

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

ACADEMY AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE 1986

Produced and directed by Brigitte Berman

CANADA 1985

115 minutes

NEW 4K RESTORATION AND REMASTERED SOUND Supervised by Brigitte Berman

World Premiere of the restored film at the Toronto International Film Festival 2023

Theatrical New York Premiere Film Forum, NYC – January 5, 2024

PRODUCTION NOTES (as written in 1985)

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

In November 1939, Artie Shaw shocked the music world when he walked away from a then million-dollar career. A few days later, the New York Times published the following editorial: "The dramatic exit of Artie Shaw from the mad, musical and cinematic whirl, and his departure for Mexico by order of his physician, was another of the week's events which would seem to require subtle editorial interpretation. At the moment however, any commentary that might occur to us would be lost in our sense of admiration at the Shakesperean sweep of Mr. Shaw's exodus: the kind of spectacularly irreverent farewell to his work and former associates that even the timidest soul must occasionally dream of, a beautifully incautious burning of all his bridges behind him...What is it anyway about people named Shaw that makes them so stimulating?"

Fourty-six years later, people are still asking the same question.

Canadian independent Producer/Director Brigitte Berman first met Artie Shaw in 1980, when she interviewed him for a documentary film about the life of cornetist Bix Beiderbecke. Two years later she showed him and the late Los Angeles Times' film critic Charles Champlin, the completed film '*BIX "ain't none of them play like him yet*''' when the film was invited to Filmex in Los Angeles. When Artie Shaw asked her what she wanted to do next, her prompt answer was: "As a matter of fact, a documentary about your life Mr. Shaw." The reason for her choice: Artie Shaw is the exact opposite of Bix Beiderbecke - a survivor.

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got is in essence a film about the individual as a survivor and what it takes to be a survivor and still remain an artist. It's easy to love those who are unique and who die young. It's more difficult to love those who dare to be different and who continue to fight for their difference.

Bix Beiderbecke was an elusive figure, though loved by everyone; an artist fantastically gifted with everything but worldly wisdom. He was a victim to the tough and riotous living of the 20s which was the lifestyle of so many musicians. When Bix died at the young age of 28, he was in such a weakened physical condition that an attack of pneumonia took his life easily.

Artie Shaw at the young age of 29 was already a symbol of the American success story. And though he had achieved fame and fortune, he never succumbed to the trappings of success. People either loved him for his intellect, his courage and his daring to be different or they hated him for his conceit, his willful rudeness and his audacity to throw away success after success. "While a quarter of a million will buy a lot of things, it won't buy the energy you blew out making it. I learned it the hard way, at the expense of almost losing my life."

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got is the first film profile about the life of this popular and controversial Big Band Leader and Clarinetist. Previously, Shaw had been approached by several people who wanted to tell his life story on film and he had always refused. This time he agreed, largely of the evidence of Berman's feature documentary 'BIX: "ain't none of them play like him yet".

Choosing to make a film about a strong-willed perfectionist like Shaw proved no easy matter. Every fact had to be correct, and when poetic license was taken, that too had to be based on factual evidence. For the next three years, Berman re-traced his footsteps, clear across the United States and into Europe. She searched out every location important to Shaw's life. Among those places filmed as part of the story: his first farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, where Shaw had lived almost fifty years ago; his dairy farm 'Picardy' in upstate New York where he wrote his first book 'The Trouble with Cinderella'; the house that he had built for himself in Spain - Spain was his refuge from America and the climate of Mc Carthyism of the 50s - and his house in Lakeville, Connecticut when he returned to the U.S. And finally his home in Newbury Park, California where Berman interviewed Artie Shaw.

Over four long days Berman interviewed Shaw, going over every aspect of his life, both the joyous and the painful ones. It was an experience from which Shaw emerged with the comment: "I feel like my head has been vacuumed."

She spoke with numerous musicians, associates and friends; some of whom were eventually interviewed on film. And one of his eight wives, Evelyn Keyes. She was the one to whom he was married the longest and who knew him the best.

