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The Many Hats of Robert Altman: A Life in Cinema

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Robert Altman and Actors



Photograph of Allen Garfield on the set of *Nashville*. This letter from Allen Garfield, one of the actors comprising the 24-person ensemble cast of *Nashville*, shares his feeling that his part was improperly edited and he didn't enjoy his on-screen performance. Despite this dissatisfaction, he could not bring himself to deny the film's brilliance.

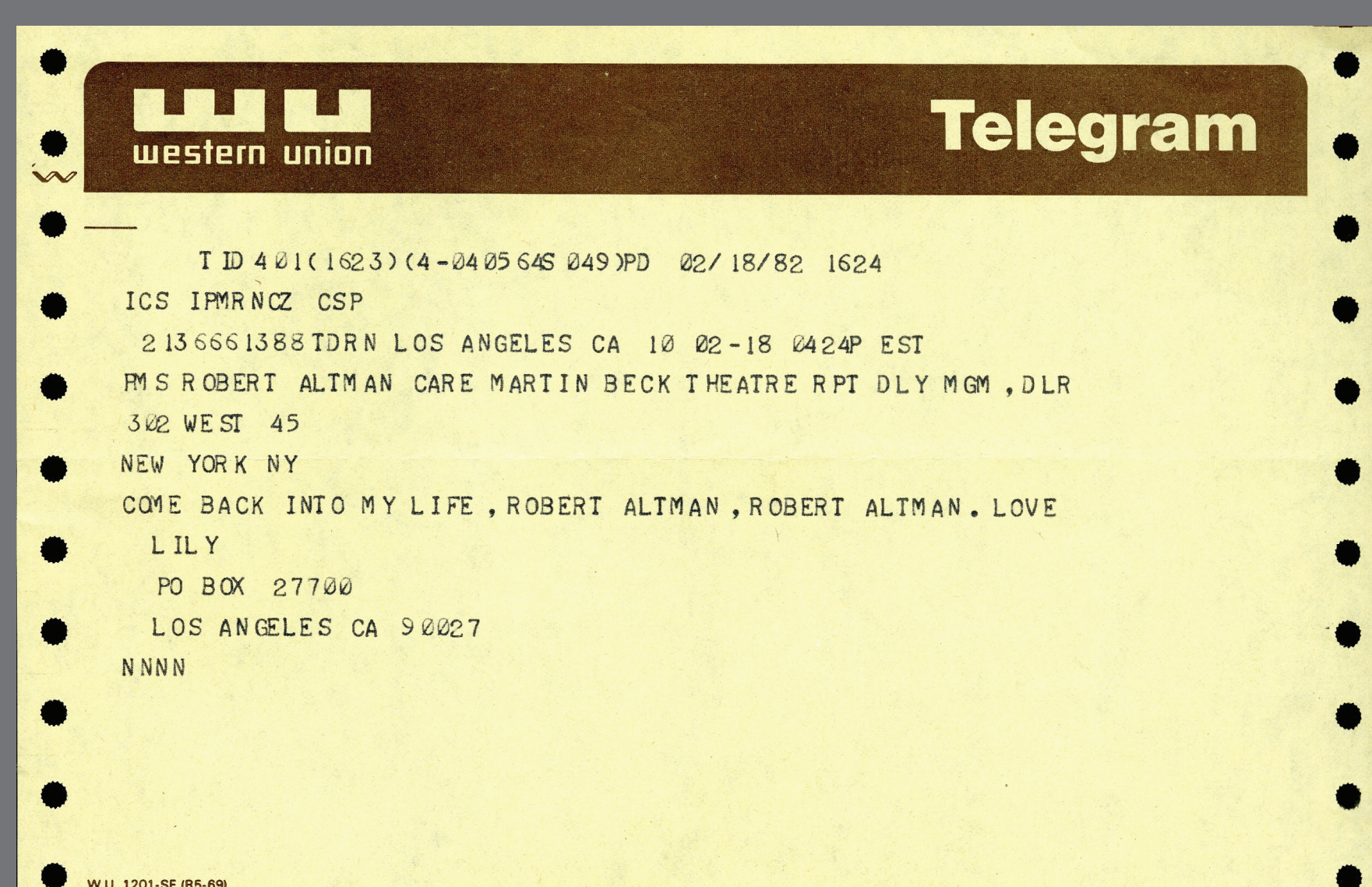
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Dear Bob,

Thank you for inviting me and Carol to Wednesday night's screening. I hope your back's feeling better completely very soon. I think you've made an unforgettably great movie with "Nashville" — I say that despite the fact I feel the entire guts and beauty of my performance and of my relationship with Barnett and Barbara Jean has been deleted virtually from the film — still

Allen Garfield, handwritten letter to Robert Altman, February 6, 1975, p. 1.

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Lily Tomlin, telegram to Robert Altman, February 18, 1982. Telegram from actress Lily Tomlin — one of several Altman "regulars" — sent to Altman while he was on Broadway directing *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*, a play that he would film for the big screen later that same year.



Photograph of Robert Altman and Elliott Gould on the set of *California Split* (1974). From the "Altman Calendar," June. Robert Altman and Elliott Gould playfully reenacting the classic Grant Wood painting, "American Gothic" on the set of *California Split*, a film that follows two gamblers to a high-stakes poker game in Reno.