than on spectacle and group dynamics . " Rubin credits Donen and Kelly with making musicals more realistic , compared to Berkeley 's style of a " separation of narrative space from performance space " Take Me Out to the Ball Game was Berkeley 's last film as a director and today can be viewed as a passing of the torch . Both Donen and Kelly found working with Berkeley difficult , and the director left before the film 's completion . When Donen and Kelly directed their own work , they were able to realize their ambitions .

When Donen and Kelly released On the Town , they boldly opened the film with an extravagant musical number shot on location in New York with fast @-@ paced editing and experimental camera work , thus breaking from the conventions of that time . Their most celebrated film Singin ' in the Rain is appropriately a musical about the birth of the movie musical . The film includes a musical montage that Donen says was " doing Busby Berkeley here , only we 're making fun of him . " Charness stated that Singin ' in the Rain 's references to Berkeley " marks the first time the Hollywood musical had ever been reflexive , and amused at its own extravagant non @-@ dancing inadequacy , at that " and that Berkeley 's " overhead kaleidoscope floral pattern is predominantly featured , as is the line of tap @-@ dancing chorines , who are seen only from the knees down . " Charness also stated that the film 's cinematography " moves the audience perspective along with the dance . "

Charness singled out the film 's famous title number and states , " it 's a very kinetic moment , for though there is no technically accomplished dance present , the feeling of swinging around in a circle with an open umbrella is a brilliantly apt choice of movement , one that will be readily identifiable by an audience which might know nothing kinesthetically of actual dance ... Accompanying this movement is a breathless pullback into a high crane shot that takes place at the same time Kelly is swinging into his widest arcs with the umbrella . The effect is dizzying . Perhaps the finest single example of the application of camera knowhow to a dance moment in Donen @-@ Kelly canon . " He also complimented Donen 's direction in the " Moses Supposes " number , including " certain camera techniques which Donen had by now formularized ... the dolly shot into medium shot to signify the ending of one shot and the beginning of another . " Although Donen credits earlier musicals by René Clair , Lubitsch and Astaire as " integrated " , he also states that " in the early musicals of Lubitsch and Clair , they made it clear from the beginning that their characters were going to sing operatically . Gene and I didn 't go that far . In ' Moses Supposes ' , he and Donald sort of talk themselves into a song . " Donen 's Royal Wedding and Give A Girl A Break continued to use special effect shots to create elaborate dance sequences , and Kelly used even more sophisticated animation in his film Invitation to Dance .

= = Relationship with Gene Kelly = =

Donen 's relationship with Gene Kelly was complicated and he often spoke bitterly about his former friend and mentor decades after they worked together . Kelly was never explicitly negative about Donen in later years . However , Silverman has asserted that Kelly 's comments were often condescending and demonstrated " a long @-@ standing attempt to diminish Donen 's contributions to their collective work . " The reasons for their conflict were both personal (both men married dancer Jeanne Coyne) and professional (Donen always felt that Kelly did not treat him as an equal) . They disagreed over who deserved more credit for their joint projects : three film 's as co @-@ directors and four as co @-@ choreographers .

= = = Jeanne Coyne = = =

At age 7 Coyne enrolled in the Gene Kelly Studio of Dance in Johnstown , Pennsylvania and developed a schoolgirl crush on him In her twenties she was cast in Best Foot Forward , where she reconnected with Kelly and first met Donen , later moving to Hollywood with them . She and Donen eloped in 1948 , but their marriage became strained . They separated in 1950 and divorced in 1951 . During their marriage Donen confided to Coyne his frustration with Kelly while making On the Town , only to find that she immediately took Kelly 's side . Coyne worked as Kelly 's personal assistant on several films while married to Donen and continued assisting Kelly until her death . Rumors held that Kelly and Coyne were having an affair both during and after Coyne 's marriage to Donen , as well as that Donen was in love with Kelly 's first wife Betsy Blair . Blair 's autobiography makes no mention of an affair between Kelly and Coyne nor of any romantic relationship with Donen . However , she does state that Donen 's marriage to Coyne was unhappy and that Donen was very close to both her and Kelly .

