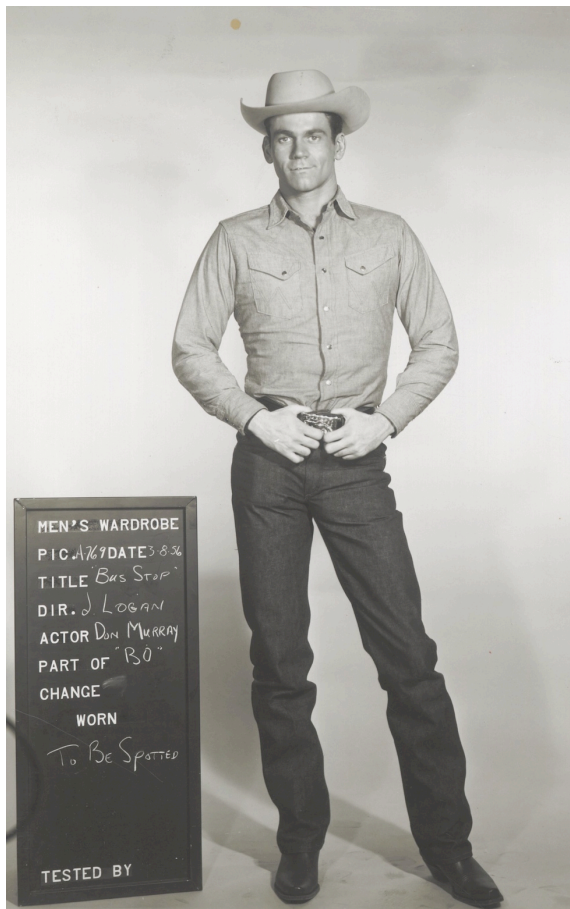


## **“A VERY SPECIAL WEEKEND WITH DON MURRAY”**

### ***ROXIE FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS NEGLECTED AMERICAN ACTOR***

San Francisco, CA (June 13, 2014) - More than two decades of oblivion are coming to an end for **Don Murray**. The 84-year-old actor/filmmaker is the subject of a forthcoming documentary, **UNSUNG HERO** (Midcentury Productions, scheduled for release in November 2014) and he'll be the subject of an ambitious retrospective at San Francisco 's Roxie Theater over the weekend of July 11-13.

“Don Murray was as big a star in the late 50s as Paul Newman,” said Roxie programmer **Elliot Lavine**, who is coordinating the retrospective in association with Midcentury Productions' **Don Malcolm**, who's producing and directing **UNSUNG HERO**. “What happened to him is one of the truly baffling events in Hollywood history, and it's a story that's just begging to be told.”



***Don Murray rocketed to stardom in BUS STOP (1956).***

The Roxie will screen fourteen of Murray 's works over the July 11-13 weekend, and the still-fit-as-a-fiddle Murray will be on hand for interviews during the course of the festival. Additionally, Midcentury Productions has announced that a new 35mm print of Murray 's long-lost interracial love triangle **CALL ME BY MY RIGHTFUL NAME** (1972) will be “re-premiered” as part of the upcoming event.

“We’re excited to be able to provide the Roxie audience with the best possible reintroduction to a film that has been otherwise lost to the public for more than four decades,” announced Malcolm, Midcentury Productions’ Executive Director, who is also producing the documentary about Murray’s life and times.

“Don Murray took off like a rocket after his appearance opposite **Marilyn Monroe** in **BUS STOP** (1956),” noted Malcolm. “But he wasn’t interested in movie stardom as practiced in 50s Hollywood. His stage training and his personal convictions—pacifism and altruistic service—set him apart from the way things worked in Tinseltown. He did things his own way, and he paid a price for it.”

The Roxie series will take a close look at Murray’s ongoing interest in the issue of race relations, which first surfaced prior to **BUS STOP** on a live television drama entitled “A Man Is Ten Feet Tall,” where he starred opposite **Sidney Poitier** in a searing tale of two dockworkers of different races and backgrounds who become friends in the maelstrom of the New York waterfront.



*SWEET LOVE, BITTER* received a bizarre promotional campaign when it was (barely) released in 1967...

One of the most significant revivals in the series will be a little-known landmark film, **SWEET LOVE, BITTER** (1967), where Murray starred with notorious 60s comedian and political activist **Dick Gregory** in a tale of a **Charlie Parker**-style jazz performer who befriends a naïve college professor who’s fallen on hard times. **Robert Hooks** and **Diane Varsi** portray a troubled interracial couple who are also involved with Gregory’s character.

“It’s a powerful film that, like many works that cut too close to the bone, was chopped up by its producers and virtually left by the side of the road after it was completed,” Malcolm explained, with a note of sadness in his voice.

Gregory and Hooks are scheduled to join Murray (Hooks in person, Gregory via Skype on the Roxie screen) after SWEET LOVE, BITTER’s screening on Saturday, July 12.

“Don Murray had a fabulous string of performances in the late 50s and early 60s.” Lavine noted, “but they rarely, if ever, get screened. It’s both vexing and perplexing, and this festival will rectify that situation. Films such as A HATFUL OF RAIN (1957), where he plays a heroin junkie hiding his addiction from his wife, or ADVISE & CONSENT (1962), where he’s a closeted gay Senator, show his commitment to cutting-edge roles that dealt with controversial social issues.”



***THE HOODLUM PRIEST should have cemented Don Murray’s career as an independent filmmaker...***

“What happened to Don Murray’s career in the 1960s is a metaphor for what happened to the United States in those years,” offered Malcolm. “UN Sung HERO will explore all that, but the first place to get a feel for Don Murray is on the big screen. People have forgotten that he was on the cutting edge of independent filmmaking in the early 1960s with THE HOODLUM PRIEST (1961). To come to the Roxie and see the promise and the achievement in that film will provide the audience with a sense of how sixties filmmaking lost something when Don Murray had so many doors slammed shut on him.”

Two of Murray's most obscure works, *THE CONFESSIONS OF TOM HARRIS* (1967) and *CALL ME BY MY RIGHTFUL NAME* (1972), will be included in the retrospective. "These films show a different side of Don Murray," Malcolm explained, "where he was breaking out of the mold of 'the earnest young man' and adding a darker side to his characters." That trend is also represented in the 1976 neo-noir *DEADLY HERO*, where Murray plays a trigger-happy cop whose career is imperiled by a less-than-"righteous kill", and in the still-controversial 1981 film *ENDLESS LOVE*.



***Murray played Brooke Shields' overly-permissive father in Franco Zeffereilli's controversial ENDLESS LOVE.***

"Don Murray has always been fascinated by characters whose lives are reaching a point of ultimate impact," Lavine noted. "You can feel the tension building on the screen. Frankly, it often makes audiences squirm."

Not playing the conventional leading man clearly dampened Murray's career, but according to Malcolm, the 84-year-old actor professes few regrets. "He has stayed true to himself, and he's one of the most genuine and most thoroughly decent human beings I've ever had the privilege to meet. Those qualities are palpable, and the Roxie audience will experience that when they'll have the chance to be with him in person."