

# Jesus At The Movies

**OLLI Spring Semester – 2017**

**Based on “Jesus At The Movies” by W. Barnes Tatum**

**Presented By: Jack Dalby**



# The King of Kings

Directed By: Cecil B. DeMille - 1927

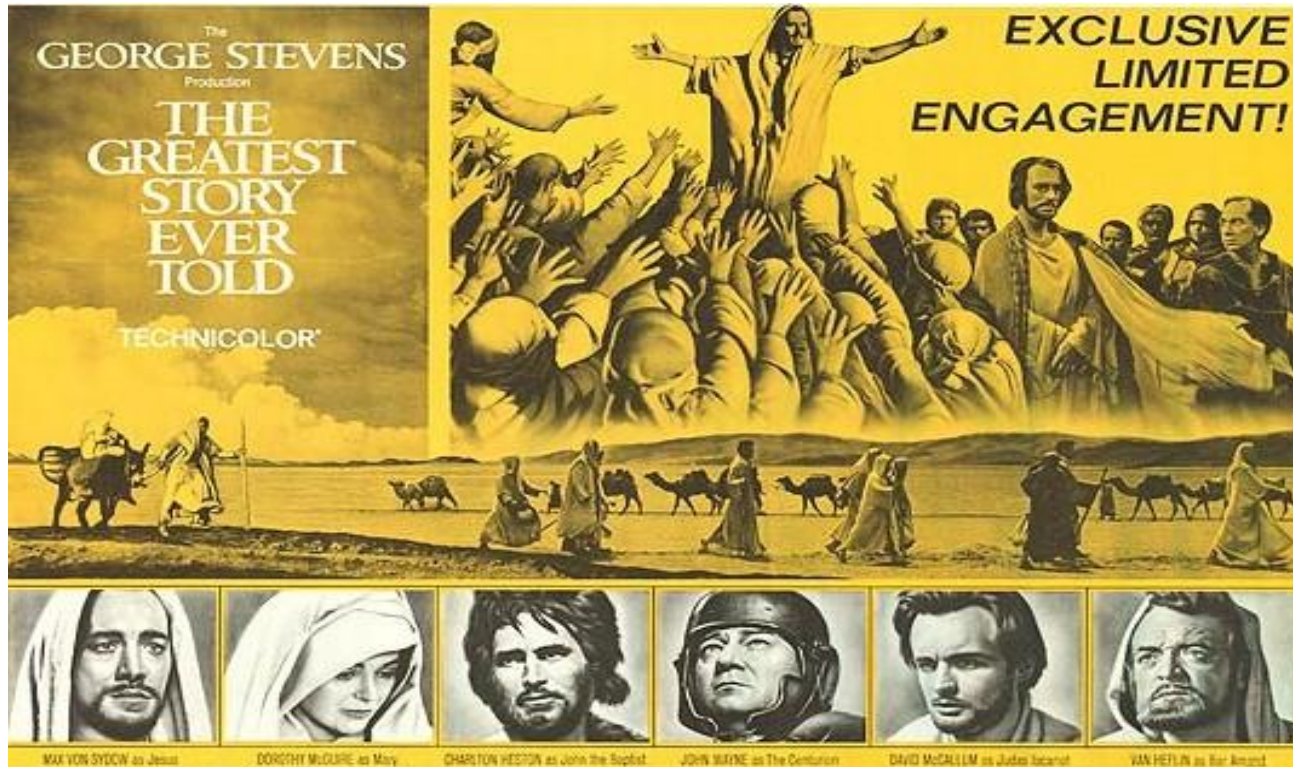


# Did You Know That...

- 1) One of the last, great, silent films.
- 2) The movie cost over two million dollars. Premiered on 4/19/27 at the Gaiety Theatre in NYC.
- 3) DeMille claimed that his movie told the story of Jesus to more people than any other medium except the Bible (800 million).
- 4) DeMille sought the advice of religious advisers to ensure accuracy. (Hail Caesar video)
- 5) DeMille encouraged prayer on the set, including Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist.
- 6) The actors contracts stipulated that they must lead exemplary lives away from the set.
- 7) The actor playing Jesus, H.B. Warner, could only speak to DeMille while in costume.
- 8) DeMille revised scenes and titles asked for my Jewish groups.