Because no complete record of his life exists to date, the facts had to be stitched together from the accounts of Artie Shaw; from personal diaries; from countless write-ups and reviews about Shaw that had appeared in print over the last 50 years, much of which was pulled together from Archives all over the United States; from scrap books kept by wives of various band members; from researcher John Harding and from Shaw's own book which is in part an autobiography and was written in 1950-52.

While the film was in the making, Berman worked as a full-time television producer/director, with every free moment spent working on the Artie Shaw documentary. Eventually, for the final months of completion, she quit her day job and worked as an independent producer, devoting all her time to the finishing of the film.

SYNOPSIS:

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

"Beware of what you wish for in your youth, you may be so unfortunate as to get it. I got it and I realized it was not what I wanted." Artie Shaw

Academy Award-winning film **Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got** portrays the life of the restless and gifted clarinetist/bandleader. He broke the color barrier by hiring legendary Billie Holiday, Hot Lips Page and Roy Eldridge for his bands. He was outspoken, independent and an intellectual, never satisfied with the life he was living at the moment. Shaw's complex love/hate relationship with his own celebrity caused him to walk away from performing almost as many times as he walked away from marriages with the most beautiful women. One of the women, actress Evelyn Keyes (*Gone With The Wind, Here Comes Mr. Jordan*) was married to Shaw the longest and she illuminates their personal life with wit and emotion. This entertaining documentary is much more than a jazz film - it's the insightful story of a brilliant and complex individual.

INTERVIEWEES:

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

The following are interviewed, in order of appearance:

- Artie Shaw
- **Polly Haynes**
- John Wexley
- Lee Castle
- John Best
- Helen Forrest
- Buddy Rich
- Mel Tormé
- Mack Pierce
- Frederic Morton
- **Evelyn Keyes**

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

Producer/Director

Associate Producer

Writer/Narrator

Camera

Sound Recording

Animation Camera

Editor

Sound Editing/ Additional Editing

Music Score

Post Production

Brigitte Berman

Don Haig

Brigitte Berman

Mark Irwin Jim Aquila

Gerry Jest Jon Brodin

John Derderian Visual Arts

Brigitte Berman

Barry Backus

Artie Shaw and his Orchestras

Film Arts, Toronto

RESTORATION CREDITS:

Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got

4K PICTURE RESTORATION BY:

Patrick Duchesne, Frank Biasi, Jim Fleming at Picture Shop, Toronto, Canada

SOUND RESTORATION BY:

Daniel Pellerin

Brigitte Berman is an Academy Award®-winning producer, director, editor and writer who was born in Frankfurt, Germany, and graduated from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, where she studied English and Film. Her work in the film and television industry encompasses more than thirty-five years. She has produced and directed over two hundred documentaries, both independently and at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

With her independent production company, *Bridge Film Productions Inc.*, Berman has directed and produced two feature documentaries **ARTIE SHAW: Time Is All You've Got** and **BIX: "ain't none of them play like him yet**". Both have been showcased at numerous international film festivals. **BIX** won her the Bronze Hugo at the *Chicago International Film Festival*, and **ARTIE SHAW: Time is All You've Got**, won the **Academy Award** for Best Feature Documentary, as well as **First Prize** at the *Valladolid International Film Festival*. Subsequently she wrote, directed and produced her first dramatic feature **The Circle Game**, which had its world premiere at *TIFF*, as well as showcasing at a number of international film festivals.

Berman has continued to work as a writer, director and producer both in theatre and in film, making documentaries and dramas to the present day. Berman and Victor Solnicki's controversial and award-winning **Hugh Hefner: Playboy**, **Activist and Rebel** (2010) feature documentary has been shown at over twentyfive International Film Festivals. It showcases Hefner's role as a pioneer during the civil rights movement. The *42nd NAACP Image Awards* nominated **Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel** for Outstanding Feature Documentary.

