

2013-04-22

# The Many Hats of Robert Altman: A Life in Cinema

Daub, Peggy; Gomis, Melissa; Hallman, Phil

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/110220>

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

---

*Downloaded from Deep Blue, University of Michigan's institutional repository*



# The Director and His Peers

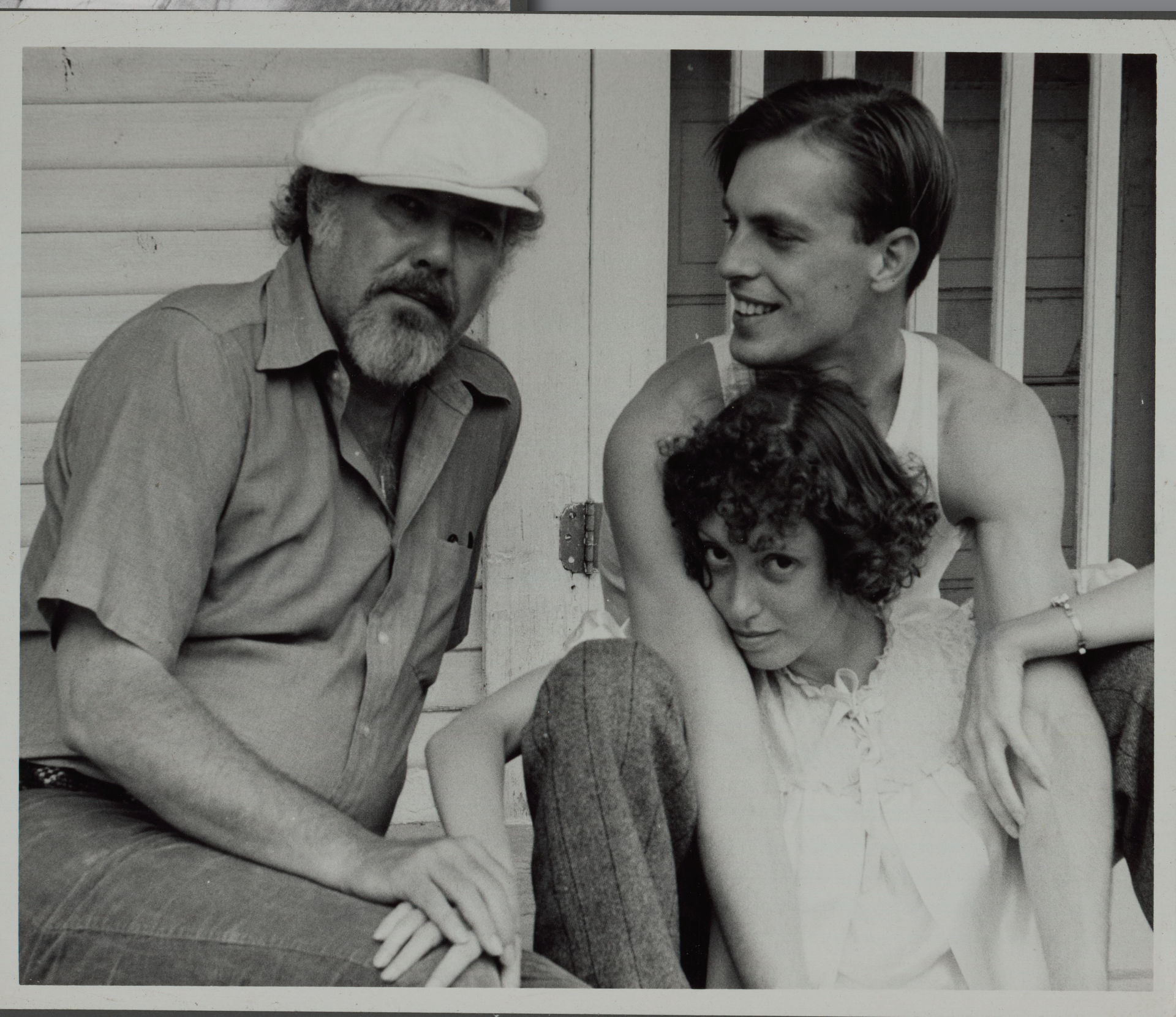
An artistic jack-of-all-trades, Robert Altman was a legend within the film industry, his innovative style and personable nature were an irresistible siren call to others. His relaxed sets, with their unconventional emphasis on collaborative filmmaking that allowed actors extraordinary access into the creative process with personal character input, original dialogue, and improvisation, fostered strong bonds and friendships. As a result, many of his collaborators, such as actors Elliott Gould, Lily Tomlin, and Shelley Duvall, returned again and again to work on multiple films. Here is a glimpse into a small sampling of these countless relationships, as reflected in the Altman Archive.