# The Greatest Story Ever Told

Directed By: George Stevens - 1965

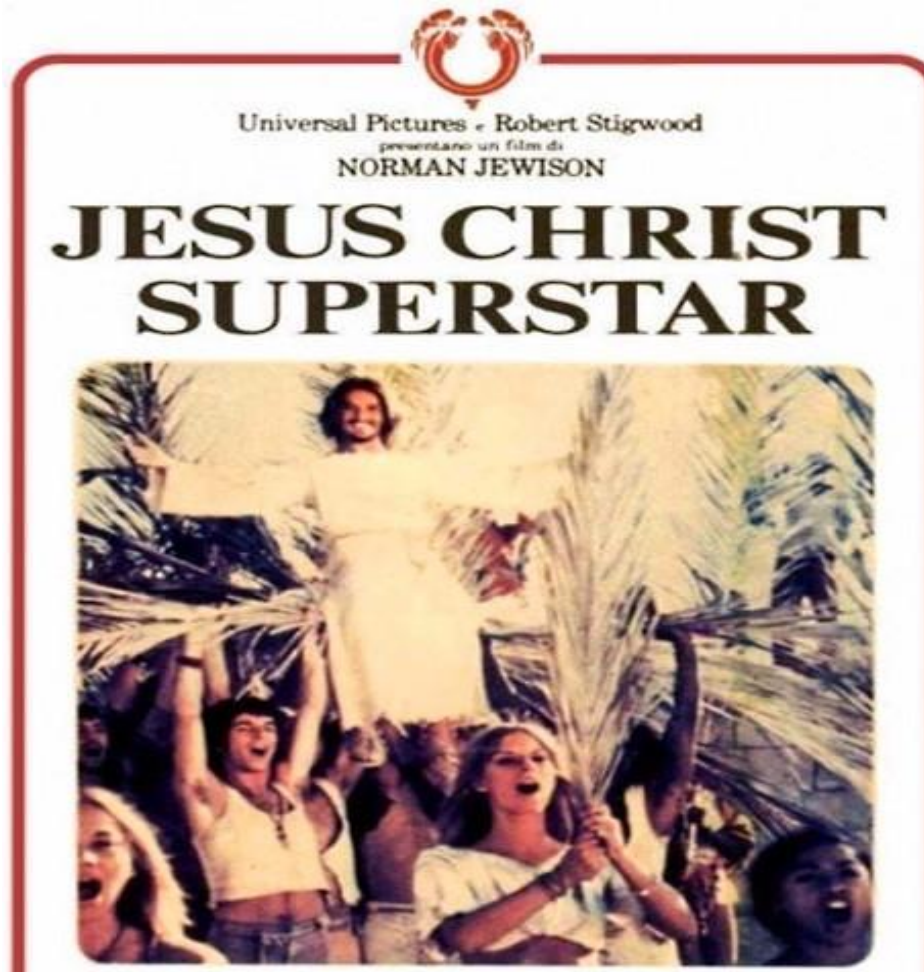


# Did You Know That...

- 1) George Stevens wanted to film in Israel, but settled on sites in the American southwest, especially Glen Canyon in Utah.
- 2) The movie's 10 million budget swelled to 20 million.
- 3) The character of Jesus was played by Swedish actor, Max Von Sydow.
- 4) Supporting actors included, Pat Boone, Charlton Heston, Van Heflin, Angela Lansbury, Sidney Poitier and John Wayne to name just a few.
- 5) Critics noted that Jesus was in competition with not only a who's-who of Hollywood stars, but also a landscape familiar to fans of countless "westerns."
- 6) The movie was 260 minutes long with a formal intermission.
- 7) The devil, played by Donald Pleasance, is called the dark hermit.
- 8) The movie opened one month before the civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama

# Jesus Christ Superstar

Directed By: Norman Jewison - 1973



# Did You Know That...

- 1) The movie is based on a musical and gives us a singing Jesus.
- 2) Godspell was released the same year.
- 3) Music was composed by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber.
- 4) Started as a single song; became a two disc album; next came a touring rock opera then a 1971 stage production before being adapted for film.
- 5) The original Broadway Jesus, Jeff Fenholt, went on to become a televangelist.
- 6) The movie was filmed in Israel.

