The Many Hats of Robert Altman: A Life in Cinema

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Inside Hollywood

Robert Altman had his problems with the major film studios and what is usually thought of as the “film industry.” His unwillingness to change his creative ideas to make his films more commercial was well known. Yet, he lived in that culture for many years and the quality of his work made him well respected in wide Hollywood circles.

The preservation of films was a cause Altman was happy to support, and he joined with many other prominent Hollywood directors to do so through Martin Scorsese’s Film Foundation. After Steven Spielberg viewed a damaged copy of McCabe & Mrs. Miller and asked Warner Brothers to check on the condition of their films in storage, Altman stated his support for preserving any filmmaker’s work.

Altman’s highly acclaimed film The Player (1992) is a biting satirical glimpse inside the often unscrupulous dealings that occur in Hollywood. It was a world Altman knew well, and his onscreen depiction of it was much appreciated by others, “on the inside.”