## Robert Altman and Actors

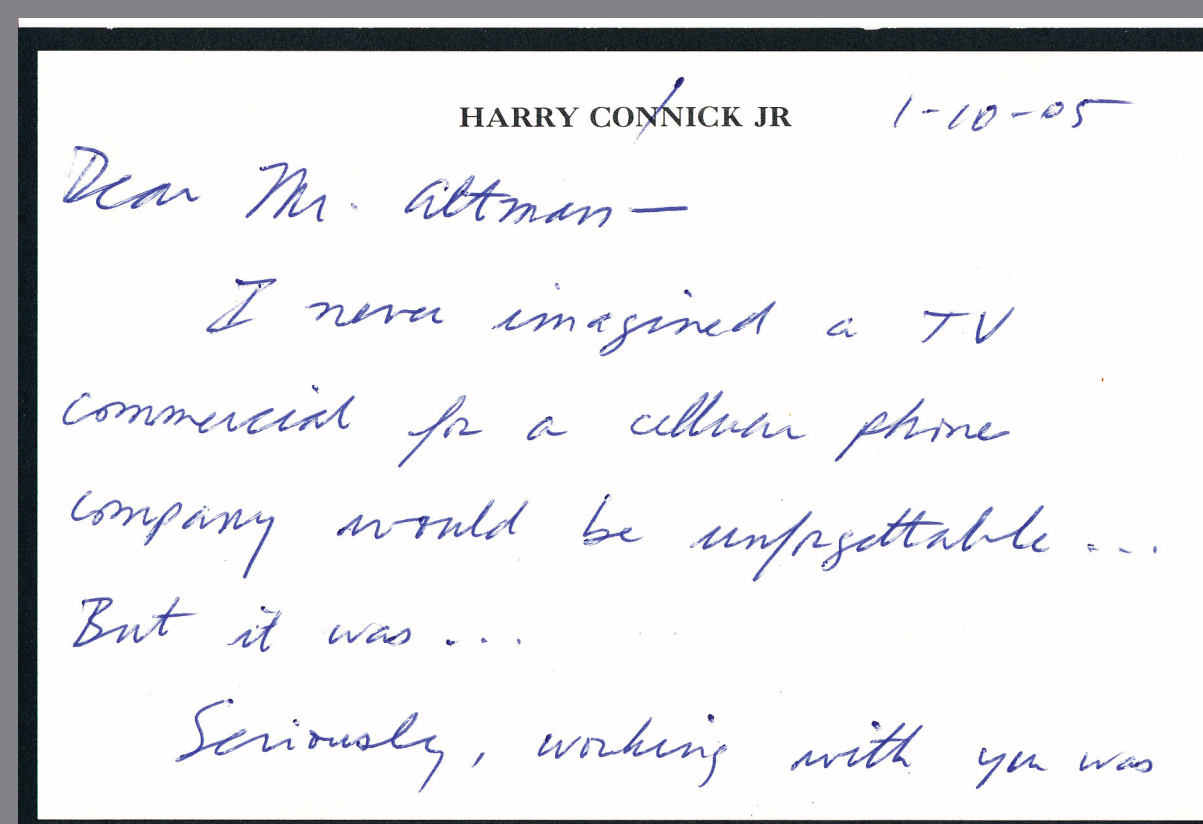


Candid images of Paul Newman and Robert Altman on the set of *Buffalo Bill and the Indians* (1976). From the "Altman Calendar," July.

This hand-made calendar was apparently a special gift to Robert Altman from his staff or family. It contains many casual photographs of the director on sets with actors as well as listings of occasions to remember.