Kelly said that Donen 's impulsive marriage to Coyne showed an emotional immaturity and lack of good judgment , and stated that " Jeannie 's marriage to Stanley was doomed from the start . Because every time Stanley looked at Jeannie , he saw Betsy , whom he loved ; and every time Jeannie looked at Stanley , I guess she saw me . One way or another it was all pretty incestuous . " Kelly 's marriage to Blair ended in 1957 , after which he moved in with Coyne . They married in 1960 and had two children together . Coyne died of leukemia in 1973 . In November 2012 the musical What A Glorious Feeling depicted both the making of Singin ' in the Rain and the love triangle between Donen , Kelly and Coyne .

= = = Professional conflict = = =

Donen and Kelly 's relationship has been described as similar to that of the characters Don Lockwood and Cosmo Brown in Singin ' in the Rain , with Kelly as the star performer and Donen as his trusted sidekick . Kelly described Donen as being like a son to him and Donen initially idolized Kelly , while still finding him to be " cold , egotistical and very rough . " Although Donen credited Kelly for " jump @-@ starting his career as a filmmaker " , he also stated that MGM producer Roger Edens was his biggest promoter .

Many people believe that Donen owed everything to Kelly , and Kelly biographer Clive Hirschhorn described Donen as having " no particular identity or evident talent ... and was just a kid from the south who wanted to make it in show business . " Donen stated that he moved to Hollywood of his own accord ; other sources state that he followed Kelly , who then helped him get his first job . Kelly would sometimes embarrass and patronize Donen in public , such as berating him for not being able to keep up with his dance steps during the rehearsals for Cover Girl . Donen has admitted that he did not consider himself to be a great performer . Despite Donen 's growing resentment of Kelly , he was able to contain his feelings and professional attitude during their collaborations . Tensions between the two exploded on the set of It 's Always Fair Weather . After Donen 's recent hits Deep in My Heart and Seven Brides for Seven Brothers he did not want to make another film with Kelly . They fought on the set for the first time , with the now more confident Donen asserting himself .

Donen almost quit the film , and his friendship with Kelly ended .

Other tensions included Donen 's hit films compared to Vincente Minnelli 's Brigadoon (which Kelly was closely involved in and had wanted to direct) flop , and Kelly 's own ambitious film Invitation to Dance , both financially unsuccessful . During the shooting of Seven Brides for Seven Brothers , Donen often complained about his budgetary constraints , while Brigadoon had a much larger budget . Around that time Kelly 's unsuccessfully attempted dramatic acting with The Devil Makes Three and Seagulls Over Sorrento also flopped , and his marriage to Betsy Blair was ending .

In later years Donen would state that he had nothing nice to say about Kelly . At a 1991 tribute to Comden and Green , Kelly said in a public speech that Donen " needed [him] to grow up with " but added " I needed Stanley at the back of the camera . " He also described Donen as being thought of as his whipping @-@ boy at MGM . Although Donen often complained that Kelly never gave him enough credit for their work , Kelly did credit him for the Jerry the Mouse and " Alter Ego " dance sequences . In 1992 Donen said " I 'm grateful to him , but I paid back the debt , ten times over . And he got his money 's worth out of me . " Betsy Blair claimed to be " surprised and bemused " about Donen 's bitterness towards Kelly .

= = = Directorial careers = = =

The relative importance of the two men 's contributions has been debated by critics . David Thomson wrote about " the problem in assessing [Donen 's] career : who did what in their collaboration ? And what is Donen 's real standing as a director ? " Thomson remarked that " nothing in his career suggests that Gene Kelly could have filmed himself singing in the rain with the exhilaration of Donen 's retreating crane shot . " However set reports state that Kelly rode the camera boom between shots and during camera set @-@ ups . Donen stated that " by the time you hash it through from beginning to end ten million times , you can 't remember who did what except in a few instances where you remember getting an idea . " Composer Saul Chaplin said that " Gene was the prime mover and Stanley an eager and talented pupil . " During the shooting of On the Town , all memos and correspondence from MGM to the production were addressed exclusively to Donen and not to Kelly .

