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

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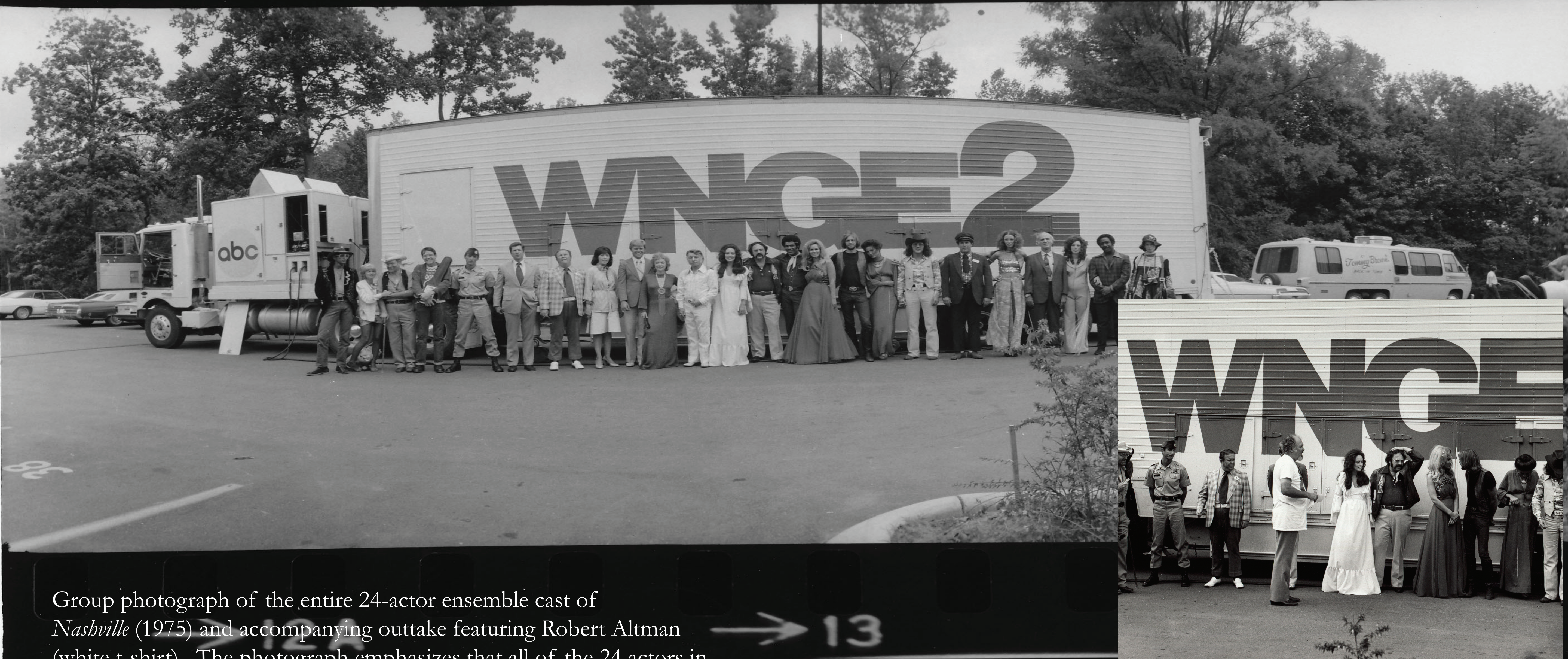
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# Nashville's Legacy

*Nashville* (1975) is the Altman film that best symbolizes his deft use of a large ensemble cast. The relationships between characters are complex, yet resoundingly real, and their large number make it a grand mural of country music, rather than a small snapshot. The film's role as a landmark in American Film was marked 25 years later by an article accompanied by a photograph of the reunited cast in *Premiere* magazine.



Group photograph of the entire 24-actor ensemble cast of *Nashville* (1975) and accompanying outtake featuring Robert Altman (white t-shirt). The photograph emphasizes that all of the 24 actors in the film had real roles with well-developed characters in this sprawling drama set against the backdrop of an impending political rally. The film was shot over eight weeks on location in *Nashville*.

Candid photograph of Robert Altman with cast of *Nashville*. From "Altman Calendar," March.

## IT HAPPENED IN NASHVILLE



Outtakes from *Premiere* magazine's 25th anniversary *Nashville* photo shoot featuring Altman and ten members of the original cast. That such recognition continued so long after its initial release is only further testament to the film's enduring impact on the industry and medium.

**PREMIERE**  
THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE

June 2, 2000

Robert Altman  
Sankofka Productions  
3000 Olympic Blvd.  
Building 3, Suite 1348  
Santa Monica, CA 90404

Dear Bob,

Enclosed please find our July issue. The *Nashville* oral history begins on p. 88. I hope it will be as fascinating and fun for you to read as it was for me to write.

I'd like to reiterate how much it meant to the magazine, and to me personally, for you to devote so much time to interviews and our photo shoot. Because *Nashville* is a film I love so deeply, I was very moved by the access you gave me into the making of the movie.

It is not often that we at *Premiere*—or I as a writer—have the opportunity to be a part of something so historic. But in this instance, we are all very grateful of this story and hope you will be as well.

We will be posting an extended version of the story—as you can imagine, there is plenty of material I couldn't use—on our website [www.premiere.com](http://www.premiere.com).

Thank you again.

Sincerely,  
Alex Lewin

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Alex Lewin, typed letter to Robert Altman, June 2, 2000. The author of the article in *Premiere* celebrating *Nashville*'s 25th anniversary, Alex Lewin, wrote a letter to Altman thanking him for the time and effort he devoted to both the photo shoot and interviews.

6-17-75  
W JUN 19 1975

Dear Bob;

I saw *NASHVILLE* at your theatre the other night. Now I can take things when they are good — but brilliant?? Then I get sick.

If I were you now, they'd have to lock me up somewhere. Jesus Christ are you terrific!

As Always  
Sidney

Sidney Lumet, handwritten note to Robert Altman, June 17, 1975.  
*Dear Bob, I saw NASHVILLE at your theatre the other night. Now I can take things when they are good — but brilliant?? Then I get sick. If I were you now, they'd have to lock me up somewhere. Jesus Christ are you terrific. As Always, Sidney*

RICHARD NIXON  
March 15, 1983  
26 FEDERAL PLAZA  
NEW YORK CITY

*Mr. Altman*

In talking with my daughter Julie recently, she told me that one of her all time favorite movies was your "Nashville".

I did not get to see it and wondered if by chance it has been or will be released in a cassette. Don't go to too much trouble but if your secretary could check it out, I would appreciate it.

With warm regards,  
Sincerely,  
Richard Nixon

Mr. Robert B. Altman  
c/o Elaine Badish  
1861 South Bundy Drive  
Los Angeles, California 90025

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Richard Nixon, typed note to Robert Altman, March 15, 1983. Appreciation of *Nashville* was far-reaching, at times leading to some unique correspondence. In 1983 — before the advent of the home theater — former president Richard Nixon sent a note to Altman requesting a copy of his daughter's favorite film.