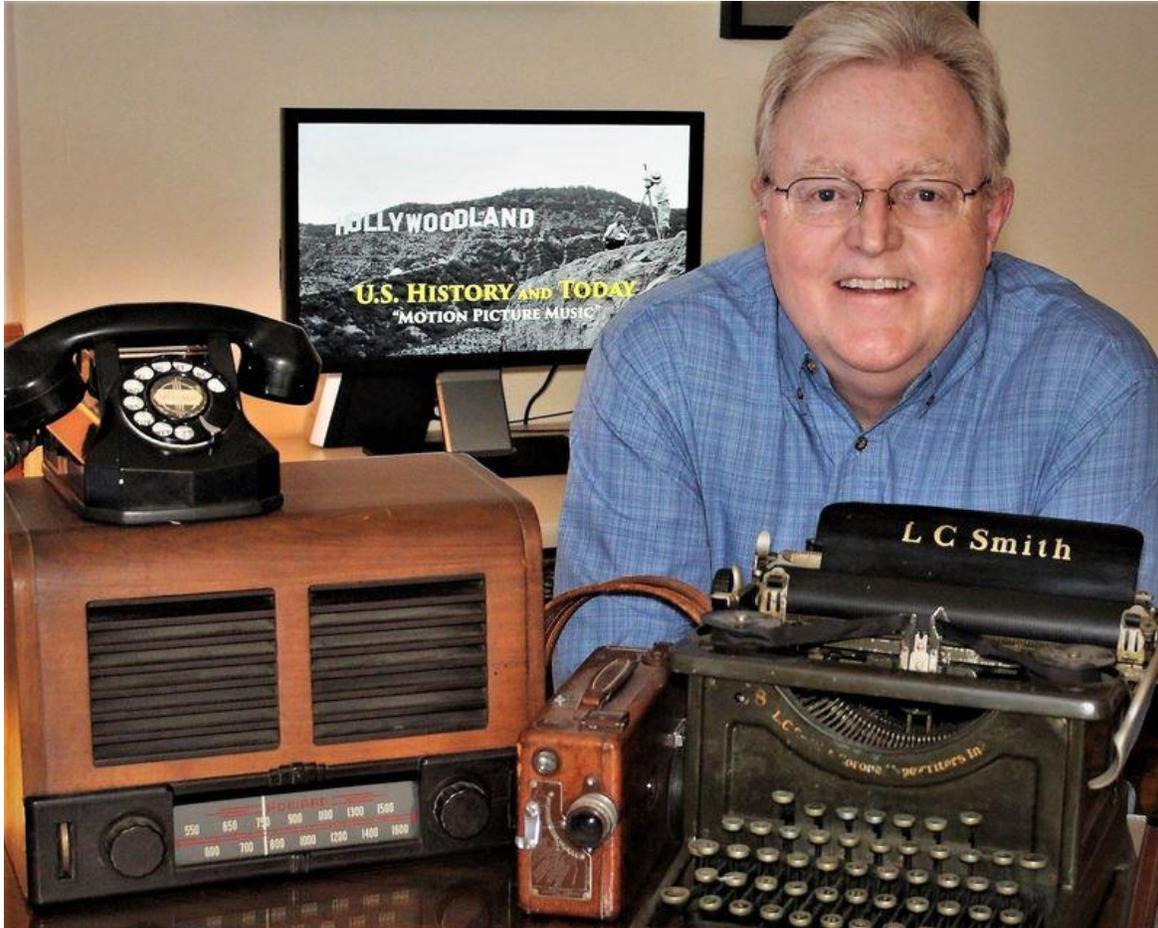


Take a trip through movie musicals

By JEN BANOWETZ, DAILY SOUTHTOWN | APR 07, 2021



Produced by film historian John LeGear, *Movie Music Romance* will take the audience on a 75-minute virtual tour through film history. The free program is hosted by the Tinley Park Public Library, with advance registration required.

Chances are you can instantly picture Gene Kelly (umbrella in hand) hanging from a slick lamp post or John Travolta and Olivia Newton John crooning about their summer exploits.

Hence the power of musical movie scenes.

Film buffs can take a romp through 23 classic songs and dances from more than 100 years of cinematic history with *Movie Music Romance* hosted virtually by the Tinley Park Public Library on April 22. Film historian John LeGear produced and leads this 75-minute movie homage to tripping the light fantastic.

“It’s pretty entertaining to tour through 100 years of American history or film history at a brisk pace and connect to so many familiar slivers of the American Experience,” LeGear said. “The show triggers memories — almost all of which are happy memories during happy times in people’s lives. In the end I’ve been packaging and presenting happiness, and it’s a remarkably rewarding thing that I get to do.”

From musical classics like “Singin’ in the Rain” (1952) and “The Sound of Music” (1965) to “West Side Story” (1961) and “My Fair Lady,” (1964) many of the film selections seem like old friends from the silver screen.

“All clips that appear in this presentation were selected entirely from films that I grew up watching and enjoying, as so many other music and film history aficionados have done,” LeGear said. “The joy of it comes from selecting specific scenes and songs that quite obviously resonate with most everyone and then editing them into a 3- or 4-minute compilation.”

Of course, it’s not just a showcase of movie musicals. The clips encompass a variety of different styles and eras, running the gamut from Charlie Chaplin’s 1918 “A Dog’s Life” to Damien Chazelle’s 2016 “La La Land.”

While you may expect “Top Hat” (1935) and “Yankee Doodle Dandy” (1942), key dance scenes from relative newcomers like the twist contest from “Pulp Fiction” (1994) and “Do You Wanna Dance” from “Silver Linings Playbook” made LeGear’s list.

“There is absolutely no element of this ‘capture-edit-package-present’ process that I don’t love,” he said. “Importing rich, clear digital versions of the songs and then synchronizing them to the film clips is both the most challenging and the most rewarding part of each chosen clip.”

Selections celebrate the wide talents of greats like Rita Moreno, the Beatles, Elvis, Gregory Hines, and, of course, Fred and Ginger.

“The most enjoyable part is sharing the experience with older audiences who grew up with these songs and dances and stars,” LeGear said. “Seniors invariably cite vivid memories of who they were with and even which movie theater they were in when they viewed the film.”