

THE
CITIZEN KANE
CRASH COURSE ON CINEMATOGRAPHY

A wildly fictional account of how Orson Welles learned everything about the Art of Cinematography in half an hour. Or was it a weekend?

DAVID WORTH

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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the more they stay the same ...”

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2 P



Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact

Many Flee Homes to Escape "Gas Raid From
Mars"—Phone Calls Swamp Police at
Broadcast of Wells Fantasy

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## OUSTED JEWS FIND REFUGE IN POLAND AFTER BORDER STAY

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WELLES ON THE RADIO / WAR OF THE WORLDS HEADLINE

## ACT I

# THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD...

The Orson Welles phenomenon that swept across America in 1939 after he had unleashed his radio play based on the H.G. Wells book *War of the Worlds* was astounding and the executives in Hollywood basically saw nothing but big box office dollars looming up on their horizons. So much so that RKO Studios more or less offered Mr. Welles *carte blanche*, even tossing in the unheard of addendum of having “Final Cut” on his very first feature film. The additional perks, which enabled their new resident genius to remain deliriously content, gorging himself on imported whiskey, filet mignons, and call girls in the Presidential Suite at the Beverly Hills Hotel... well this



**BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL**

## ACT II

**TOES,  
T%&T,  
TITS,  
TEETH...**

The Beverly Hills Hotel opened in 1912 and by the 1920s it had already become a glamour establishment that attracted stars like Charlie Chaplin, Gloria Swanson, Rudolph Valentino, and the honorary mayor of Beverly Hills, Will Rogers. It was known for its secluded bungalows that were used by celebrities for their many and assorted trysts. Being located above Sunset Boulevard somehow made it seem more remote than it actually was, which usually gave rise to a kind of wild abandon by those guests who frequented its spacious suites, dark hallways, intimate restaurants, dimly lit lounges, and aforementioned bungalows.

The El Jardin Restaurant wouldn't become the Legendary Polo Lounge for several more years when Mr. Welles took up his residence in the Presidential Suite, in 1939. After all nothing it seemed was too good



**PINK'S HOT DOGS 1940**

## ACT III

LET  
THERE  
BE  
LIGHT...

Paul Pink was an entrepreneur ... he had opened his hot dog stand in 1939 next to the gas station among the weeds and rolling hills near the corner of Melrose and La Brea Avenues in Hollywood. It would be nearly seven more years before he traded in his famous hot dog wagon for a small building standing on the very same spot, yet somehow only months after he had opened Orson Welles happened to discover this culinary delight and it soon became one of the Boy Wonders favorite haunts.

Perhaps it was the sign that read “Curb Service” that had attracted him ... that way Mr. Welles could wait in his Bentley while his studio driver Ernesto stopped in front and held up six fingers. Paul Pink would then quickly bring a half dozen of the chili dogs to Mr. Welles car were he would ravenously devour every one of them. Orson adored these simple right off the street hot

SANTA MONICA

66

End of the Trail

## ACT IV

# OBJECTS AT REST OR IN MOTION... ■■■

The idyllic beachfront community of Santa Monica was incorporated in 1886 and named for Saint Monica, the mother of Saint Augustine. However, by 1922 the tranquility and “Saintliness” had begun to wane since various Hollywood celebrities had already started buying up the surrounding land. Will Rogers owned an immense ranch in Santa Monica Canyon and by 1928 he had sold his sizable property on the beach containing two houses to the infamous William Randolph Hearst, who of course had passed it on to his mistress Marion Davies. Other notable celebrities to have established homes in the seaside community during that time were Greta Garbo, Cary Grant, and Douglas Fairbanks.



**WELLES, TOLAND, AND CAMERA IN STAGE FLOOR**

## ACT V

# FRANKLY ORSON, I DON'T GIVE A DAMN...

By now it's the middle of Sunday afternoon and Toland is feeling the effects of the long drug and alcohol fueled weekend. All that he really wants to do right now is to go home and attempt to sleep it off before he has to show up for work on Monday. However, when he makes that suggestion Orson insists that there must be, "more to making the movies than just that? What about the all of the editing and the sound and the lab and all the rest of that... rigmarole?"

"Sure, sure, sure..." Toland replies, as he attempts to rub that numb pain out of his forehead with the fingers of his left hand. "There's a lot more to it, but at least you have the basics..."