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Clarence Sinclair Bull, *Alfred Hitchcock and the MGM Lion*, 1958. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the John Kobal Foundation.

### ***Preserving the Legends of Tinsel-town***

Santa Barbara Museum of Art Presents International Debut of ***Made in Hollywood***

July 12 – October 5, 2008

June 16, 2008 – Garbo, Dietrich, Swanson, Harlow, Gable, Hepburn, Bogart... these are some of the names synonymous in people's minds when it comes to remembering the golden age of Hollywood. What about the names of George Hurrell, Clarence Bull, Ruth Harriet Louise, Robert Coburn, or Ernest Bachrach? They are perhaps less recognizable, but they fundamentally filled some of the most important roles in Hollywood history – they were the photographers of the stars, and they launched many a successful career, keeping the best in the limelight and Hollywood as a place where dreams were realized in the consumer's mind.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art proudly presents the exhibition ***Made in Hollywood Photographs from the John Kobal Foundation*** showcasing more than 90 original vintage prints by the most important photographers working in Hollywood from 1920 - 1960. The exhibition is organized by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and makes its worldwide debut in Santa Barbara before being presented in venues in the United States and Europe. It is being co-curated by Karen Sinsheimer, SBMA Curator of Photography, and Robert Dance, film historian and co-author of ***Gab's Gab's***

The collection of works in the exhibition are chosen from The John Kobal Foundation, a fine art archive of more than 4,500 original vintage photographs featuring the major studios and stars from the late teens until about 1960.



Scotty Welbourne, *Humphrey Bogart*, 1940. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the John Kobal Foundation.



Robert Coburn, *Rita Hayworth for "Gilda"*, 1946. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the John Kobal Foundation.

The Foundation is the legacy of John Kobal (1940-1991) who was among the pioneering generation of Hollywood historians and among the first to examine seriously the photographs taken to promote the stars, the films, and Hollywood as place. Among the collections are a vast trove of original, 8 x10" negatives and extensive documents, including oral histories relating to the life and career of the photographers who recorded this important aspect of American cultural life.

"[John] Kobal first started seriously examining and acquiring Hollywood portraits and stills in the 1960s when this material was considered nothing more than insignificant Hollywood ephemera," notes Robert Dance, co-curator of the exhibition. "Only a few film enthusiasts, including Kobal, scrambled and competed to acquire original studio photographs. Kobal did, however, collect better than the others, and in the end used his extraordinary collection in the service of restoring the reputations of the photographers who had helped create the stars in the first place."

Kobal's love affair with the movies when he was a boy in Austria in the 1940s bloomed into a ravenous tenacity to get close to tinsel-town's elite. Robert Dance's essay highlights a poignant example:

"Kobal's first brush with the tinsel-town glamour he had read and fantasized about came when he was twenty. Marlene Dietrich was to give a concert in Toronto. For the first time one of his idols from the screen would appear before him in person. The anticipation was intoxicating and Kobal was determined not only to see the legend on stage but to meet her as well. The charm that served him well throughout his life must have been in full force the day he invaded the press office of Toronto's O'Keefe Theater. Claiming to be a reporter from Ottawa (his hometown), he tried to secure an interview. Impossible. In fact he would not even be able to go backstage after the performance. But he did get backstage by following a crush of well-wishers. There before him was Dietrich. Taller than the others crowded around her, he addressed Dietrich in the booming voice of youth in his native German. This caught her attention and after an ensuing conversation of sorts, consisting of shouts over the room's din, he secured an invitation to the opening night party... That evening with Dietrich (and the day that followed) foretold what would become a lifetime of making friends with many of the celebrated giants of the screen, especially the ladies whom he held in utter fascination and who became just as fascinated by him."

The resulting collection provides a platform for the ***Made in Hollywood*** exhibition which includes prints of some of the greatest stars during the golden age of the film industry, along with behind-the-scenes looks of sets. The majority of the works are 11x14" original, vintage prints, with approximately 8 printed specifically for the exhibition from the original negatives.

***Made in Hollywood*** is the third in a series of exhibitions organized by and on view at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art that highlights the golden age of film. It is complement to the two previous exhibitions, ***Ruth Harriet Louise and Hollywood Glamour Photography*** in 2002 which focused on the Hollywood photographer, and ***Garbo's Garbo*** in 2005 which celebrated the star. ***Made in Hollywood*** is accompanied by a catalogue published by Steidl which contains more than 200 images drawn from the Kobal archive.

This exhibition is made possible through the generosity of SBMA PhotoFutures, Susan and John Sweetland, and an anonymous donor.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is a privately funded, not-for-profit institution that presents internationally recognized collections and exhibitions and a broad array of cultural and educational activities as well as travel opportunities around the world.

***Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.  
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