However , actress Kathleen Freeman stated that when people visited set of Singin ' in the Rain to relate their experiences during the silent era , they would ask to speak with Kelly . Singin ' in the Rain art director Randall Duell stated , " Gene ran the show . Stan had some good ideas and worked with Gene , but he was still the ' office boy ' to Gene , in a sense , although Gene had great respect for him . " Kelly became more involved with the Singin ' in the Rain script during its third draft , which was when its structure began to resemble the final version . Comparing Donen and Kelly 's films as solo directors , Donen 's were usually more critically acclaimed and financially successful than Kelly 's films . Kelly 's 1969 film Hello Dolly ! is credited with effectively killing the Hollywood musical .

= = Personal life = =

Donen married and divorced five times and had three children . His first wife was dancer , choreographer and actress Jeanne Coyne . They married on April 14 , 1948 and divorced in May 1951 . Donen 's second wife was actress Marion Marshall , who had been the girlfriend and protégé of Howard Hawks and later married actor Robert Wagner . Donen and Marshall had two sons together : Peter Donen , born in 1953 , and Joshua Donen , born in 1955 . They provided the name of Cary Grant 's character in Charade . Donen and Marshall were married from 1952 until 1959 . They had a lengthy custody battle over their two sons after Marshall married Wagner and Donen moved to England . Donen 's third wife was Adelle , Countess Beatty . She had previously been the second wife of the 2nd Earl Beatty . They married in 1960 , had one son (Mark Donen , born 1962) , and lived together in London . They separated in 1969 before divorcing in 1971 . Donen 's fourth wife was American actress Yvette Mimieux . They were married from 1972 until 1985 , but remained close friends after their divorce . Donen 's fifth wife was Pamela Braden , thirty @-@ six years his

junior . Donen proposed to her four days after having met her . They were married from 1990 until 1994 .

In the early 1940s Donen dated actress Judy Holliday while working on Broadway . He also dated Elizabeth Taylor for a year between his first and second marriages . Donen 's current longtime companion is writer and director Elaine May , who he has dated since 1999 and claimed to have proposed marriage to " about 172 times . "

Donen 's eldest son Peter Donen was a visual effects artist who worked on such films as Superman III , Spaceballs , The Bourne Identity , and The Truth About Charlie . He also designed the title credits for Blame It on Rio . He died of a heart attack in 2003 at age 50 . Donen 's second son Joshua Donen is a film producer who worked on such films as The Quick and the Dead and Gone Girl , and the television series Spartacus : Blood and Sand . Mark Donen , Stanley 's third son , worked as a production assistant on Blame It on Rio .

In 1959 , Donen 's father , Mordecai , died at 59 in Beaufort , South Carolina . His mother , Helen , died in 1989 at 84 in South Carolina , and Donen delivered the eulogy at her funeral .

With the deaths in the 2000s of Billy Wilder , George Sidney , Elia Kazan , Robert Wise , and Jules Dassin , Donen became the last surviving notable film director of Hollywood 's Golden Age . He occasionally appears at film festivals and retrospectives and has continued to develop ideas for film projects . He was the subject of the 2010 documentary Stanley Donen : You Just Do It .

In December 2013 it was announced that Donen was in pre @-@ production for a new film co @-@ written with Elaine May , to be produced by Mike Nichols . A table reading of the script for potential investors included such actors as Christopher Walken , Charles Grodin , Ron Rifkin and Jeannie Berlin . In celebration of Donen 's 90th birthday in 2014 , a retrospective of his work titled " A Lotta Talent and a Little Luck : A Celebration of Stanley Donen " was held from July to August in Columbia , South Carolina . This retrospective included a tour of Donen 's childhood neighborhood , a lecture by Steven Silverman and film screenings at the Nickelodeon movie theater , which Donen frequented as a child .

= = Filmography = =

= = = Feature Films = = =