# The Last Temptation Of Christ

Directed By: Martin Scorsese - 1988



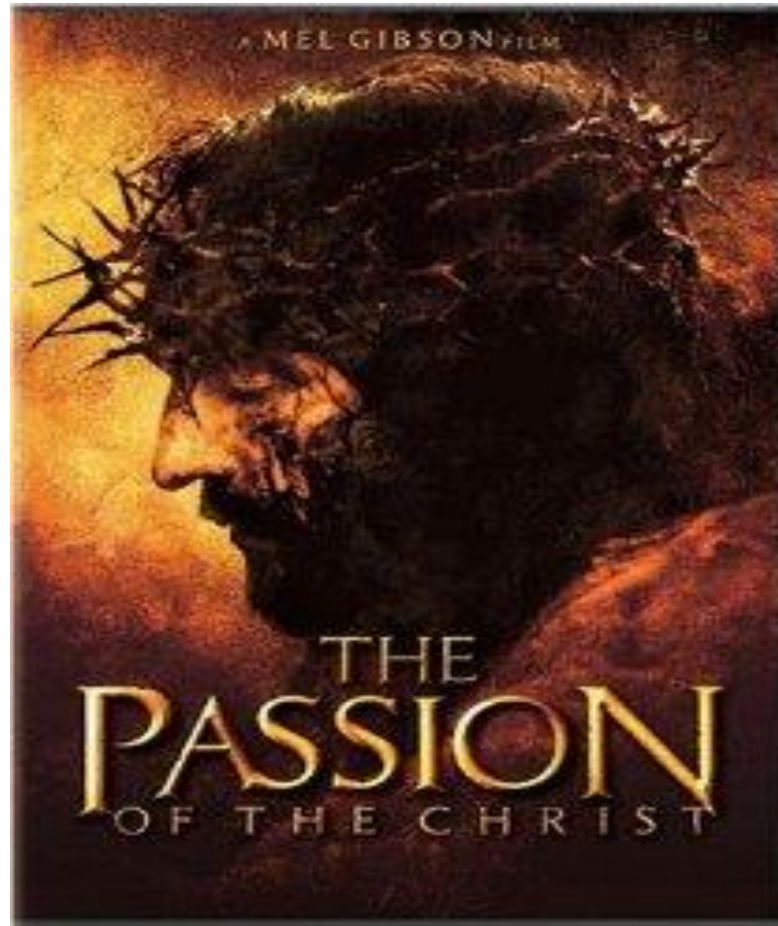


# Did You Know That...

- 1) The movie is based on a 1955 novel by Nikos Kazantzakis. Translated from Greek to English in 1960.
- 2) The Jesus story is used by Kazantzakis to examine his own lifelong struggle between the flesh and the spirit.
- 3) Scorsese waited to make the movie, directing Mean Streets, Taxi Driver and Raging Bull in the interim.
- 4) A letter writing protest convinced Paramount to drop their support of the movie in 1984. Universal agreed to finance the movie in 1987. Shooting was moved from Israel to Morocco.
- 5) Jerry Falwell called for a boycott of all theaters showing the film.
- 6) Ironically, Universal studio chairman, Lew Wasserman, himself a Jew, was accused by Christian groups of fomenting anti-Jewish hatred.

# The Passion Of The Christ

Directed By: Mel Gibson - 2004



# Did You Know That...

- 1) The film was released on Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2004.
- 2) Mel Gibson self financed the \$25 million film.
- 3) Gibson directed the movie. His hand makes an on screen appearance holding a nail during the crucifixion.
- 4) The film was shot in Matera, Italy.
- 5) James Caviezel plays Jesus. He also starred in the TV show, Person of Interest, through 2016.
- 6) Gibson originally wanted his actors to speak in Aramaic and Latin without subtitles.
- 7) The movie grossed \$350 million by Easter weekend.