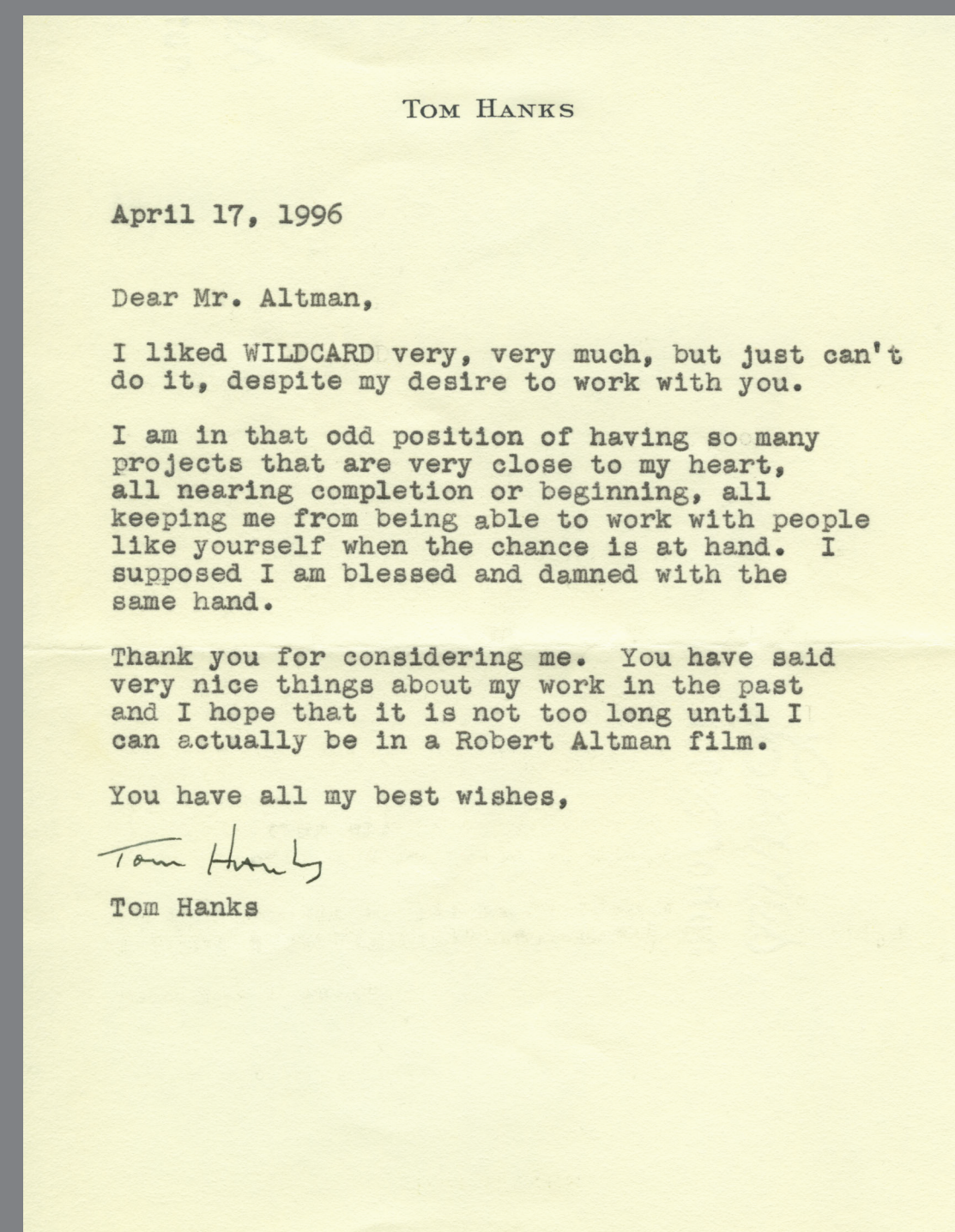
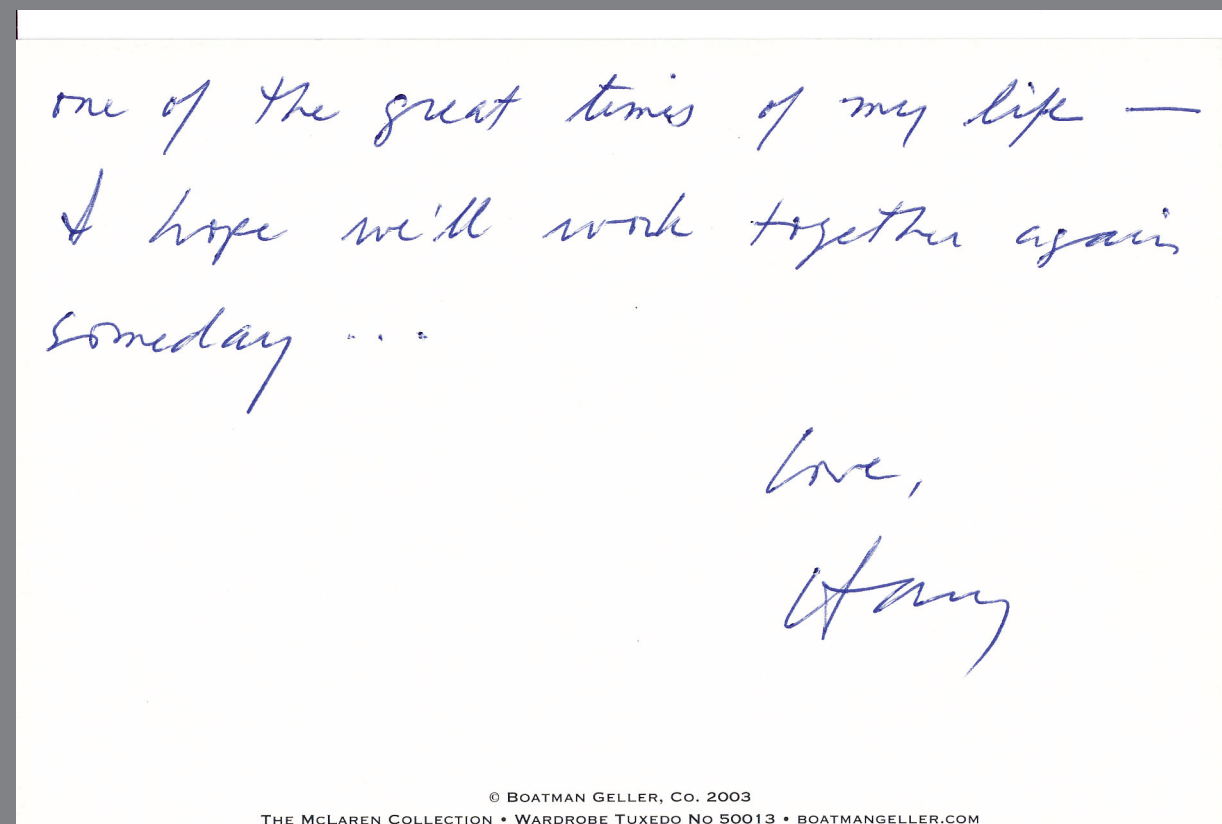


Photograph of Robert Altman, Keith Carradine, & Shelley Duvall on the set of *Thieves Like Us* (1974). From the "Altman Calendar," February.



Harry Connick Jr., handwritten Note to Robert Altman, 2005. Expresses his gratitude for working with Altman on a 2005 SunCom Wireless commercial.

*Dear Mr. Altman - I never imagined a TV commercial for a cellular phone company would be unforgettable... But it was... Seriously, working with you was one of the great times of my life - I hope we'll work together again someday... Love, Harry*



Tom Hanks, Typed Letter to Robert Altman, 1996. Although he was forced to decline Altman's offer due to previous commitments, this letter from Tom Hanks attests to the movie star's strong desire to someday work with the director, a sentiment shared by countless other Hollywood performers.

Robert Altman, Keith Carradine, and Shelley Duvall on the set of *Thieves Like Us* (1974), a film based on an Edward Anderson novel by the same name that chronicles the doomed love affair of an escaped convict and the daughter of a gas-station attendant in 1930's Mississippi.