

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

### JULIAN BLAUSTEIN (1913 - 1995)

Julian Blaustein, Adjunct Professor of Communication, Emeritus, died of cancer in Los Angeles on July 20, 1995 at the age of 82. He did not come to Stanford until 1973, after a long and distinguished career in the film industry, and he shared his knowledge and experience with many Stanford students. Initially, he taught documentary film writing and directing, drawing on his experience making documentaries for the U.S. Army Signal Corps during World War II, and for a major part of his stay at Stanford, he supervised a Master's program in Screenwriting. His students have made major contributions to the American film.

Julian was born in Boston on May 30, 1913, and went to Boston Latin School and Harvard, from which he graduated in 1933 in the depths of the depression. His rigorous and classical secondary school and Harvard education was a subject of considerable pride. After graduating from Harvard, he spent a year in flight training at the U.S. Army Air Force Academy at Randolph Field, in Texas, before abandoning this project and making his way to Hollywood.

In 1934, Julian Blaustein began as a Reader in the story department of Universal Pictures. This was a typical entry-level position for a college graduate in the Hollywood of those times. By 1939, he had been promoted to Head of the Story Department, and was hired away by the talent agency MCA to head their story department. Within a year, he had been recruited by Paramount Pictures to supervise their story department.

At the outbreak of World War II, he turned his skills to the production of troop information and training films for the U.S. Army Signal Corps, where he supervised a production unit in Astoria, New York. At war's end, he returned to Los Angeles and joined David O. Selznick Productions as Editorial Supervisor in charge of all production activities. In 1949, after two years with Selznick, he was recruited by Twentieth-Century Fox as a Producer and soon became Executive Producer in charge of all production at the studio.

At the Fox studio, Julian Blaustein produced several landmark films. In 1950, "Broken Arrow," adapted from the Elliott Arnold novel "Blood Brother" was some decades ahead of its time in the attempt to depict Native Americans fairly. He was proud of the film and the employment of 375 Apaches, the use of authentic wickiups and native musical instruments and traditional dance to enhance its authenticity. In an interview in the Los Angeles Times in 1950, he said "We treated them as people, not savages. We have tried to show that the only real 'heavies' are ignorance, misunderstanding and intolerance."

Of all his films, he was most proud of "The Day the Earth Stood Still," which he produced and his friend Robert Wise directed in 1952. He was very much aware that science fiction films are most often cautionary parables about the present. In the film, made in the depths of the Cold War, the hero, played by Michael Rennie, comes to Earth to warn mankind of the importance of living in a non-aggressive manner, and the certain doom of doing otherwise.

By 1955, the old studio system was being restructured, and Julian left Twentieth Century Fox to become an independent producer. He made "Storm Center," "Cowboy, and "Bell, Book and Candle," among other films, as an independent, working in Los Angeles and London.

Julian's classes at Stanford were frequently enlivened by the unannounced appearance of major film industry figures, with none of the publicity usually associated with their celebrity. Director Robert Wise, actors Jack Lemmon and Burt Lancaster, and a number of leading screenwriters were among the visitors to his classes. It was not at all unusual to see a familiar face in deep conversation with a group of students in Avocado Court, long after the scheduled end of class. Absent a guest, Julian himself was not shy about drawing on his own experience to illustrate important points in teaching.

Julian Blaustein came to teaching quite late in his career, but at Stanford his depth of education and breadth of interests flourished. Unlike the film industry, it was a place where so-called "unworldly" ideas really mattered, where the term "intellectual" was not an insult, and where it was normal for people to disagree on specific issues yet remain close friends. At Stanford he was a skilled raconteur about his work in the film industry, and expected that his friends would reciprocate with conversation based on their own work. He counted among his Stanford friends colleagues from such diverse fields as Psychology, History, English, Genetics, Molecular Biology, Psychiatry, and Physics.

Julian did not retire from Stanford happily. He enjoyed his students and colleagues too much to take easy leave of them, but at the time, university policy was flexible only up to a point. He left Stanford and moved back to Beverly Hills where he became active with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and as a Trustee of the Motion Picture and Television Fund. At the same time, he presided over an informal combination salon and consulting service for the many Stanford alumni in the film and television industry who had been his students.

Julian Blaustein is survived by his wife Florence, his son John, his daughter Laurie Megee, and four grandchildren.

Henry Breitrose, Chair  
Kristine Samuelson  
Donald Roberts