



The Mini Page

Betty Debnam, Founding Editor and Editor at Large

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A 75-Year Enchantment

'The Wizard of Oz'

Can you finish these famous movie lines?

- "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in _____ anymore!"
- "There's no place like _____."
- "I'll get you, my pretty, and your little _____, too!"
- "Follow the _____ Road."

"The Wizard of Oz" movie first lit up movie screens in August 1939. Seventy-five years later, it is still one of the most beloved movies of all time. Say one of the movie lines above, and people know exactly what you mean.

The Mini Page talked with an Oz historian to celebrate the lasting power of "The Wizard of Oz."

Magical story

The magic of "The Wizard of Oz" starts with the great story. The movie is based on "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," written by L. Frank Baum in 1900. He had written three other books for kids before that, but the Oz books made him famous.



L. Frank Baum wrote 14 Oz books in all.

photo courtesy Library of Congress



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The Scarecrow (Ray Bolger), the Cowardly Lion (Bert Lahr), Dorothy (Judy Garland) and the Tin Man (Jack Haley) eagerly approach the Wizard.

Actor Buddy Ebsen was cast as the first Tin Man. He inhaled the silver aluminum crystals dusted on his face and suffered a severe reaction. He had to be in an iron lung, a machine to help him breathe, for two weeks. The role of the Tin Man was taken over by Jack Haley. The aluminum crystals were mixed with Haley's makeup to form a paste. That way, he would not inhale the crystals.

American adventure

"The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" was America's first fairy tale, experts say. Until that book, most kids' books were by European authors, and lessons were more important than the story.

Oz characters are independent and work to reach their dreams. Readers can understand what the characters are going through. They know about caring for a pet and how scary it would be to be lost far from home.

In the early 1900s, American girls were not usually the heroes of books. But Baum believed girls could be just as strong as boys. Girls are often the heroes of his stories.

Changing the story

The movie directors thought kids in 1939 would not like magical worlds, so they turned Dorothy's adventures into a dream. In the books, Oz wasn't a dream. It was real, and Dorothy returns to Oz in later adventures.



In the book, Dorothy's magical slippers are silver. But the movie's producers changed them to ruby so they would shine out in color.

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The Rainbow Dream

Colors of the rainbow

The bright, deep colors of “The Wizard of Oz” dazzled audiences in 1939. The movie was filmed with an advanced type of **Technicolor**, a process that made richer colors than ever before.

Walt Disney was one of the first to use the new Technicolor process, in the cartoon movie “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.” It helped make that movie super successful.

But filming live actors with the new Technicolor was still in the testing process. At that time, only about seven other full-length, live-action movies had been made with the new process. When “The Wizard of Oz” was made, only nine Technicolor cameras existed in the world.

Technicolor needed a lot of light, which made the set very hot. The costumes, especially the Cowardly Lion’s, made the actors even hotter. Filming often had to stop until the sets had cooled down.



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For the scenes where Emerald City shines in the distance, the city was drawn onto a large piece of cardboard and filmed separately. That film was then combined with the film of the actors. Lights shining through holes in the art made the city sparkle. For other scenes, sets of Emerald City were built. All of Munchkin Land and parts of the witch’s castle were built.

In the Horse of a Different Color scene, horses were coated with different flavors of Jell-O mix. Horses kept trying to lick off the sweet powder.

Technicolor

The first Technicolor process was invented in 1916. This early system had a limited range of colors. It basically worked by mixing negative strips of green and red.

In 1932, a new Technicolor process was developed that used three colors. These three colors could be used to produce every color of the rainbow. They were: **cyan** (SIGH-an), a greenish-blue; **magenta** (muh-JEN-tuh), a purplish-red; and yellow.

Over the rainbow

About the first 18 minutes of the movie were in **sepia** (SEE-pea-yuh), a soft brown color.

When Dorothy opens the door to Oz, everything bursts into color. The contrast between the sepia and the rich colors really did feel like magic to the audiences of 1939.

When Dorothy opened the door to the bright colors, early audiences gasped, and many stood up and applauded.

Ready Resources



The Mini Page provides ideas for websites, books or other resources that will help you learn more about this week’s topics.

On the Web:

- bit.ly/1z8h5th

At the library:

- “The Wizard of Oz” DVD
- “The Wonderful World of Oz: An Illustrated History of the American Classic” by John Fricke
- “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz,” “Ozma of Oz,” “The Scarecrow of Oz” and other books by L. Frank Baum



Basset
Brown’s

Try
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Find

‘The Wizard of Oz’

B	Y	H	T	O	R	O	D	D	R	A	Z	I	W	W
B	A	L	R	M	V	Y	L	D	R	A	W	O	C	I
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D	Y	N	I	T	C	L	U	F	R	E	D	N	O	W
O	N	A	M	R	O	L	O	C	I	N	H	C	E	T

Words that remind us of “The Wizard of Oz” are hidden in the block above. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: BAUM, BOOKS, BRICK, COWARDLY, DOG, DOROTHY, LION, MAGIC, MAN, RAINBOW, ROAD, RUBY, SCARECROW, SKY, SLIPPERS, TECHNICOLOR, TIN, TORNADO, WITCH, WIZARD, WONDERFUL, YELLOW.



