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'The Treasure of the Sierra Madre,' 'Justice League' and 'Wonder' at Lamorinda Theatres

By Derek Zemrak



The Rheem Theatre will screen "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre" at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 15. The film won three Oscars in 1949 (Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Walter Huston, Best Director John Huston and Best Screenplay) and it will be the last Moraga Movers Classic Movie hosted by Moraga resident and film historian, Larry Swindell. With his wealth of film history, Swindell has introduced the Moraga Mover's Monthly Classic Series over the past eight years at the Rheem Theatre.

Swindell was born in rural north Texas in 1929 (nine years after Mickey Rooney) and has been a Californian since 1940. He graduated from UCLA in 1952, where he majored in English with a history minor. After graduation, he served a two-year conscription in the U.S. Army from 1952-54.

Mr. Swindell's professional newspaper career spanned 45 years in New York, California, Pennsylvania and Texas, respectively. His newspaper career included two years as editor of The Orange County Illustrated magazine in Newport Beach. During his years in New York, he was the Broadway drama critic for a chain of eight suburban newspapers, all in New York's Westchester County. He served as literary editor for the Philadelphia Inquirer from 1967 to 1979, and for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 1980 to 1999. Larry was also a founding director of the National Book Critics Circle.

Interspersed with his newspaper career, Swindell also taught composition and literature courses at five universities: Maryland; UC Irvine; LaSalle University

(Philadelphia); Delaware; and Texas Christian University for 19 years in Fort Worth. He has had a lifelong love affair with the movie industry, and is the author of five film biographies, all heavily rooted in Hollywood history. In publishing sequence, they are:

"Spencer Tracy" (national bestseller)

Image provided

"Body and Soul: The Story of John Garfield"

"Screwball: The Life of Carole Lombard"

"The Last Hero" (this biography of Gary Cooper was a national bestseller and Literary Guild selection).

"Charles Boyer: The Reluctant Lover"

This entire collection has been published in eight languages. "While still in my teens, I was a regular panelist for screenings of The Great Films Society, the first seriously constituted study of movies both domestic and foreign, silent and sound."

His service to the community is real. His dedication to Lamorinda, especially through his hosting and championing of the Moraga Mover's Classic Movies at the Rheem Theatre, has maintained an important link to the cinematic past. The audience can always rely on Swindell's "additional information" about the cast, the directors/producers and how the movie was enjoyed by the industry in general.

Swindell was inducted into the Classic Film Hall of Fame in May 16, 2013.

Thank you, Larry, for sharing your stories and knowledge to the Lamorinda community over the past eight years. You will be missed at the Rheem Theatre.

New Movies This Week at Lamorinda Theatres

The Rheem Theatre will be showing the highly anticipated super hero film, "Justice League." Fueled by his

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restored faith in humanity and inspired by Superman's (Henry Cavill) selfless act, Bruce Wayne (Ben Affleck) enlists the help of Diana Prince (Gal Godot), to face an even greater enemy. "Justice League" also brings Aquaman (Jason Momoa) and The Flash (Ezra Miller) to the big screen.

There will be a special early screening of "Justice League" at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16.

The Orinda Theatre will be getting "Wonder," based on the New York Times bestseller. "Wonder" tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences, who enters fifth grade in a mainstream elementary school.

A special early screening is scheduled at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16.

See you at the movies!

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