The River of My Dreams: A Portrait of Gordon Pinsent is the second collaboration for Berman and her late husband, producer Victor Solnicki. It had its world premiere at *TIFF* in 2016. The film features one of Canada's great icons – Gordon Pinsent. It was also showcased at the *Atlantic Film Festival* in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and was the Opening Night Gala at the *St. John's International Women's Film Festival*. Subsequently the film travelled across Canada with numerous festival and art house screenings, including a special presentation for Canada's 150th Birthday Celebration at Ottawa's National Art Centre in February, 2017.

Hugh Hefner's After Dark: Speaking Out in America, is the third collaboration for Berman and Solnicki and is the brain child of her late husband and writing/producing partner, Victor Solnicki. The film was completed in August 2018

and world premiered at the *Telluride Film Festival* and went on to screen at numerous other international Film Festivals. It won the 'Audience Choice Award for Most Popular Canadian Film' at the *Whistler Film Festival* in December 2019 and won the Best Documentary Feature Film Award at the *Montana International Film Festival* in 2019.

Currently she is in pre-production on her next feature documentary film. During the pandemic, she took the opportunity to restore her first feature documentary film **BIX:** "ain't none of them play like him yet. On August 6th, 2021, this newly restored film world premiered at the *Film Forum* in New York City where it received a New York Times 'Critics Pick' and several excellent reviews.

In 2023 she restored her Oscar-winning documentary **ARTIE SHAW: Time Is All You've Got** which will have its world premiere at the 2023 Toronto International Film Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY (select highlights):

2022 onward production of new feature documentary

2018 - Hugh Hefner's After Dark: Speaking Out in America feature documentary – 101 minutes director/producer/writer/editor

<u>Awards:</u>

Audience Choice Award – Most Popular Canadian Film Whistler Film Festival - 2018

Invited to Telluride Film Festival - 2018

Best Documentary Feature Film Award – 2019 Montana International Film Festival

- 2016 The River of My Dreams: A Portrait of Gordon Pinsent feature documentary – 104 minutes director/producer/writer/editor
- 2010 Hugh Hefner: Playboy, Activist and Rebel feature documentary – 124 minutes director/producer/writer/editor

Awards:

Nominated for NAACP Image Award for outstanding theatrical documentary of 2010 First Prize – Rhode Island Intl. Film Festival Runner-up for audience award at the Whistler Film Festival and the London Documentary Film Festivals

- 2008 Valkyrie: The Plot to Kill Hitler documentary – 90 minutes co-producer
- 2004 Light One Candle documentary – 60 minutes director/writer/editor
- 2002 Ta Voix Dans La Nuit drama – 30 minutes director/writer/editor
- 2001 Le Porte-Bonheur drama – 30 minutes writer/director/editor
- 1999 Testing the Limits dramatic MOW – 100 minutes director/writer
- 1995 The Circle Game dramatic feature – 116 minutes writer/director/producer/editor
- 1980 2003 wrote/directed and produced over two hundred documentaries both independently and for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation of various lengths up to 90 minutes
- 1989 The Break dramatic short – 25 minutes writer/director/editor
- 1989 A Date dramatic short – 10 minutes writer/director/editor
- 1985 Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got feature documentary – 115 minutes writer/director/producer/editor Bridge Film Productions Inc.
- Awards: Academy Award (OSCAR) 1986

Best Documentary – Time of History Valladolid Intl. Film Festival - 1986

- 1984 Robert Bateman: A Celebration of Nature CBC documentary – 30 minutes writer/producer/director
- Awards: CHRIS Plaque Award Columbus Intl. Film Festival
- 1983 The Osbornes: A Very Special Family CBC documentary – 30 minutes writer/producer/director
- 1982 The Many Faces of Black CBC documentary – 90 minutes writer/director/producer
- 1981 Bix: "Ain't None Of Them Play Like Him Yet" feature documentary – 112 minutes writer/director/producer/editor Bridge Film Productions Inc.
- <u>Awards:</u> Bronze Hugo Award Chicago Intl. Film Festival

Honorable Mention San Francisco Intl. Film Festival

- 1979 How Music Came To The Garden City CBC documentary – 60 minutes writer/director/producer
- 1978 Elmira CBC documentary – 60 minutes writer/director/producer