Mini Spy

Mini Spy and Basset Brown are acting in "The Wizard of Oz"! See if you can find:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bell | <input type="checkbox"/> lock | <input type="checkbox"/> dragon | <input type="checkbox"/> chicken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> thimble | <input type="checkbox"/> number 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> frog | <input type="checkbox"/> book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ladder | <input type="checkbox"/> fish | <input type="checkbox"/> star | <input type="checkbox"/> needle |



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Rookie Cookie's Recipe Pineapple Cloud Pie

You'll need:

- 1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple with juice
- 1 (1-ounce) package instant lemon pudding (powder only)
- 1 (8-ounce) carton light whipped topping
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 9-inch prepared graham cracker pie crust

What to do:

1. Combine crushed pineapple with lemon pudding powder by beating by hand until well mixed.
2. Gently stir in whipped topping and drained oranges. Reserve 8 orange slices.
3. Pour mixture in prepared graham cracker pie crust.
4. Arrange orange slices on top as a garnish. ("Garnish" is a decoration.)
5. Chill for 8 hours. Makes 6 to 8 slices.

You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

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Meet Judy Garland



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Although Judy Garland was a star of many movies, she is best known for her role as Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz." She was 16 years old when she made the film, and by then, she had already been acting and singing for 14 years.

Judy Garland was born as Frances Ethel Gumm in 1922. Her parents were both **vaudeville** performers. (Vaudeville (VAHD-vil) was a type of live variety show that appeared throughout the U.S. in the early 1900s.)

Judy and her two older sisters sang and danced in vaudeville. When she was 13, Judy was hired by the MGM movie studio. She starred in many movies, including "Meet Me in St. Louis," "Easter Parade" and "In the Good Old Summertime." She died in 1969.

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Goldie Goodsport's Supersport



Height: 5-1
Birthdate: 10-1-2002
Hometown: Stanford, California

It is often said that "good things come in small packages." Amateur golfer Lucy Li, an 11-year-old sixth-grader, proved to be a "good thing" when she became the youngest-ever qualifier for the U.S. Women's Open Championship — one of the five major tournaments on the Ladies Professional Golf Association Tour.

Lucy was able to play in the Open after qualifying in her home state of California. She's been participating in golf events since she began training at age 7. When she was 9, Lucy won the California Women's Amateur Championship.

When she's not smashing 230-yard drives or ending her playing round with some ice cream, Lucy does her best to enjoy the moment on the golf course. "I just want to go out there and have fun and play the best I can, and I really don't care about the outcome," she said in an interview. "I can learn a lot from these great players."

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Lucy Li



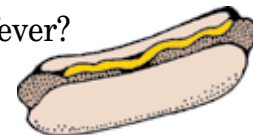
Mighty Funny's

Mini Jokes

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

David: What should you give a dog with a fever?

Danny: Mustard — it's the best thing for a hot dog!



Doris: What trick do zombies teach their dogs?

Daria: To play dead!



Debbie: Where are abandoned dogs sent?

Dexter: To an arf-anage!

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A Magical Mixture

Magical music

Harold Arlen composed the music for the movie, and E.Y. Harburg wrote the lyrics (LEER-iks), or words to the songs. These artists were already known for their songs, but this movie made them famous. Many others worked on the music as well.

In 1903, the first musical of “The Wizard of Oz” was a huge success on Broadway. But its music did not really help tell the story, and entirely new music was composed for the movie. A new script was written, too.

The most beloved song is “Over the Rainbow.” Associate producer Arthur Freed was impressed by how well the song “Someday My Prince Will Come” showed Snow White’s dreams in that movie. He wanted a song that showed what Dorothy longed for.

Today, we can’t imagine the movie without “Over the Rainbow.” But studio executives considered cutting it from the movie. They believed it slowed down the story.



“Over the Rainbow” was composed partly to show off Judy Garland’s lovely voice. It won the Academy Award for Best Song.



Margaret Hamilton, who played the Wicked Witch of the West, caught on fire in the scene where she disappears from Munchkin Land. During filming, the fire started before she was safely through the floor, and she suffered serious burns. She recovered after six weeks and was able to return to the filming.

Making up the magic

Movie techniques were so new that experts had to invent all the special effects for the movie. There were no computers. Everything had to be done the hard way.

Makeup artists figured out how to make **prosthetic** (prahs-THEH-tik), or artificial, body pieces to turn actors into the scary flying monkeys. They did such a good job that about 30 years later, they used the same process for the first “Planet of the Apes” movie.

Battery packs in the monkeys’ wings made them flap. The actors flew hanging from thin piano wire.

In the movie, it looked as if hundreds of flying monkeys filled the sky. But there were really only 12 actors. The rest were miniature rubber puppets run by hundreds of other wires. Remember, it wasn’t like it is today, when computers can just copy images.

Awesome special effects

The terrifying tornado was made with a 35-foot-long **muslin**, or lightweight cotton, stocking hanging from the top of the soundstage. A tiny motorized car was placed below the set, at the bottom of the tornado stocking. Technicians moved the car to make it look as if the tornado were sweeping across the prairie.

They filmed the scene with lots of wind machines, blowing dust and a miniature farm. The tornado footage was projected behind Dorothy as she tried to run to safety.

In all the scenes with fire, such as the flames surrounding the Wizard’s head and the Wicked Witch disappearing in flame, movie makers used real fire. The throne room set caught on fire, but everyone was prepared and no one was hurt.

To make the witch appear to melt, the actress was lowered on an elevator platform. Technicians tacked the hem of her dress to the outside of the platform. When the elevator lowered, air from the elevator shaft puffed out her dress. She wore a larger-size witch’s hat, so it looked as if she were shrinking.

The Mini Page thanks John Fricke, Oz historian and author of several books on “The Wizard of Oz,” including “The Wonderful World of Oz: An Illustrated History of the American Classic,” for help with this issue.

Look through the TV listings of your newspaper to find showings of your favorite movies.

Next week, The Mini Page is about the 100th anniversary of the Panama Canal.

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